Greater KC Food Policy Coalition Candidate Questionnaire November 3, 2026

Guide to this Questionnaire

Policymakers play a key role in improving our local food system so it works for all people in the Greater Kansas City area. GKCFPC has shared a questionnaire with candidates for elected office within a 10 mile radius of the Kansas City city center as well as county officials for Platte, Clay, Jackson, and Johnson (KS) counties (Wyandotte county has no races this election cycle). This questionnaire sought to capture a snapshot of where each candidate stands on local agriculture and food access policies.

This nonpartisan guide captures all responses in full and unedited, with the sole purpose of informing voters.

Candidates not listed here were either unable to be reached or did not respond.

ARE YOU READY TO VOTE?

Primary Election: August 4th, 2026
General Election: November 3rd, 2026

Missouri Voters: https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/govotemissouri/register

Kansas Voters: https://myvoteinfo.voteks.org/VoterView

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Missouri Races

Key:

(I) = Incumbent

* = Did not respond

** = Could not contact

U.S. House of Representatives *(pg. 7)*

District 4	District 5	District 6
Thomas Holbrook**	Randy Langkraehr**	Andy Maidment*
Jordan Herrera	Emanuel Cleaver (I)*	Josh Smead*
Mark Alford (I)*	Rick Brattin*	Chris Stigall*

Statewide

Missouri State Auditor

Scott Fitzpatrick (I)*

Quentin Wilson*

Dustin Coffell*

Missouri State Legislature *(pg. 8)*

Missouri Senate

Jon Patterson, *8th District**

Keri Ingle, *8th District*

Missouri House of Representatives

Jerry Hickey, *12th District**

Tracey Steele, *12th District*

Bill Allen (I), *17th District**

Susan Hoisington, *17th District*

Eric Woods (I), *18th District**

Karen Irene Spalding, *19th District*

Wick Thomas (I), *19th District**

Mike Steinmeyer (I), 20th *District**

Jeff Spicer, 20th *District*

Michael Young, 21st *District**

Will Jobe (I), 21st *District**

Yolanda Young (I), *22nd District**

Steven W Hinton, *28th District***

Donna Barnes (I), *28th District**

Robert Bruette, *29th District**

Tedi H. Rowland, *29th District*

Jacquie Aziere Stenger, 35th *District**

Michael Scott, 35th *District*

Dave Thomas, 36th *District**

Anthony T. Ealy Jr. (I), 36th *District**

<u>Clay County</u> *(pg. 13)*

County Commissioner

Jerry Nolte (I)*

Jennifer Justus

Jackson County *(pg.14)*

County Executive

Alan Rohlfing*

Stacy Lake

County Legislature

Carla Fields, *1st District at-large***

Lance Pollard, *1st District at-large*

Donna Peyton (I), *2nd District at-large**

Gresia Cabrera, *2nd District at-large**

Susan Wilson, *3rd District at-large***

Kelly Thompson, *1st District*

Vanessa Huskey (I), *2nd District*

Eric Dickinson, *2nd District**

Phyllis Hernandez, *3rd District**

Scott Qualls, *3rd District**

Byron Townsend, *4th District*

Lon McDonald, *4th District*

Antoine D. Jennings, *5th District***

Dale Carter, *5th District**

Tony Lawson, *6th District*

Bill Haley, *6th District**

Platte County *(pg. 20)*

County Commissioner

Jason Maki*

Mary McKenna

Kansas Races

Key:

(I) = Incumbent

* = Did not respond

** = Could not contact

U.S. Congress *(pg. 22)*

U.S. Senate

David Graham

Adam Hamilton

Roger Marshall (I)*

U.S. House of Representatives

John Hauer, *2nd District*

Don Coover, *2nd District**

Derek Schmidt (I), *2nd District**

Steve Hohe, *3rd District**

Sharice Davids (I), *3rd District*

Eric Jenkins, *3rd District**

Statewide *(pg. 26)*

Kansas Governor (Lieutenant Governor)

Cindy Holscher (KC Ohaebosim)*

Ty Masterson (Jeffrey Klemp)*

Secretary of State

Jennifer Day

Pat Proctor*

Attorney General

Chris Mann*

Kris Kobach (I)*

State Treasurer

Juan C. Luengo*

Steven Johnson (I)*

Commissioner of Insurance

Dinah Sykes*

Daniel Hawkins*

Kansas State Legislature *(pg. 28)*

Kansas State House of Representatives

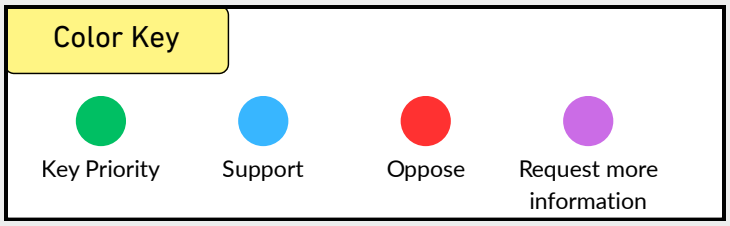
Sherry Giebler, *14th District**
Charlotte Esau, *14th District**
Linda Featherston (I), *16th District*
Jo Ella Hoye (I), 17*th District*
Jim Eschrich, *17th District**
Cindy Neighbor (I), *18th District*
Robert Whitman, *18th District**
Stephanie Sawyer Clayton (I), *19th District**
Mark Hermes, *19th District**
Mari-Lynn Poskin, (I) *20th District**
Jerry Stogsdill (I), *21st District**
Reed Krewson, *22nd District*
Susan Ruiz (I), *23rd District**
Jarrod Ousley (I), *24th District**
Scott Speicker, *24th District**
Rui Xu (I), *25th District**
Bryan Mouber, *28th District**
Alex. N Bergman, *28th District**
Heather Meyer (I), *29th District**
Amelia Wiederaenders, *30th District*
Laura Williams (I), *30th District**
Emily Hane, *31st District*
Dennis Grindel, *31st District**
Pam Curtis (I), *32nd District**
Marco A. Medina Diaz, *32nd District**
Emily Blanks, *33rd District*
Carolyn Caiharr (I), *33rd District**
Valdenia C. Winn (I), *34th District**
CeCe Harlin, *34th District**
Wanda Brownlee Paige (I), *35th District*
Alex Sanchez, *35th District**
Lynn Melton (I), *36th District**
Brian Dickason, *36th District**
Melissa M Oropeza (I), *37th District**
Connie Jo Henry, *37th District**
Zach Maier, *39th District**
Angela Stiens (I), *39th District**
Dan Osman (I), *48th District*
Nikki McDonald (I), *49th District*
Tricia Sinclair, *49th District**
Brandon Woodard (I), *108th District*
Brandon Holland, *117th District*
Adam Turk (I), *117th District**

Johnson County *(pg. 40)*

County Commission Chairman

Karen Crnkovich*
Mike Kelly (I)

Missouri Questionnaire Responses



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pg. 20 Platte County Commissioner
Mary McKenna

U.S. House of Representatives, MO 4th District

Jordan Herrera

Democrat, U.S. House of Representatives, 4th District

***Full responses provided in below section: "Complete Responses"*

Q3. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?**

Answer: Food insecurity is not simply a SNAP problem; it is an affordability, competition, and food-access problem. SNAP is an essential safety net, and I will fight to protect it, but we also have to address why working Missourians increasingly cannot afford to put food on the table in the first place. When families are spending a disproportionate share of their income on groceries while wages have failed to keep pace with the cost of living, the answer cannot simply be telling people to work harder. Most of these families are already working. We have to address the systems that are making food more expensive and less accessible.

Q4. How will you support the future of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP)? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst [budget] cuts?**

Answer: I will fight for a seat on the House Agriculture Committee because Missouri farmers deserve a representative who strives to understand them and will fight for them. Agriculture is not a secondary issue in our district; it is central to our economy and our way of life.... I support restoring and expanding funding for the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production because I believe we need to broaden how we think about American agriculture.... At a time when families are struggling with food costs, we should be investing in ways to increase domestic production, create more local producers, and strengthen competition throughout our food system, not reducing those opportunities.... I would work to strengthen OUAIP while better connecting it with programs such as NIFA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and the Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program, as well as USDA Rural Business Development Grants.... I also support substantially strengthening incentives through programs like the Rural Energy for America Program to help agricultural producers invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and modern technology.... Ultimately, my goal is to build an agricultural pipeline that helps people become producers and helps existing producers remain competitive....

Q5. Do you support reinstating the collection of [food security] data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?**

Answer: Yes. I strongly support reinstating the collection and publication of Household Food Security data, and I would support legislation requiring USDA to continue collecting and publicly reporting this information. We cannot fix what we refuse to measure. If Congress is serious about addressing hunger, we need reliable data showing where food insecurity exists, who is being affected, whether our policies are working, and where resources need to go. Ending the collection of that information does not end hunger; it simply makes hunger easier to ignore....

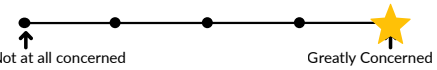
Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Strengthening domestic food production through innovation and investment in family and local farms
2. Restoring competition in our food and grocery markets
3. Reforming our agricultural labor and immigration system to protect both American agriculture and the workers who sustain it

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility?



Comments: See "Complete Responses"

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My nearest one which is my favorite by default is the River Market in Kansas City Missouri. I also really love the atmosphere at the weekend market in Lee's Summit. I have only been twice to hear local bands and see a few friends of mine but each tiem it was an occasion at the market, which is really special.

Missouri State Senate

Keri Ingle

Democrat, MO State Senate, 8th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: Eliminate/reduce sales taxes on groceries. Expand grant programs to food banks.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
There is a program that allows kids who qualify for Medicaid to automatically qualify for lunch, would love to see that implemented until we can pass universal lunch. I also support eliminating the $60 million sent to the private school voucher program being reallocated to school lunches. Other tax credit programs through general revenue could also be reallocated.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?
Answer: The same advantages and programs offered to commodity crop production could be offered to producers of specialty crops.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Protect SNAP benefits
2. Pass universal school lunch
3. Expand SNAP benefits in farmers' markets.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Lee's Summit and KC's River Market! I love fresh produce, eggs, flowers, honeys, etc.

