

As a leading agricultural producer, Kansas is often referred to as “the nation’s breadbasket. Yet 30% of all Kansas counties are rated as food deserts and more than 800,000 Kansans within those food deserts suffer from a lack of access to healthy foods.

To help improve Kansans' access to healthy food, the [Kansas Health Foundation](#) launched the Kansas Healthy Food Initiative (KHFI) Nov. 6 at the Kansas Leadership Center in Wichita.

The kickoff of the \$4.2 million initiative brought together more than 100 Kansas business owners, city officials, funders, Extension professionals, and healthy food stakeholders to hear about the public-private partnership that aims to increase access to affordable fresh food to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities. The KHFI provides evidence-based technical assistance for those seeking to strengthen access to healthy foods as well as financing through a mix of loans and grants to develop new or renovate fresh food retail in underserved communities throughout Kansas. The program works to bridge informational and financing gaps faced by healthy food stakeholders and food retailers operating in low- to moderate-income areas.

The KHFI is a partnership among the Kansas Health Foundation, Kansas State University’s Center for Engagement and Community Development, IFF (a community development finance institution) and NetWork Kansas, with strategic guidance provided by The Food Trust.

To access information about healthy food access or to determine eligibility for KHFI funding, one can contact the Kansas Healthy Food Initiative in a number of ways. The website is: www.kansashealthyfood.org. The email is: khfi@ksu.edu. Or call us at (785) 532-6868.