



K-State's Center for Engagement and Community Development

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Working to Save Our Rural Grocery Stores One Challenge at a Time

Challenge Five: Lack of Community Support

Many store owners have expressed frustration regarding folks who drive past the local grocery store on their way to stores in search of a “deal” to purchase their groceries. Store owners, who not only work hard to supply groceries for the community, support local ball teams, 4-H clubs, church events and other civic causes, wish local citizens likewise would support their local grocery business. This is a particularly difficult challenge as everyone is looking to spend their dollars efficiently. Still, there are important reasons for people to shop locally. Check out our fast facts for just a few of these reasons.



Solutions

Participants at our first rural grocer summit offered several great ideas for increasing community support for local grocery stores. High value and communication are keys to loyal shoppers. First, there must be value for those who shop locally. This value can come from the cost of groceries, the convenience of local shopping and / or the exceptional service they receive when shopping at their local grocery store. Likewise, this value needs to be clearly communicated through increased marketing, ‘buy local’ educational campaigns and through community discussion. See our website for additional ideas about keeping local grocery stores alive at www.ruralgrocery.org.

Fast Facts:

- October 2004 study shows that locally owned businesses create more jobs locally and, in some sectors, provide better wages and benefits than national chains.
- September 2003 study shows that locally owned businesses contribute more than twice as much of their revenue to charitable causes as corporate chains. Advocates find that local business owners are generally much more accessible than executives of large corporations.
- September 2003 study argues for every **\$100** spent at locally owned stores, **\$45** stays in the local economy, creating jobs and expanding a city's tax base. For every **\$100** spent at a national chain or franchise store, only **\$14** remains in the community.

Kansas Best Practices:

The Kansas Sampler Foundation promotes “Buy Local” campaigns by providing buttons and printed reasons why grocery stores are vital to small towns in Kansas.
www.kansassampler.org

Looking for More? Check out our website for more information:
www.ruralgrocery.org