Missouri State House of Representatives

Tracey Steele

Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 12th District

Q1. Main Priorities

1. All kids should have access to free breakfast and lunch at school.
2. The state should do more to directly support local food banks.
3. Small family farming should be the target for state ag programs.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I love looking for big tomatoes like my mom used to grow in our garden. Grocery store tomatoes are so often flavorless.

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Answer: 1. We must restore SNAP benefits to people who were unfairly kicked off the SNAP program and reduce the administrative barriers that have been used to force people out of SNAP. 2. We should create a means-tested sales tax exemption program for groceries. 3. We should tap into Missouri's agribusiness community to push those companies to do more to support the state's efforts to fight hunger and food insecurity.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

Nine states offer free breakfast and lunch to all students. We don't need to reinvent the wheel; successful models for this already exist. I believe that making sure all kids are receiving nutritious food ought to be a top priority.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?

Answer: Giant ag corporations have a scale advantage over small family farmers but small farmers have the advantage when it comes to flexibility and specialization. I think that if we lower some of the barriers to entry, like offering downpayment assistance and lower interest rates, for farmers who work their own land and serve "specialty" markets, more people would see farming and food production as viable economic choices.

Susan Hoisington

Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 17th District

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Food access: reducing food deserts and boosting SNAP/WIC enrollment so that residents have reliable access to affordable groceries,
2. Urban agriculture: supporting community gardens and farmers markets to bring fresh, local food into neighborhoods
3. Food industry infrastructure: backing local food processing, warehousing, and distribution businesses that serve the KC metro area.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Historic Downtown Liberty Farmers' Market

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Answer: To address food security issues, possible solutions could include: 1) food access -- expand Double Up Food Bucks, fund food banks, and incentivize grocers in food deserts, 2) urban agriculture -- provide grants for community gardens and farmers markets, and 3) food industry infrastructure -- support local food processing/distribution businesses. To support Missourians who do not have or have lost SNAP benefits, I would propose a state-funded grant program to bridge the gap for those who lost eligibility under new work requirements but remain food insecure. This would be paired with funding for community outreach workers who help people navigate SNAP paperwork and identify exemptions. Additionally, I would partner with the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) to analyze data on enrollment drops and denial reasons so that support can be targeted where it is needed most.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

To expand free school meal access for Missouri kids, I would push to adopt Medicaid Direct Certification, since Missouri is one of only six states not using it, which would boost the number of identified students and help more schools qualify for or keep Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) even if federal eligibility thresholds tighten. I would also propose a state-funded "Healthy School Meals For All" program to backfill any schools that lose CEP eligibility, ensuring no district has to start charging families due to federal changes. To eliminate immediate barriers, I would fund a school meal debt eliminiation program so that no student is denied food over unpaid balances.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?

Answer: Specialty crop producers need diffeirent kinds of support than commodity crop farmers get, particularly when it comes to land, capital, credit, and markets. Approaches worth exploring include land-access programs for beginning farmers, state-backed loans or grants aimed specifically at speciality crops, guaranteed markets through farm-to-school or farm-to-institution contracts, and technical assistance to help producers navigate credit options and USDA speciality crop grants. I would want to build these ideas out further through direct conversations with producers and by reviewing what has worked in neighboring states.

Jeff Spicer

Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 20th District
**Full responses provided in below section: "Complete Responses"

Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Keeping food affordable for working families
2. Supporting Missouri farmers and local food producers
3. Ensuring that no child, senior, or working family goes hungry simply because they are struggling financially

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Sweet corn. Nothing beats fresh sweet corn in the summer.

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?**

Answer: 1. No Missourian working a full-time job should have to choose between groceries, rent, utilities, or medicine. Yet that is the reality for too many working families today. SNAP is an important part of our safety net, and I oppose creating unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible Missourians from receiving assistance. But our response to food insecurity cannot begin and end with SNAP. I support strengthening Missouri's food banks and community food programs, expanding access to school meals, supporting programs that connect local farmers directly with consumers, and making it easier for families to purchase fresh Missouri-grown food. We should also improve coordination between state agencies and community organizations so people who need assistance can actually find and access it.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?**

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion. I support expanding access to free school meals because a child's ability to eat during the school day should not depend on their parents' income or whether a family successfully navigated an application process. Hungry students have a harder time learning, and ensuring children are fed is one of the most basic investments we can make in their success. I would support maximizing Missouri's participation in available federal school nutrition programs, protecting and expanding community eligibility, and examining what state investment would be necessary to close remaining gaps. I also support stronger farm-to-school programs that allow schools to purchase more food from Missouri farmers and producers, so that our investment in student nutrition also supports Missouri agriculture.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?**

Answer: Missouri agriculture should have room for the next generation of farmers, not just the largest established operations. The cost of land, equipment, and startup capital can make entering agriculture extremely difficult, particularly for young and beginning farmers and smaller specialty-crop producers. I support strengthening beginning-farmer financing and loan programs, improving access to affordable credit, and ensuring state agricultural programs are accessible to small and mid-sized producers rather than being so complicated that only large operations have the resources to navigate them.

Tedi Rowland

Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 29th District
***Full responses posted in below section: "Complete Responses"*

Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Eliminating the state sales tax on food
2. Expanding food access in underserved parts of Independence.
3. Supporting local farms and food producers as an economic backbone.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I love zucchini season, there's nothing better than a fresh loaf of zucchini bread. I'm also a regular for local honey at the farmers market.

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?**
Answer: 1. Eliminate the state sales tax on groceries. This lowers the cost of food at checkout for every Missourian, SNAP recipient or not, and it's the most direct thing state government can do right now. 2. Protect and strengthen SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks, and push back against state-level enrollment barriers that push eligible Missourians off the rolls. 3. Invest in local food banks and community food networks, so Missourians who don't qualify for SNAP, or who've lost it due to changing federal rules, still have a real safety net close to home.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?**
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
Policies I'd support: 1. State-funded universal free school meals for all Missouri students, regardless of federal Community Eligibility Provision status, so access doesn't depend on shifting federal rules. 2. Expanding purchasing of Missouri-grown food in school meal programs, so this investment also supports local farmers and food producers. 3. Streamlining direct certification so eligible families are automatically enrolled without extra paperwork burdens.
Funding: I'd look first at closing corporate tax loopholes and reviewing state tax incentives that aren't delivering promised returns for Missouri communities. I'd also prioritize this within the state's existing K-12 funding formula rather than treating it as a separate, easily-cut line item. I don't believe this needs to come at the expense of other public education priorities. It's part of fully funding public education, not competing with it.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?**
Answer: Land access: Support land-linking programs connecting retiring farmers with new growers, and protect agricultural land from unchecked development, sized for the smaller acreage specialty crops need. Capital and credit: Push for state-backed loans and grants sized for specialty operations, covering things like high tunnels, irrigation, and cold storage that commodity ag lending doesn't fit.
Markets: Expand Missouri-grown produce purchasing in schools and food banks, support farmers markets and Double Up Food Bucks-style programs, and build regional food hub infrastructure so smaller producers can reach institutional buyers without commodity-scale volume.

Michael Scott

Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 35th District

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Giving Children access to free lunch;
2. Resources for small farms and community gardens;
3. Expansion of access to fresh local produce

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Lee's Summit Green Street Farmers Market

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Answer: 1. I support protecting and expanding SNAP, reviewing eligibility thresholds so working families are not pushed out of assistance before they can afford rising food costs, and strengthening programs that connect families with fresh, locally grown food.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I would prioritize public dollars for public schools by ending tax credits and subsidies that divert resources to private education. Those funds should be redirected toward universal free school meals, ensuring every Missouri student has access to nutritious food without placing additional burdens on working families.

Q5. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?

Answer: I would expand access to affordable land, credit, and financing for small and beginning producers while strengthening connections to local markets. Supporting Missouri-grown food keeps more dollars in our communities, creates jobs, and gives families better access to fresh, locally grown products.

Clay County Commissioner

Jennifer Justus

Republican, Clay County Commissioner

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: I would need more information and education to understand the efforts and challenges.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: I would need to look at the tax policies in regards to this to determine the best courses of action.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: I think looking at grants and grant writers, as well as collaboration with the MU extension agriculture program could be beneficial and help accessibility.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Safe food supply
2. Education of food supply
3. Collaboration for agriculture groups to learn from each other

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

That's a tough one, I love so many the Smithville farmers market but also liberty farmers market and then on five corners out FFA teacher in Smithville has a little corner farm off 92 & 5 corners .... I love them all honestly

Jackson County Executive

Stacy Lake

Democrat, Jackson County Executive

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?

Answer: The Jackson County Executive only oversees the unincorporated areas of Jackson County. I plan to do a full scale review of the ordinances in Jackson County to ensure that they are up to date and will properly the needs of our Jackson County Residents. I will do community outreach and meet with members of our Agricultural community to ensure that these reforms will best meet the needs of the Jackson County Community.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?

Answer: As your next County Executive, I plan to do a full scale reform of our Assessment department. This will include appointing an auditor in the first 100 days of office and restoring our assessment department to operate fully in house. The policies and procedures of the Assessment department needs to be completely rewritten to ensure that the assessments are done in compliance with Missouri Law. We also need to do make a process to make sure that the parcels have correct classification.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?

Answer: I personally support funding assistance for small local farmers. However, due to the funding restraints projected for next year, I don't know if there will be enough money to accommodate this. If there is, I would be open to having a grant program to help provide assistance for small local farmers.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Stop the expansion of AI Data Center growth in Jackson County.
2. Fix the property tax assessment issues, so that agricultural lands in Jackson County will no longer be unlawfully assessed and have to suffer from skyrocketing property taxes.
3. Provide opportunities to help support the local small business community, which includes the local farming community. This could be done through grant opportunities and building better relationships with the County Government.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Young Family Farm

Jackson County Legislature

Lance Pollard

Republican, Jackson County Legislature, 1st District, At-Large
***Full responses posted in below section: "Complete Responses"*

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?**
Answer: I would support reviewing Jackson County's zoning regulations to make sure they do not unnecessarily stand in the way of small-scale agriculture, community gardens, urban farming, and local food production. Where appropriate, I would support allowing more agricultural uses on smaller parcels, simplifying the permitting process for community gardens and small farms, and creating clearer standards for activities such as farm stands, greenhouses, composting, and limited livestock operations. The goal should be to reduce unnecessary barriers while maintaining reasonable standards for health, safety, sanitation, animal welfare, and neighboring properties...

