



# Request for Proposals

**The National Rural Grocery Summit Planning Committee is seeking proposals for presentations at the National Rural Grocery Summit on June 24-25, 2024 in Montgomery, Alabama.**

The National Rural Grocery Summit is the premier networking and resource-sharing venue for independent grocers and rural food access stakeholders. This biennial summit brings together store owners, citizen leaders, food suppliers, academic researchers, healthy food access practitioners, policy makers, and funders to learn from and strategize with one another about sustaining rural grocery stores and improving rural access to healthy foods.

**We invite you to submit a proposal to share your work at this important conference.** We are seeking presentations, panel discussions, and posters that relate to summit objectives and suggested topic areas. Proposals should be submitted online by **11:59 PM Central on February 2, 2024.**

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## Summit Objectives

- Explore the connections between rural grocery operations and community vitality
- Provide rural grocery store owners and rural grocery stakeholders the opportunity to network and learn from each other
- Highlight innovative models and strategies for strengthening healthy food retail in rural communities
- Chart a path for robust rural food systems that improve the health and well-being of rural communities.

## Key Dates

- **Presentation Proposal Submission Deadline:** February 2, 2024 at 11:59 PM Central
- **Selected Presenter Notification:** Mid-March, 2024
- **Conference:** June 24-25, 2024

## Potential Topic Areas

Topics to be covered at the summit include, but are not limited to:

- **Equity in rural food systems:** This could include experiences supporting rural food access in historically marginalized or underserved communities, innovative examples of programs that encourage rural grocery led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) entrepreneurs.
- **Innovation in rural food access:** This could include emerging grocery models, rural food distribution solutions, creative partnerships, strategies to address rural grocery challenges.
- **Local food system connections:** This could include strategies for sourcing local products in local grocery stores, partnerships with local producers or other food systems stakeholders to build capacity for the local food system, etc.
- **Policy:** This could include tools for rural grocers to engage with policymakers, discussion of relevant state or federal grocery or rural food access policies, lessons learned from interactions with policymakers.
- **Resources (financial and informational):** This could include research findings, details on funding programs, newly developed informational resources.
- **Rural grocery stores as community builders** This could include examples of community-led rural food access efforts, community leadership (formal or informal) of rural grocery project.
- **Rural grocery best practices:** This could include ways to increase sales and attract new customers, overcoming challenges (e.g. supply chain, operations, competition, consolidation, distribution, labor, etc.), addressing changes in shopping behaviors and consumer preferences, strengthening community relationships, building customer loyalty, Increasing business value, succession planning, etc.
- **Other**

## Presentation Formats

Presentations at the National Rural Grocery Summit may take the form of:

### 1. Breakout Session:

- a) **20-minute Presentation:** Share research findings, emerging strategies, lived experiences, and resources in this presentation session. Each hourlong breakout session will feature two 20-minute presentations on a related topic followed by audience Q&A. Up to two individuals may co-present on a selected presentation.
- b) **45-minute Presentation:** Provide an in-depth review of research findings, emerging strategies, lived experiences, or resources in this presentation session. Each hourlong breakout session will feature one 45-minute presentation followed by audience Q&A. Up to two individuals may co-present on a selected presentation.
- c) **Panel Discussion:** Engage in a conversation about rural food systems during a panel discussion. Each panel discussion will be one hour and will consist of three to four speakers sharing their unique perspectives on a common theme. Panelists may discuss research, resources, case studies, firsthand experiences, and so on. Panelists will have 5 minutes to introduce themselves, followed by moderated Q&A and dialog with co-panelists. In your panel session proposal, please also submit initial ideas for potential panelists. If your proposal is selected, the conference planning team will work with you to confirm their participation.

## 2. Poster Session

**Poster Presentation:** Share and solicit feedback on an existing or emerging project during a poster session. Posters typically mix a brief narrative description with photographs, organizational or historical charts, maps, videos, etc. Posters may share empirical research, community action research, participatory research, and more. They may also share innovative ideas and practices, programmatic successes, and/or reflections from food access practitioners. Poster presenters are expected to discuss their poster during a dedicated session. If you have questions about poster formatting, please contact us.

## Who should submit a proposal?

You! We are looking for proposals from a broad range of rural grocery, healthy food access, and community vitality stakeholders. This may include, , grocers, practitioners, resource providers, academic researchers, policy makers, funders, and students from across the country.

## Submission Requirements

Submit the following information using the online form no later than **February 2, 2024 at 11:59 PM** Central. The online form is located at: <https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/8366/submitter>

### 1. Presentation format (select one)

- 20-minute Presentation
- 45-minute Presentation
- Panel Discussion
- Poster Session

### 2. Title of presentation, panel, or poster

### 3. Topic (select one)

- Equity in rural food systems
- Innovation in rural food access
- Local food system connections
- Policy
- Resources (financial and informational)
- Rural grocery stores as community builders
- Rural grocery best practices.
- Other, please explain:

### 4. Brief description of presentation, panel, or poster (2-3 sentences that will be included in the summit program, if selected)

### 5. Summary of presentation, panel, or poster (500 word limit) that addresses the following:

- What information will be covered?
- How will this session connect with summit objectives?
- What knowledge, skills, or new understanding will attendees gain?

**6. Contact information of primary presenter and co-presenter (if applicable)**

- Name
- Email
- Institutional affiliation (business, organization, academic institution, etc.)
- Position title
- Biography (2-3 sentences)
- City
- State
- Country

**7. Panel presenters**

If you are submitting a panel presentation proposal, share 2-3 potential panelists (name and organization) that you have in mind to participate in your proposed session.

**8. Do you have any other special requests or requirements for your session? Laptops, projectors, and screens will be available for presenters.**

**9. Presenter will attend**

Check this box to confirm that at least one presenter will register to attend and present, if selected, at the 2024 National Rural Grocery Summit in Montgomery, AL.

**10. Permission to share**

Check this box to give the summit planning team permission to share your breakout session description and slides electronically, if it is accepted for presentation.

## Submit your proposal via Oxford Abstracts

Presentation proposals will be accepted through an online submission form through Oxford Abstracts. To submit a proposal, you must create an account with Oxford Abstracts ([see instructions](#)). All communications regarding the status of a proposal will occur through the Oxford Abstracts platform.

NRGS Oxford Abstracts submission form: <https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/8366/submitter>

## What support is available to defray the cost of attending the summit?

Complimentary registration is available for up to two representatives from an individual grocery store. Presenters will receive a reduced registration rate.

## Questions?

To learn more about the Rural Grocery Initiative, please visit [www.ruralgrocery.org](http://www.ruralgrocery.org). For additional questions about the initiative or the summit, please contact us at [rgi@ksu.edu](mailto:rgi@ksu.edu).