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?**
Answer: would support making it easier and more affordable for urban farmers and community growers to access land and navigate the property assessment process.

First, I would work with the County Assessor's Office and other appropriate agencies to make sure urban and community gardens that qualify under Missouri law are properly recognized and receive the agricultural assessment they are entitled to. The process should be clear, accessible, and understandable to small-scale growers who may not have the resources or expertise to navigate a complicated assessment system...

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?**
Answer: Yes. I strongly support funding assistance for small local farmers, urban growers, community gardens, and small agricultural nonprofits. If we want a stronger local food system, our funding programs need to be designed so that the smallest organizations can actually access them.

I would support creating or expanding County funding opportunities specifically for small-scale food producers, with smaller grant amounts and simpler applications. I would also support providing technical assistance to help farmers and small nonprofits identify available grants, complete applications, meet reporting requirements, and maintain compliance...

Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Expand access to healthy, affordable food.
2. Support local farmers, growers, and food businesses.
3. Strengthen community-based food programs and urban agriculture.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I have a real appreciation for all locally grown fruits and vegetables, especially when they are fresh and in season. But if I had to pick one local product, it would be locally harvested honey from Jackson County. I am a beekeeper myself, so I have a particular appreciation for the work that goes into producing local honey and for the important role that honeybees play in our agricultural system. Supporting local beekeepers supports more than just a great local product—it helps strengthen pollination and the health of our local food system. I also love visiting our local farmers markets and seeing the variety of fresh [produce] grown by our neighbors. There is something special about knowing where your food comes from and supporting the people who produce it.

Kelly Thompson

Democrat, Jackson County Legislature, 1st District
***Full responses posted in below section: "Complete Responses"*

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?**
Answer: There are many barriers to urban agriculture created at the municipal level through zoning and land use regulations, so I believe the county's role is to partner with cities, which is where we can have more impact for the region. Where Jackson County can lead is by bringing municipalities, farmers, and community organizations together to identify unnecessary barriers and share best practices. I also believe the county should explore opportunities to make appropriate publicly owned land available for community gardens or urban agriculture, support local food system planning, and connect growers with technical assistance and funding opportunities....

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?**
Answer: My approach is the same one I bring to all property tax issues which is to create a system that is fair, transparent, and aligned with the public good. As a county legislator, I will work with the Jackson County Assessor, municipalities, and state partners to better understand where classification and valuation practices create unintended barriers for urban agriculture. I strongly support greater transparency in the assessment process, clear guidance for landowners seeking agricultural classification where allowed under state law, and identifying opportunities to advocate for legislative changes when current policies discourage productive land use....

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?**
Answer: Yes. Small local farmers and community organizations should be able to compete fairly for funding opportunities without being excluded by unnecessarily complex application or reporting requirements. Throughout my career, I've helped organizations redesign services to make them easier for people to access and navigate. Because of that experience, I believe government should do the same and it is possible. While many funding programs are administered at the state and federal levels, Jackson County can play an important supporting role by connecting local farmers with available resources, offering technical assistance, and partnering with organizations that help applicants navigate grant and compliance requirements....

Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Improve access to healthy, affordable food.
2. Strengthen local food systems and regional agriculture.
3. Advance public health through food policy.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My family and I move around from market to market because they all have unique things to offer! We love the Brookside Market, City Market, and the Young Family Farm.

Vanessa Huskey

Democrat, Jackson County Legislature, 2nd District

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?

Answer: To effectively support local food production and modernize outdated municipal frameworks, several high-utility zoning changes can eliminate existing barriers for local farmers. Perhaps urban farmers may be allowed neighborhood-level distribution by legalizing the direct sale of whole, uncut fresh produce from residential properties or community plots.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?

Answer: To reduce property tax barriers and support affordable land access for urban farmers in Jackson County, I propose three reforms: reforming agricultural classification criteria, implementing valuation caps for productive vacant lots, and establishing a public land-lease program.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?

Answer: Funding for urban agriculture often comes from grant programs and land acquisition programs administered by state and federal government. These programs are accompanied by hurdles such as auditing and application processes that are convoluted or unattainable to smaller non-profits or small for-profit farms. I am not aware that Jackson County support funding assistance for small local farmers?

Q1. Main Priorities

I am aware of Cultivate KC. This group permits residents to host community gardens, run community supported agriculture programs, and sell homegrown fruits and vegetables directly in the residential community..

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Kanbe's Market

Byron Townsend

Democrat, Jackson County Legislature, 4th District

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: I have a BS in Agribusiness from Northwest Missouri State University, so I will be supportive of any changes in zoning that makes sense in the county based on case by case situations.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: The whole property tax evaluation system needs to be overhauled, I am in favor of a system that looks at more factors to valuate property than the current system does.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: I understand the plight of the small farmer, I hope to create Jackson County more accessible and user friendly to all small businesses including farmers.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Protect and expand food access for county residents
2. Protect family farms
3. Expand urban agriculture

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

City Market downtown Kansas City

Lon McDonald

Republican, Jackson County Legislature, 4th District

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: I support reviewing and updating county zoning regulations to remove unnecessary barriers that prevent responsible urban agriculture while protecting the neighborhood and property rights. Perhaps Gardens and Greenhouses of a small nature.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: This most certainly is a zoning issue that if in unincorporated Jackson County the legislature can review.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: I do support funding. At this point I believe we can only support it on Unincorporated areas.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Protect and expand access to affordable, food for seniors, children, working families, veterans.
2. Invest in local and Regional Food Systems-connect local producers with consumers and schools.
3. Strengthen Urban agriculture and voluntary Conservation (Extention [of point 2])

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I do not know the name but every year we get produce from the one art Holmes and Blueridge

Tony Lawson

Democrat, Jackson County Legislature, 6th District

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: Ease existing restrictions, write new ordinances.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: Support food to table restaurants, agrotourism, encourage local farmers markets, ordinances allowing for small hoop houses, chickens and ducks, reduce penalties for guerrilla farming.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: I do support small farms. I believe it is the way forward. Tie it to the need for affordable homes. Build affordable neighborhoods with large communities gardens and community greenhouses.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Permaculture
2. Agrotourism
3. Small family farms.

I own a restaurant and rely heavily on locally produced eggs and produce. The whole community benefits from our efforts to support local agriculture.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Missouri-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Blue Springs farmers market on 7 in the American Legion parking lot.

Platte County Commissioner

Mary McKenna

Democrat, Platte County Commissioner

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: The first thing I would do would bring stakeholders to the table. Ensuring that there is a fair zoning process that allows urban farming efforts and local food production is important to securing our food supply chain.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: I would work with the county assessor and our state delegation to figure out ways to reform the process of classification that is beneficial to urban farmers and the communities in which they farm. Ensuring that vacant lots can be repurposed into usable land is vital to a prosperous county. Turning vacant lots into lots to grow food in creates new opportunities to bring in more local producers.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: I would advocate for at least maintaining the current funding, while also finding ways to promote existing programs to local farmers. Once more funding sources can be secured, then these programs may be expanded to promote local producers.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Building relationships between regional/local growers and those selling produce.
2. Eliminating food deserts.
3. Looking into different systems to improve the food systems such as co-ops.

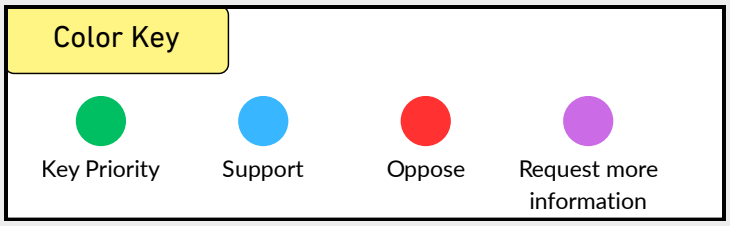
Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Tomatoes from the Kansas City Farmer's Market.

Kansas Questionnaire Responses



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U.S. Senate, KS

David Graham

Libertarian, U.S. Senate, Kansas

Q3. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: The government should eliminate unnecessary, cumulative, and burdensome regulations on the production and distribution of food. Let's allow farmers to sell locally-produced food directly to local people. Food deserts will disappear and food cost will be reasonable.

Q4. How will you support the future of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP)? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst [budget] cuts?
Answer: I would not support the future of OUAIP. It is another unnecessary government bureaucracy. Instead, tax credits should be given to urban agriculture startups, which should be allowed to operate with little to no government interference.

Q5. Do you support reinstating the collection of [food security] data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?
Answer: The government should not be collecting and storing information about Americans and the food industry.

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Overland Park Farmers Market

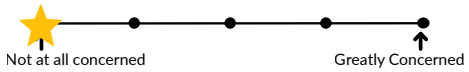
Q1. Main Priorities

1. Affordability of food
2. Access to food
3. Development and Protection of Family Farms, Micro Farms, and other Non-corporate Farms

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility?



Comments: I oppose government interference in the free market.

Adam Hamilton

Democrat, U.S. Senate, Kansas

Q3. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: I've spent decades organizing food ministries, so this is personal for me. In the Senate I will protect WIC and restoring the nutrition funding stripped out of recent law. I'd also crack down on the price-gouging and consolidation that keep grocery prices high. For families who don't receive SNAP, we need a strong charitable food infrastructure and fewer barriers to it: support for food banks and pantries, flexible commodity programs, school and summer meals for kids, and senior nutrition programs. No Kansan should go hungry in a state that feeds the world.

Q4. How will you support the future of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP)? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst [budget] cuts?
Answer: Urban agriculture is real agriculture, and in greater Kansas City it means jobs, fresh food in neighborhoods that lack it, and a next generation of growers. I'd support reversing cuts to OUAIP and oppose the Administration's proposal to zero out funding for the office and in the meantime I'd defend its grant programs, push USDA to keep serving urban and small-scale producers through existing conservation and beginning-farmer programs, and make sure Kansas applicants actually get their share.

Q5. Do you support reinstating the collection of [food security] data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?
Answer: Yes. You cannot fix what you refuse to measure, and ending this data collection looks less like savings and more like hiding the problem. I'd support legislation requiring USDA to resume the annual Household Food Security report, and I'd use appropriations and oversight to push for reinstatement in the meantime. Good data is how we target help where it's needed and how we hold ourselves accountable for results.

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

The Stilwell Farmers Market

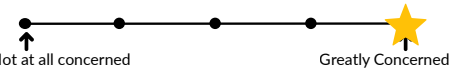
Q1. Main Priorities

1. Protect and restore nutrition assistance. Our congregation's FoodMobile and pantry network brings groceries to tens of thousands of our neighbors each year, and I've seen what happens when SNAP and WIC are cut: the need doesn't go away, it just shows up at our doors.
2. Fair markets and lower costs for Kansas farmers, who feed the world but are being squeezed by tariffs, rising input costs, and shrinking export markets.
3. Connect the two: expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food for schools and food banks, so the dollars we spend feeding our kids and neighbors also support the farmers down the road.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility?



Comments: Shifting SNAP costs to the states is an unfunded mandate dressed up as reform. Kansas cannot absorb those costs without cutting benefits, tightening eligibility, or taking money from schools and roads, and hungry families would pay the price. Feeding people who fall on hard times is a national commitment, and I'd work to keep it one.

U.S. House of Representatives, KS 2nd District

John Hauer

Libertarian, U.S. House of Representatives, 2nd District

Q3. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: I believe that government spending has caused the rise of inflation in general and food prices in particular. The government spending more money will only increase the problem more, and the vicious cycle will continue. What the federal government needs to do is get out of the food business altogether and let farmers and individuals grow what the people want and need. Over-regulation and the consequent need for subsidization of the entire food industry has added to the rise in prices. That's why inflation hits the hardest in the most necessary areas to life for the working class.

Q4. How will you support the future of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP)? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst [budget] cuts?
Answer: I love urban agriculture, it has the potential to be the lifeline of many communities. I don't think a federal program is the best way to go about this. When programs are regulated by the government, there are always strings attached and very high barriers to entry in the form of safety regulations. I believe that the best way to encourage urban agriculture is to allow people to own their land and sell their products with little to no oversight or taxation. With high property taxes and highly regulated limits to using urban land, only the already wealthy can afford to take advantage of federal programs such as this because of the capitol and piles of paperwork required.

Q5. Do you support reinstating the collection of [food security] data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?
Answer: I do not support reinstating the collection of this data. I prefer that the federal government pry into the affairs of the citizens as little as possible.

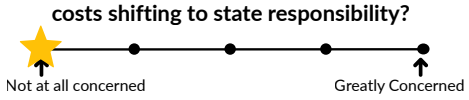
Q1. Main Priorities

1. Deregulating food and agriculture industries
2. Removing barriers to entry such as building and equipment requirements
3. Allowing untaxed and unlimited person to person sales of any and all food and farm products

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility?



Comments: I don't believe in SNAP, but if it continues to exist, it should be at the local level where people really know what their community needs.

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

The Woodshed Market in Topeka!

U.S. House of Representatives, KS 3rd District

Sharice Davids

Democrat, U.S. House of Representatives, 3rd District

Q3. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: No child or senior should go hungry because politicians in Washington chose to cut food programs to pay for tax breaks for billionaires. I opposed the recent cuts to SNAP because they take food off the tables of families, older adults, and children who are already struggling with the rising cost of groceries. We should be strengthening nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC — not weakening them — while also investing in local food systems, supporting food banks, and helping more Kansas-grown food reach schools and communities. We also need to tackle the root causes of food insecurity by lowering the cost of health care, housing, and child care and creating more good-paying jobs so fewer Kansans have to choose between paying the bills and buying groceries.

Q4. How will you support the future of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP)? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst [budget] cuts?
Answer: Urban agriculture is about more than growing food—it's about creating economic opportunity, supporting small businesses, improving access to fresh, healthy food, and strengthening local food systems. Programs like the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production help entrepreneurs, beginning farmers, and community organizations build businesses, create jobs, and increase food security in neighborhoods that often lack access to fresh produce. I'll continue supporting policies that help urban agriculture grow and ensure communities have the tools they need to expand local food production and strengthen regional economies.

Q5. Do you support reinstating the collection of [food security] data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?
Answer: Yes. Good policy depends on good data. Policymakers, researchers, food banks, and community organizations need accurate information to understand where food insecurity exists and which programs are working. I support restoring USDA's collection and publication of household food security data and will work to ensure the Department has the resources and direction needed to continue this important work. Without reliable data, it becomes much harder to make informed decisions and target resources where they're needed most.

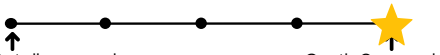
Q1. Main Priorities

1. Lowering food costs for Kansas families by protecting SNAP, WIC, and other nutrition programs while supporting local food supply chains to lower grocery costs for everyone.
2. Supporting Kansas farmers and ranchers by expanding market opportunities, pushing back against reckless tariffs, investing in agricultural research and innovation, and strengthening domestic supply chains.
3. Strengthening local and regional food systems so more Kansas-grown food reaches schools, food banks, and families while creating new opportunities for farmers.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility?



Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Overland Park, KS Farmers' Market!

Kansas Secretary of State

Jennifer Day

Democrat, Kansas Secretary of State

***Full responses are posted in below section: "Complete Responses"*

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?**

Answer: Food security is an important issue because every Kansan deserves the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families. Rising costs have created real challenges for many households, and we should recognize the impact that food insecurity can have on children, working families, and communities across our state.... Helping Kansas families access nutritious food should be an issue where we set politics aside and focus on our shared responsibility to one another. When we work together, we can support stronger communities and help ensure every Kansan has the opportunity to succeed.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?**

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

Ensuring Kansas children have access to nutritious food requires strong partnerships between schools, families, communities, and state agencies. I support efforts that increase awareness of available programs, connect families with the resources they need, and help ensure children have the opportunity to thrive. We should continue evaluating how these programs are reaching children and identifying ways to improve coordination, outreach, and communication with families. The goal should be a system that is easy to understand, works effectively, and ensures children who need assistance are not left behind....

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?

Answer: No child in Kansas should go hungry, and every family should have access to the resources they need to support their children. School meals are an important part of ensuring students are ready to learn, grow, and succeed. While the Secretary of State does not administer SNAP or school meal programs, I believe state leaders should work together to make sure families can easily access the services available to them. That includes improving awareness of available resources and ensuring families have clear information about how to apply and maintain eligibility.

Q1. Main Priorities**

1. Ensuring the Secretary of State's office provides efficient, reliable business services for farmers, ranchers, cooperatives, and agricultural businesses. Whether registering a new business, filing required documents, or accessing state services, these processes should be straightforward and responsive.
2. Continuing to modernize the office so business services are accessible, secure, and easy to use. Agricultural producers already face enough challenges, and interacting with state government should not be one of them.
3. Maintaining an open line of communication with Kansas' agricultural community. By listening to producers, agricultural organizations, and rural business leaders, I can better understand how the Secretary of State's office can improve the services it provides to one of our state's most important business sectors.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My favorite farmers market is in Overland Park. My favorite vendor is a tough choice, but I've never met a donut I didn't like from Mr. D's. Also, I've supported KC Compost Collective since 2019.

Kansas Commissioner of Insurance

Dinah Sykes

Democrat, KS Commissioner of Insurance

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Answer: While the Insurance Commissioner does not administer the SNAP program, food insecurity is closely tied to financial strain, medical care costs, and gaps in insurance coverage. As Insurance Commissioner, I would focus on:

- Reduce insurance related financial burdens by enforcing fair rate practices, strengthening consumer protections, and ensuring families aren't paying more than necessary for required coverage.
- Expand access to affordable health insurance options, including support for rural communities where coverage gaps contribute to economic instability.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

While the Insurance Commissioner's office does not set school meal budgets, it can ensure its own operations are efficient and supportive of statewide priorities. If federal or state leaders expand access to free school meals, the Insurance Commissioner's role would be indirect. However, I would support better coordination with education and social service agencies and policies that would reduce administrative barriers for families navigating multiple social service programs.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?

Answer: The Insurance Commissioner does not administer school meal programs, but can contribute by:

- Improving outreach and communication so families understand how changes in income or insurance status may affect other benefits.
- Coordinating with agencies that handle eligibility to ensure families receive clear, timely information about application steps.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Strengthening insurance access for farms and small agricultural businesses. Ensuring farmers and other small agricultural business owners can obtain affordable, reliable insurance coverage.
2. Improving consumer protection for families facing rising food and living costs. Fair insurance practices become even more important to families facing tight budgets.
3. Supporting rural and underserved communities through better insurance market oversight. Expanding access to health and dental insurance helps strengthen the broader economic conditions that support local food systems.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Since I live in Lenexa and represent a large area of Lenexa in the Kansas Senate, I am proud to support the Lenexa Farmers Market. There is nothing like a fresh grown tomato purchased from a local farmer to enjoy in the summer months.

Kansas State House of Representatives

Linda Featherston

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 16th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: I will continue to be an outspoken advocate for those who are food insecure, including reminding my religious colleagues that the bible is clear about a mandate to feed the poor. I'd love to see a restoration of the Farm to Food Bank funding, since it helps both food insecure Kansans and Kansas farmers. As a 6 year member of the agriculture committee (and current rankin member), I will continue to push for informational sessions about solutions for food insecurity in hopes that it will stir my colleagues to see how the various programs could help their constituents.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I support universal free lunch and breakfast. Trimming pet project budget add ons that circumvent the legislative process would more than cover this cost.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: Honestly, I'm at a loss for what to do besides continuing to share awareness of the problem.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Universal free school lunch
2. Continue to oppose state legislative attacks on the food insecure
3. Restore Kansas' Farm to Food bank funding

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I volunteer in the Sunset Community Garden. During regular production years (not this year due to a temporary relocation), we host several market days throughout the summer.

Jo Ella Hoye

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 17th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: We need to remove barriers and strings attached for SNAP. The longer the form, the more likely we are to have errors. No child should go hungry. I tried to amend the state budget to provide copays for families on reduced lunch so that kids qualified for reduced lunch would receive free lunch. Unfortunately, this option did not prevail.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
The state can afford to pay reduced lunch copays for qualified Kansas families, and I will keep fighting for that to be included in our budget.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: There is more that the state can do to expand access to free school meals for kids. I've been a strong advocate for SNAP and for paying for school meals.

Q1. Main Priorities

Did not respond

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Lenexa Farmers Market

Cindy Neighbor

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 18th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: Increase farmer markets that provide healthier foods and provide lower costs. Work with local food banks to increase their food supply for shoppers. Work to provide more coverage of SNAP and WIC benefits from the Legislature.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
We need to work with Federal Legislators to ensure access to Kansas students for nutritious foods and funding for school lunches. If children are hungry, they can't learn. On the local level, we need to look at our next school finance formula which is due in 2027 and address the needs of school lunches.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: We need to address the reinstatement of the lost funds. We also need to look at our current funding and definition of at-risk students to see if those funds can be applied.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Expand SNAP and WIC programs;
2. Enhance urban agriculture;
3. Protect ag land

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Shawnee and Merriam/tomatoes and corn

Reed Krewson

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 22nd District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: To address both the loss of SNAP benefits and the rising cost of food for all vulnerable Kansans, a dual approach works best: first, we must expand state-funded SNAP Employment & Training programs and adopt Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility to help low-wage earners maintain their benefits without being penalized for building modest savings. Second, to support the "missing middle" who do not qualify for SNAP but still struggle with inflation, we should fully fund the Local Food Purchase Assistance Program to route fresh, Kansas-grown produce directly to local food banks, scale up the "Double Up Food Bucks" program at farmers' markets, and fiercely defend the permanent repeal of the state grocery tax to keep basic nutrition affordable for every family.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I strongly support providing free breakfast and lunch to every K-12 student in Kansas, alongside expanded after-school and summer meal programs, because hungry kids cannot learn. To achieve this, I would champion legislation reimbursing school districts for universal meals while maximizing our state's use of the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to drastically reduce out-of-pocket state costs. We can fund the remaining state obligation without raising taxes on working Kansans by reallocating the massive administrative savings gained from eliminating school lunch debt and application processing, utilizing our current state budget surplus, and closing outdated corporate tax loopholes to invest directly in our children's future.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: My proposed solution in number 4 would address this.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Strengthening Local Food Systems & Farm-to-Table Access (OP Farmers' Market is in my district)
2. Water Conservation & Environmental Stewardship (My predecessor Lindsay Vaughn was a big water champion on the water committee and I have been actively involved in Kansans for Conservation for the past 5 years).
3. Food Security & Nutrition Access (Protecting SNAP + WIC, mitigating food deserts, and protecting the food tax repeal)

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Sweet corn, watermelon, tomatoes, and blueberries :)

Amelia Wiederaenders

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 30th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: I'm honestly unsure at this time but I want to explore this issue. My assumption is investing would help decrease the cost of healthy food.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I would support an effort for a community eligibility program at the state level to replace the federal level if it's taken away. I feel doing something like legalizing marijuana could bring in the necessary funds for this program

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: I'm a big supporter of community eligibility programs because it's my understanding that this helps families that might not know how to apply or don't think they can.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Enhance urban agriculture;
2. Protect SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks;
3. Invest in local food systems

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Eggs

Emily Hane

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 31st District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: For House District 31, food insecure neighbors depend on pantries, almost all of which are supplied by Harvesters. We all know Harvesters is stretched especially thin thanks to growing need coupled with Federal nonsense. The state can help to coordinate access to locally grown food and ensure less food waste.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
Looking at other states who have passed similar policies, I'm really impressed with Colorado's HB22-1414 Healthy Meals for All Public School Students. They funded that act by adjusting the state income tax itemized deductions for taxpayers who make above $300,000. I don't know how the math would net out for Kansas, but I would support something similar (e.g. adjusting income tax itemized deductions for high earners). (I also really like that their legislation increases wages for food prep workers in the school setting!)

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: I would support fully funding public education so that schools are better equipped to work with parents in applying for access to meals. I'm not certain of the role the state can play in promoting more programs like Harvesters BackSnack program or converting community land bank property into growable areas. I would look forward to learning what the coalition would recommend.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Enhanced SNAP/WIC
2. Urban Agriculture
3. Grocery store access (e.g. regional food system)

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Cucumbers! So crisp and refreshing!

Emily Blanks

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 33rd District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: The SNAP program needs to be reevaluated on who qualifies and expanding coverage of items that qualify. A lot of Kansans are mislead on the "abuse" of the program. Is it an option to release numbers of an audit and show there's little to not "fraud? Then explain that restricting these programs are hurting vulnerable Kansans that truly need the support when food costs have risen over 30%! My journey into being a public servant, began just as that. In 2021, I began volunteering for the Bonner Springs-Edwardsville food pantry, Vaughn-Trent Community Services. By the end of 2022, they asked me to join their Board of Directors. Since then, I've proudly hosted several fundraisers and pantry-raisers. Our numbers have grown every year, and we work hard to ensure consistent service. I also help create ties with our school district to make sure parents are aware of our services.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
Point blank, if children are expected to be at school, we should be feeding them. It shouldn't be controversial to feed CHILDREN. If parents want to opt out of lunches being covered, let them. Adults failing to get along shouldn't punish children, who need to be fed and focused on learning. Kansas currently has a $2B surplus. Let's take a look at where those savings are coming from and look at routing them to school breakfast and lunches.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: State legislatures MUST be advocates with their constituents and schools to help kids regain their access to food services at school. There is ALWAYS funds to feed children, we must find them and reallocate them, but need to prioritize re-expanding SNAP.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Food insecurity among students and families
2. More access to fresh produce
3. Education on protein/proper nutrition - would love to boost programs from the KSU-WYCO Extension Research program.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Bonner Springs Farmers' Market -- incredible produce and honey by Next to Nature Farms.

Wanda Brownlee Paige

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 35th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: This summer I worked hard to get voters registered to vote.. I also helped to get more Democrats to run for office. I hope to work on bills to over turn legislation that has hurt Kansans. Work with any groups that can help feed our residents in our state.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I will actively support children's access to nutritious food by advocating for state-level funding to lower the cost of school meals and protect SNAP. In addition, to protecting Summer EBT from restrictive barriers and fund early childhood programs

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: I will vote for any new legislation that will make sure that our children are fed. I will support churches and organization that will work to feed children. I will encourage school districts to make sure budgets will help feed our childrens.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Make sure that food is assesible to everyone in the state.
2. Make sure we use our water and land wisely.
3. Protect and expand SNAP.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I love corn on the cob.

Dan Osman

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 48th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: No Kansan should have to choose between paying the rent, filling a prescription, or putting food on the table. While SNAP is one of our most effective tools for addressing hunger, it's clear that many working families, seniors, and others who don't qualify for benefits are still struggling as food prices continue to outpace wages. Hunger is not a partisan issue. It is an economic issue and a moral one. I will work with anyone, regardless of party, to advance practical solutions that ensure every Kansan has reliable access to healthy, affordable food.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
One of the primary challenges that we face as a Legislature is revamping the funding formula. The Legislators you choose for 2027 will be deciding how money is allocated for public schools across Kansas including special education. As we look towards that, we'll also be incorporating issues like students on free or reduced lunches, SNAP and WIC benefits as part of our overall budget. We need legislators who are willing to look at the whole picture and make strong decisions at protecting resources for children and families.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: No child should go hungry because of paperwork or a change in eligibility. When families lose SNAP benefits, we should do everything we can to ensure they understand that they may still qualify for free or reduced-price school meals and help them navigate the application process. Schools, community organizations, and state agencies should work together to conduct proactive outreach, simplify enrollment, and connect families with available resources before children fall through the cracks. At the same time, Kansas should work closely with our representatives in Congress to address the unintended consequences of federal SNAP policy changes. We should advocate for policies that ensure children don't lose access to school meals simply because their family's SNAP eligibility has changed. While the federal government sets many of these rules, Kansas has a responsibility to be a strong partner and advocate for our families.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Cost of living including cost of groceries and transportation.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

We shop all the time at the OP Farmer's Market on Saturdays. It's only available for a very limited time, but squash blossom flowers are amazing.

Nikki McDonald

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 49th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: Our social safety net programs have been continuously eroded. Layers of bureaucracy have been added to make it even more difficult for people who need help to access it. I proposed a bill that would allow seniors on Medicaid in nursing homes to be allowed to have more cash/assets than they currently are allowed to have on hand. I support meals on wheels and would like to see an expansion of food service programs for early childhood childcare providers. In short, I want to lessen barriers for accessing quality, affordable nutritious food for those who are struggling financially.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
I have pushed for this on the K-12 Budget Committee repeatedly. At the end of the day, we can afford what we prioritize. I'm always looking at new sources for revenue as a piece of the puzzle. There are some opportunities that would potentially provide that ranging from legalizing marijuana to development of data centers to increasing the number of income tax brackets to Medicaid Expansion.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: Much of the issue is a federal issue. The Trump Administration has not prioritized those who are in need & has created barriers. I am open to ideas on ways that I (as a state legislator) could address this problem.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Increasing access to affordable, high quality food
2. Providing free breakfast and lunch universally in K-12 Schools
3. Incentivizing local produce to be a part of the solution for feeding Kansans, whether it's in schools or food pantries or farmers markets.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

House District 49 has a great farmer's market at Black Bob Park. :) I am also anxious to visit the newly renovated Overland Park Farmer's Market soon.

Brandon Woodard

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 108th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: Work with Congress to reinstate the funding and do what we can at the state level to reduce error rates to have more resources to provide benefits to hungry Kansans.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: Work with you to find solutions!

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Eliminate copays for reduced lunch students
2. Restore resources to get Kansans back on SNAP
3. Sustainable ag to protect water = future food.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Did not respond

Brandon Holland

Democrat, KS House of Representatives, 117th District

Q2. What solutions do you propose to address food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?
Answer: I really do believe that the best choice we have is to establish these partnerships between farmers and schools, and eventually expanding these partnerships to local food banks and shelters.

Q3/4. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids? If "Yes," what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?
Answer: Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion
ITopeka can replace the lost revenues from the unpredictable forces of world trade. Kansas farmers lost income due to tariffs, and DOGE shut down a lot of programs on the federal level similar to what I have suggested. The state must work to replace those programs.

Q5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?
Answer: We can use an expanded criteria based off previous SNAP qualifications. The state should base eligibility for free meals on factors such as income.

Q1. Main Priorities

I'd consider my top three priorities to all meld together. I think my overarching priority is we need to make sure that no child in Kansas goes hungry. In order to do this, we need to create new programs that allow school systems to buy food directly from local producers, which enables greater availability to feed hungry kids. And finally, we use these programs to protect Kansas farmers from the chaos the current administration is inflicting upon them.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Anthony's Honey is amazing!

Johnson County Commission Chairman

Mike Kelly

Nonpartisan Race, Johnson County Commission Chairman

Q2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?
Answer: Zoning/Land Use/Building Codes should be evaluated at a regional scale to enhance opportunities for local food production, allowing for effective deployment within multiple jurisdictions.

Q3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?
Answer: As part of any legislation amending appraisal procedures, urban agriculture designations should be allowed and a transparent process should be established.

Q4. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?
Answer: Yes. K-State Extension's partnership with Johnson County could be supplemented to directly assist local farmers.

Q1. Main Priorities

1. Enhance urban agriculture
2. Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
3. Invest in local/regional food systems.

Q1. Specific Policy Priorities

- Invest in local and regional food systems
- Protect and expand food access for residents of your county
- Expand purchasing of Kansas-grown food in schools and food banks
- Enhance urban agriculture
- Strengthen voluntary conservation programs
- Create a safety-net for farms of all scales
- Protect agricultural land as working land

Q5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Green Beans from the OP Farmer's Market

Complete Responses

If you do not see a candidate listed here, that means their complete response was captured in the highlight box above.

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U.S. House of Representatives, MO 4th District

Jordan Herrera: *Democrat, U.S. House of Representatives, 4th District*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

My top three priorities related to food and agriculture are strengthening domestic food production through innovation and investment in family and local farms, restoring competition in our food and grocery markets, and reforming our agricultural labor and immigration system to protect both American agriculture and the workers who sustain it.

First, we must strengthen domestic food production. In states like Missouri, farmers should not be penalized for modernizing their operations through green technology, new agricultural practices, or innovative approaches to production. We should encourage market diversity, lower barriers for new and beginning farmers, and expand opportunities for locally grown and locally sourced food. I would support greater investment in agricultural technology, innovative farming operations, and urban agriculture. The USDA already provides grants and programs for beginning farmers and urban growers, and I believe we should strengthen and expand those opportunities. Here is my why: when more local and family farms take root, small-town America benefits. More locally owned farms mean more economic activity in our communities, stronger local food systems, greater competition, and a more resilient domestic food supply. I will work to grow American agriculture by helping farmers embrace innovation and new technologies while ensuring that family farms have a real opportunity to compete and succeed.

Second, we must restore competition and address the concentration of corporate power throughout our food system. Too many parts of our economy, from food processing and distribution to grocery shelves, are dominated by a relatively small number of powerful corporations. Consumers may see dozens of brands when they walk through a grocery store, but many of those brands ultimately belong to the same handful of parent companies. That creates the appearance of choice without the level of genuine competition a healthy market requires. When markets become overly concentrated, farmers and small businesses have less bargaining power, consumers have fewer meaningful choices, and there is greater opportunity for prices to rise without adequate competitive pressure. I will support vigorous antitrust enforcement, stronger congressional oversight, and an adequately staffed and independent enforcement system capable of challenging monopolistic and anticompetitive conduct. I speak with Missourians who are struggling every week to afford groceries, and that struggle affects more than a family's bank account. It affects their sense of security, their quality of life, and their ability to believe that working hard in America will still allow them to build a better future. When families who work hard cannot afford basic necessities, government has a responsibility to examine where our markets are failing them and have the courage to act.

Third, Congress must finally address agricultural labor and immigration reform. American agriculture depends heavily on immigrant labor, including temporary agricultural workers and undocumented workers who have become deeply embedded in our agricultural economy. Many farmers have come to rely on these workers because they are dependable and willing to perform extraordinarily difficult work, yet our broken immigration system has created opportunities for exploitation. There have been cases of workers being underpaid, subjected to abusive labor practices, and, in the most serious circumstances,

exploited through labor trafficking. We need a functional temporary agricultural worker system that allows farms to meet legitimate labor needs while ensuring that workers receive fair wages, safe working conditions, and meaningful protections against exploitation. I believe firmly that H-2A and H-2B workers are just as welcome to union protection as any other in our nation of laws and protection.

At the same time, we need comprehensive immigration reform that recognizes both the rule of law and the reality of the people who have lived, worked, paid taxes, raised families, and contributed to this country for many years. I support creating an earned pathway to legal status and eventual citizenship for long-term undocumented residents who meet clearly defined requirements, including demonstrating years of residence, paying taxes, complying with the law, and completing appropriate background and legal requirements. Congress must also reform the Department of Homeland Security and provide stronger oversight and accountability for agencies such as ICE and Customs and Border Protection. I would go so far as to say to reform and recreate them into a functional border management department. Public trust has been badly damaged, and simply pretending the system is working is not an acceptable answer. We must learn from those failures, rebuild accountability, protect our borders and communities, and create an immigration system that is orderly, humane, enforceable, and responsive to the actual labor needs of American agriculture.

These three priorities are connected. America needs to produce more of its own food, give family farmers and new growers a fair opportunity to succeed, restore genuine competition so farmers and consumers are not at the mercy of concentrated corporate power, and build a legal agricultural workforce system that treats workers with dignity while giving farmers the reliable workforce they need. Food security is national security, and Missouri should be at the center of building a stronger, more competitive, and more resilient American agricultural economy.

2. Where do you stand on SNAP funding costs shifting to state responsibility? Elaborate on your response...

I am greatly concerned about shifting SNAP funding costs from the federal government to the states because a national safety net should not become dependent on state politics or a state's ability or willingness to fund it. When we make food assistance negotiable, the people who become political pawns are those with the least power to defend themselves, including children, seniors, people with disabilities, and working families already struggling to get by. We should never balance a budget by negotiating food out of the mouths of the poorest children in America.

We are a nation that famously says, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” Those words should mean something. There is a shared responsibility between the federal government and the states to ensure that Americans facing hardship have a basic safety net, but the federal government cannot simply shift its responsibility onto states and create a system where access to food depends on where someone lives.

This is especially concerning at a time when families are struggling with the cost of groceries, housing, healthcare, and childcare while wages for many working Americans

have failed to keep pace with the cost of living. We have watched wealth become increasingly concentrated while the economic security once associated with the American middle class has become harder to achieve. SNAP exists for precisely these moments. Hunger should never be partisan, and whether a child eats should never depend on which political party controls their state government. Protecting that basic safety net is a responsibility I believe the federal government must continue to share.

3. 48,000 Missourians have lost their SNAP benefits since July 2025. Meanwhile, individuals with and without SNAP benefits face increasing barriers to food access. Low income earners spend, on average, 30% of their income on food, while high income earners spend only 8%. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food costs have risen more than 30% and incomes are not keeping up. What solutions do you propose to address these food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Food insecurity is not simply a SNAP problem; it is an affordability, competition, and food-access problem. SNAP is an essential safety net, and I will fight to protect it, but we also have to address why working Missourians increasingly cannot afford to put food on the table in the first place. When families are spending a disproportionate share of their income on groceries while wages have failed to keep pace with the cost of living, the answer cannot simply be telling people to work harder. Most of these families are already working. We have to address the systems that are making food more expensive and less accessible.

First, I want to strengthen local and domestic food production by investing in Missouri farmers, family farms, beginning farmers, urban growers, and innovative agricultural operations. We should expand USDA opportunities that help new farmers enter the market and help existing farmers modernize through technology, sustainable practices, and more efficient production. We should also strengthen connections between local producers and schools, food banks, community organizations, and underserved neighborhoods. When more food is grown closer to the people who consume it, we strengthen local economies, create opportunities for Missouri farmers, improve access to fresh food, and build a food system that is less vulnerable to disruption.

Second, we have to restore genuine competition to our food economy. Too much of our food production, processing, distribution, and retail marketplace has become concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of powerful corporations. When a handful of companies have excessive control over a market, farmers lose bargaining power and consumers lose meaningful choices. I will support aggressive antitrust enforcement and challenge monopolistic and anticompetitive practices throughout the food supply chain. Competition matters because families should not have to choose between paying the electric bill and buying groceries while enormous corporations use market concentration to increase their power over both producers and consumers.

Finally, we have to recognize that food insecurity exists both inside and outside SNAP. I support protecting SNAP and strengthening food banks and community food programs, but we should also expand incentives that make fresh, locally produced food more affordable for low-income families regardless of whether they qualify for SNAP. We can strengthen partnerships with farmers' markets, local grocers, community gardens, urban farms, schools, nonprofits, and Missouri agricultural producers to reach people who fall through the cracks of traditional assistance programs. We should also address food

deserts by supporting grocery cooperatives, independent grocers, mobile markets, and innovative food distribution models in rural and urban communities where access to affordable, nutritious food is limited.

My goal is not to build an America where more people need SNAP. My goal is to build an economy where fewer people need it, while making absolutely certain that the safety net is there when they do. That means protecting food assistance today while addressing wages, competition, agricultural production, and affordability for tomorrow. Missouri is one of the great agricultural states in this country. There is something fundamentally wrong when we can produce an abundance of food here and still have families in our own communities who cannot afford to eat. We can do better by supporting the people who grow our food, restoring competition to the marketplace, and making sure the food we produce actually reaches the people who need it at a price they can afford.

4. The 2018 Farm Bill directed USDA to create an Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP) to support farmers in urban areas through grants and programming. Although the office is authorized to receive $25 million annually, its annual appropriations have never exceeded $8.5 million. The FY27 budget cut OUAIP's budget by $3 million - from $5 million to $2 million. How will you support the future of the OUAIP? What solutions do you propose to aid urban agriculture amidst these cuts?

I will fight for a seat on the House Agriculture Committee because Missouri farmers deserve a representative who strives to understand them and will fight for them. Agriculture is not a secondary issue in our district; it is central to our economy and our way of life. When Mark Alford gave up his seat on the Agriculture Committee for a seat on Appropriations, he showed us where his priorities were. I would make a different choice. I want to be at the table where we write the Farm Bill, fight for family farmers, strengthen rural communities, invest in the next generation of farmers, and shape the future of American agriculture. Missouri farmers deserve someone at that table fighting for them, and I intend to be there.

I support restoring and expanding funding for the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production because I believe we need to broaden how we think about American agriculture. Agriculture is not limited to large rural operations. It can include a family farm in rural Missouri, a veteran beginning a small agricultural operation, an urban farm converting vacant land into productive use, or an entrepreneur using hydroponics, greenhouses, and new technology to grow food closer to the communities where it will be consumed. At a time when families are struggling with food costs, we should be investing in ways to increase domestic production, create more local producers, and strengthen competition throughout our food system, not reducing those opportunities.

I would work to strengthen OUAIP while better connecting it with programs such as NIFA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and the Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program, as well as USDA Rural Business Development Grants. We should create clearer pathways for beginning farmers, veterans, urban growers, and agricultural entrepreneurs to access training, technical assistance, capital, land, and markets. As a veteran, I particularly believe agriculture can provide another pathway for those leaving military service to build businesses, create jobs, and continue serving their communities.

I also support substantially strengthening incentives through programs like the Rural Energy for America Program to help agricultural producers invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and modern technology. Where appropriate, I would explore increasing federal cost-sharing to 50% or even 75% for qualifying small, beginning, and family farming operations that otherwise could not afford the upfront cost of modernization. We should not create a system where only the largest agricultural corporations have enough capital to adopt technologies that lower operating costs and improve productivity.

Ultimately, my goal is to build an agricultural pipeline that helps people become producers and helps existing producers remain competitive. We should be turning vacant urban land into productive space, helping veterans and young people enter agriculture, helping family farms modernize, and using technology and innovation to produce more food here at home. OUAIP can be an important part of that strategy, but it should work alongside our other USDA programs so that we are not simply funding individual projects; we are creating sustainable farms, businesses, jobs, and a stronger domestic food supply.

5. The USDA terminated the collection and publication of food security data, disrupting policymakers and the public's ability to evaluate the state of the nation's food security challenges and create targeted policy solutions to address food security issues. Do you support reinstating the collection of this data? If so, how will you propose new legislation and/or encourage the reinstatement of the terminated legislation requiring the collection of Household Food Security data?

Yes. I strongly support reinstating the collection and publication of Household Food Security data, and I would support legislation requiring USDA to continue collecting and publicly reporting this information. We cannot fix what we refuse to measure. If Congress is serious about addressing hunger, we need reliable data showing where food insecurity exists, who is being affected, whether our policies are working, and where resources need to go. Ending the collection of that information does not end hunger; it simply makes hunger easier to ignore.

This issue is deeply personal to me because I grew up in poverty. My family did not have much, and I remember eating Kraft macaroni and cheese and hot dogs more times than I could ever count. I remember what it was like to be a child and understand, even before I had the words for it, that money was tight and food was not something you could simply take for granted. I remember going to bed hungry. Those experiences stay with you. Today, when I see children sitting in classrooms trying to learn while they are hungry, I see a part of myself in them. I have helped support efforts to raise food donations for Kansas City Public Schools because I believe there is a responsibility that comes with having lived through hardship. I remember wishing someone would fight for families like mine, and now I have the opportunity and the obligation to be that advocate for someone else.

Restoring this data is only the beginning. I want us to use it to identify food deserts and direct resources toward the communities being left behind. We should strengthen SNAP and our food banks, but we also need to invest in the infrastructure that creates long-term food security. That means supporting small and midsized farms, beginning farmers, urban agriculture, local grocers, farmers markets, cooperatives, and innovative growing operations that bring healthy food closer to where people actually live. It also means enforcing our antitrust laws so that excessive corporate concentration does not continue squeezing farmers on one end of the food system while families pay higher prices on the other.

I believe food security is ultimately about resilience. A community should not become a food desert because one grocery store closes. A family without a car should not be unable to buy fresh food because the nearest affordable grocer is miles away and disconnected from public transportation. A child should not be expected to grow their mind while their body is hungry. We need a more decentralized and resilient food system, with more farmers, more local producers, more independent grocers, and more healthy food being produced closer to the communities that need it.

I am running for Congress to fix broken systems, and food security is one of them. Hunger is connected to housing, healthcare, education, wages, agriculture, transportation, and economic opportunity. These problems do not exist in isolation, and our solutions cannot exist in isolation either. I will fight to restore federal food-security data because good policy requires truth, but collecting the numbers is not enough. We must have the courage to look at what those numbers tell us and then act. No child in the wealthiest nation on Earth should know what it feels like to go to bed hungry. I did. That is one of the reasons I am determined to make sure fewer children ever have to.

6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My nearest one which is my favorite by default is the River Markey in Kansas City Missouri. I also really love the atmosphere at the weekend market in Lee's Summit. I have only been twice to hear local bands and see a few friends of mine but each tiem it was an occasion at the market, which is really special.

Missouri State House of Representatives

Jeff Spicer: *Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 20th District*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

My top three priorities are keeping food affordable for working families, supporting Missouri farmers and local food producers, and ensuring that no child, senior, or working family goes hungry simply because they are struggling financially.

House District 20 is home to laborers, farmers, and working-class families. Food policy has to work for all three. That means strengthening local agriculture and family farms, expanding opportunities for Missouri-grown food to reach Missouri consumers, and addressing the rising cost of groceries that is putting increasing pressure on household budgets. I also support strengthening food assistance and school nutrition programs so that temporary financial hardship does not become hunger.

2. 48,000 Missourians have lost their SNAP benefits since July 2025. Meanwhile, individuals with and without SNAP face increasing barriers to food access. Low income earners spend, on average, 30% of their income on food, while high income earners spend only 8%. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food costs have risen more than 30% and incomes are not keeping up. What solutions do you propose to address these food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

No Missourian working a full-time job should have to choose between groceries, rent, utilities, or medicine. Yet that is the reality for too many working families today. SNAP is an important part of our safety net, and I oppose creating unnecessary barriers that prevent eligible Missourians from receiving assistance.

But our response to food insecurity cannot begin and end with SNAP. I support strengthening Missouri's food banks and community food programs, expanding access to school meals, supporting programs that connect local farmers directly with consumers, and making it easier for families to purchase fresh Missouri-grown food. We should also improve coordination between state agencies and community organizations so people who need assistance can actually find and access it.

Ultimately, food insecurity is also an affordability issue. When wages fail to keep pace with the cost of groceries, housing, utilities, and healthcare, working families get squeezed from every direction. As a laborer for 25 years, I understand that reality. Supporting good-paying jobs, strong wages and benefits, and the right of workers to organize is part of my food-security policy because a family with economic security is a family better able to put food on the table.

And when state government spends public dollars on food, we should look for opportunities to purchase from Missouri farmers and producers. That supports our agricultural economy while helping feed Missouri families.

3. Community eligibility provisions for free and reduced school meals are being challenged at the federal level. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids?

Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

4. If "Yes" on Question 3, what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

I support expanding access to free school meals because a child's ability to eat during the school day should not depend on their parents' income or whether a family successfully navigated an application process. Hungry students have a harder time learning, and ensuring children are fed is one of the most basic investments we can make in their success.

I would support maximizing Missouri's participation in available federal school nutrition programs, protecting and expanding community eligibility, and examining what state investment would be necessary to close remaining gaps. I also support stronger farm-to-school programs that allow schools to purchase more food from Missouri farmers and producers, so that our investment in student nutrition also supports Missouri agriculture.

As a legislator, I would not responsibly promise a specific budget offset before seeing the state budget and the actual cost of expansion. My first priority would be drawing down every available federal dollar and reviewing existing appropriations, tax expenditures, and underutilized programs before asking Missouri taxpayers for additional revenue. Feeding children should be a budget priority, and I would work to fund it responsibly.

5. Missouri is known as an agricultural state, which often refers to commodity crop production more often than specialty crop production. Specialty crops are the vegetables and fruits that Missourians eat. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?

Missouri agriculture should have room for the next generation of farmers, not just the largest established operations. The cost of land, equipment, and startup capital can make entering agriculture extremely difficult, particularly for young and beginning farmers and smaller specialty-crop producers.

I support strengthening beginning-farmer financing and loan programs, improving access to affordable credit, and ensuring state agricultural programs are accessible to small and mid-sized producers rather than being so complicated that only large operations have the resources to navigate them.

We also need to address the market side. Missouri can create more opportunities for our farmers by connecting local producers with schools, hospitals, food banks, state facilities, grocery stores, and other institutional purchasers. When Missouri taxpayer dollars are being spent to purchase food, we should look first for opportunities to buy Missouri-grown products when they are competitive and available. That keeps more of those dollars circulating in our communities, strengthens family farms, and gives consumers greater access to fresh food.

6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

Sweet corn. Nothing beats fresh sweet corn in the summer.

Tedi Rowland: *Democrat, MO House of Representatives, 29th District*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

1. Eliminating the state sales tax on food. Missouri is one of the few states that still taxes groceries. For working families in House District 29, that's a real cost on every trip to the store — and it falls hardest on families who can least afford it. This is one of my top legislative priorities.

2. Expanding food access in underserved parts of Independence. Too many families in our district live without a full-service grocery store nearby. I want to see the state support incentives that bring grocery investment — and support for food banks and community food programs — into the areas that need it most.

3. Supporting local farms and food producers as an economic backbone. Family farms and local food producers are part of the working-class economy I'm running to protect. That means safety-net support for farms of all sizes, protecting agricultural land from being paved over by unchecked development, and connecting local growers to schools and institutions here in Missouri.

2. 48,000 Missourians have lost their SNAP benefits since July 2025. Meanwhile, individuals with and without SNAP face increasing barriers to food access. Low income earners spend, on average, 30% of their income on food, while high income earners spend only 8%. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food costs have risen more than 30% and incomes are not keeping up. What solutions do you propose to address these food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Missourians who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Losing SNAP benefits doesn't mean losing the need for food, it just shifts that need onto food banks and community networks that are already stretched thin. I'd address this on three fronts:

1. Eliminate the state sales tax on groceries. This lowers the cost of food at checkout for every Missourian, SNAP recipient or not, and it's the most direct thing state government can do right now.

2. Protect and strengthen SNAP, WIC, and Double Up Food Bucks, and push back against state-level enrollment barriers that push eligible Missourians off the rolls.

3. Invest in local food banks and community food networks, so Missourians who don't qualify for SNAP, or who've lost it due to changing federal rules, still have a real safety net close to home.

Food insecurity is one symptom of incomes not keeping pace with costs. It won't be solved by food policy alone, but these are concrete steps state government can take now.

3. Community eligibility provisions for free and reduced school meals are being challenged at the federal level. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Missouri kids?

Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

4. If "Yes" on Question 3, what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Missouri students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Every Missouri kid should be able to learn without worrying about whether they'll eat that day. Universal free school meals is a public education investment, not just a food program. Hungry kids can't focus in the classroom, and food insecurity shouldn't be a barrier to learning.

Policies I'd support:

1. State-funded universal free school meals for all Missouri students, regardless of federal Community Eligibility Provision status, so access doesn't depend on shifting federal rules

2. Expanding purchasing of Missouri-grown food in school meal programs, so this investment also supports local farmers and food producers

3. Streamlining direct certification so eligible families are automatically enrolled without extra paperwork burdens

Funding: I'd look first at closing corporate tax loopholes and reviewing state tax incentives that aren't delivering promised returns for Missouri communities. I'd also prioritize this within the state's existing K-12 funding formula rather than treating it as a separate, easily-cut line item. I don't believe this needs to come at the expense of other public education priorities. It's part of fully funding public education, not competing with it

5. Missouri is known as an agricultural state, which often refers to commodity crop production more often than specialty crop production. Specialty crops are the vegetables and fruits that Missourians eat. How would you work towards increasing producer access to land, capital, credit, and markets?

I'd work on three fronts:

Land access: Support land-linking programs connecting retiring farmers with new growers, and protect agricultural land from unchecked development, sized for the smaller acreage specialty crops need.

Capital and credit: Push for state-backed loans and grants sized for specialty operations, covering things like high tunnels, irrigation, and cold storage that commodity ag lending doesn't fit.

Markets: Expand Missouri-grown produce purchasing in schools and food banks, support farmers markets and Double Up Food Bucks-style programs, and build regional food hub

infrastructure so smaller producers can reach institutional buyers without commodity-scale volume.

Commodity agriculture already has decades of policy support behind it. Specialty crop producers need the state to build equivalent tools sized to how they actually farm.

6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I love zucchini season, there's nothing better than a fresh loaf of zucchini bread. I'm also a regular for local honey at the farmers market.

Jackson County Legislature

Lance Pollard: *Republican, Jackson County Legislature, 1st District, At-Large*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

Expand access to healthy, affordable food. I want to support efforts that make fresh, nutritious food more accessible to families throughout the district, particularly in communities where cost, transportation, or limited grocery options create barriers.

Support local farmers, growers, and food businesses. Local agriculture creates jobs, keeps more dollars in our communities, and strengthens our regional food system. I would support policies and partnerships that help local producers, farmers markets, community gardens, and small food businesses succeed.

Strengthen community-based food programs and urban agriculture. Community gardens, food pantries, food rescue programs, farmers markets, and other neighborhood-based initiatives play an important role in addressing food insecurity. I want the County to be a strong partner in expanding these efforts and connecting residents with locally grown food.

2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?

I would support reviewing Jackson County's zoning regulations to make sure they do not unnecessarily stand in the way of small-scale agriculture, community gardens, urban farming, and local food production.

Where appropriate, I would support allowing more agricultural uses on smaller parcels, simplifying the permitting process for community gardens and small farms, and creating clearer standards for activities such as farm stands, greenhouses, composting, and limited livestock operations. The goal should be to reduce unnecessary barriers while maintaining reasonable standards for health, safety, sanitation, animal welfare, and neighboring properties.

I also believe the County should work with municipalities, farmers, community organizations, and residents to identify vacant or underutilized public and private land that could be put into productive agricultural use. Local food production can improve food access, create economic opportunities, and make our communities more resilient.

As a legislator, I would be interested in reviewing the County's existing zoning policies and working with stakeholders to identify practical changes that encourage local agriculture without creating conflicts with surrounding neighborhoods.

3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?

I would support making it easier and more affordable for urban farmers and community growers to access land and navigate the property assessment process.

First, I would work with the County Assessor's Office and other appropriate agencies to make sure urban and community gardens that qualify under Missouri law are properly recognized and receive the agricultural assessment they are entitled to. The process should be clear, accessible, and understandable to small-scale growers who may not have the resources or expertise to navigate a complicated assessment system.

Second, I would support creating a County program to identify vacant or underutilized publicly owned land that could be made available through affordable leases or other agreements for community gardens and local food production. Where appropriate, the County should prioritize long-term arrangements that give growers enough stability to make investments in soil improvement, irrigation, greenhouses, and other infrastructure.

Third, I would explore ways the County can reduce the non-tax costs of accessing land, including streamlined permitting, technical assistance, connections to grants and other funding, and partnerships with nonprofits and community organizations. I would also support educating urban farmers about the assessment and appeals process so that they understand their rights and available options.

I recognize that Missouri law establishes many of the rules governing property classification and agricultural assessment, so I would work within those requirements while advocating for practical changes at the County level and, where necessary, for state-level reforms. My goal would be to ensure that the cost of land does not unnecessarily prevent residents from growing food, creating small agricultural businesses, and contributing to a stronger local food system.

4. Funding for urban agriculture often comes from grant programs and land acquisition programs administered by state and federal government. These programs are accompanied by hurdles such as auditing and application processes that are convoluted or unattainable to smaller non-profits or small for-profit farms. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?

Yes. I strongly support funding assistance for small local farmers, urban growers, community gardens, and small agricultural nonprofits. If we want a stronger local food system, our funding programs need to be designed so that the smallest organizations can actually access them.

I would support creating or expanding County funding opportunities specifically for small-scale food producers, with smaller grant amounts and simpler applications. I would also support providing technical assistance to help farmers and small nonprofits identify available grants, complete applications, meet reporting requirements, and maintain compliance.

I would also advocate for moving away from reimbursement-only funding when possible. Requiring a small farmer or nonprofit to spend thousands of dollars upfront before receiving reimbursement can effectively exclude the organizations most in need of assistance. Where appropriate, I would support upfront payments or milestone-based funding, combined with reasonable accountability and auditing requirements.

Finally, I would look for opportunities to coordinate County funding with existing state, federal, nonprofit, and philanthropic programs so that organizations are not repeatedly filling out different applications for similar purposes. Jackson County should use its resources to help leverage outside funding and make sure local growers have a clear pathway to the assistance available to them.

My goal would be a funding system that maintains transparency and accountability while recognizing that a small neighborhood farm should not need a full-time grant administrator to participate. If we want local food production to grow, our funding programs need to meet small farmers where they are.

5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

I have a real appreciation for all locally grown fruits and vegetables, especially when they are fresh and in season. But if I had to pick one local product, it would be locally harvested honey from Jackson County. I am a beekeeper myself, so I have a particular appreciation for the work that goes into producing local honey and for the important role that honeybees play in our agricultural system. Supporting local beekeepers supports more than just a great local product—it helps strengthen pollination and the health of our local food system. I also love visiting our local farmers markets and seeing the variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, and other products grown by our neighbors. There is something special about knowing where your food comes from and supporting the people in our community who produce it.

Kelly Thompson: *Democrat, Jackson County Legislature, 1st District*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

1. Improve access to healthy, affordable food.

No family should struggle to access nutritious food because of where they live or how they get around. I will support stronger partnerships between the county, local governments, schools, food banks, and community organizations to reduce food insecurity, expand access to fresh food, and improve transportation and other infrastructure that connects people to healthy options.

2. Strengthen local food systems and regional agriculture.

Jackson County should support local farmers, food producers, and small businesses that strengthen our regional economy and food supply. I believe the county can play an important convening role by encouraging local procurement, supporting farmers markets and food hubs, and helping connect producers with institutions and consumers.

3. Advance public health through food policy.

Fundamentally, food policy is public health policy. Public health is a key pillar for this campaign and should be for county government. As a legislator, I will support initiatives that improve nutrition, reduce health disparities, and ensure residents have the resources they need to live healthy lives. That will involve working across sectors to address the root causes of food insecurity while investing in community health, education, and neighborhoods.

2. Many urban zoning restrictions create barriers for local farmers in acquiring and utilizing land for crop production and livestock handling. What changes, if any, would you propose to support local food production and urban farming efforts in your county?

There are many barriers to urban agriculture created at the municipal level through zoning and land use regulations, so I believe the county's role is to partner with cities, which is where we can have more impact for the region.

Where Jackson County can lead is by bringing municipalities, farmers, and community organizations together to identify unnecessary barriers and share best practices. I also believe the county should explore opportunities to make appropriate publicly owned land available for community gardens or urban agriculture, support local food system planning, and connect growers with technical assistance and funding opportunities.

Urban agriculture is about improving food security, strengthening neighborhoods, creating educational opportunities, and supporting small businesses. I support practical, collaborative policies that make it easier for local food producers to succeed.

3. County property tax rates are determined by the classification of the land utilized, and many urban farmers encounter barriers in classifying land as agricultural vs. residential. Furthermore, the valuation of vacant lots greatly impacts farmers who seek to utilize these lots for local crop production. What policies and practices do you propose to reduce these barriers and cost burdens to urban farmers? How will you support affordability for local food production and land access?

My approach is the same one I bring to all property tax issues which is to create a system that is fair, transparent, and aligned with the public good.

As a county legislator, I will work with the Jackson County Assessor, municipalities, and state partners to better understand where classification and valuation practices create unintended barriers for urban agriculture. I strongly support greater transparency in the assessment process, clear guidance for landowners seeking agricultural classification where allowed under state law, and identifying opportunities to advocate for legislative changes when current policies discourage productive land use.

I believe affordability is essential to building a resilient local food system. The county should explore partnerships that expand access to underutilized public land for community food production, support nonprofit and neighborhood-led growing efforts, and ensure that county policies encourage local food production.

4. Funding for urban agriculture often comes from grant programs and land acquisition programs administered by state and federal government. These programs are accompanied by hurdles such as auditing and application processes that are convoluted or unattainable to smaller non-profits or small for-profit farms. Do you support funding assistance for small local farmers? If so, how would you propose supplementing funding assistance programs or restructuring the current programs to be more widely accessible?

Yes. Small local farmers and community organizations should be able to compete fairly for funding opportunities without being excluded by unnecessarily complex application or reporting requirements.

Throughout my career, I've helped organizations redesign services to make them easier for people to access and navigate. Because of that experience, I believe government should do the same and it is possible. While many funding programs are administered at the state and federal levels, Jackson County can play an important supporting role by connecting local farmers with available resources, offering technical assistance, and partnering with organizations that help applicants navigate grant and compliance requirements.

When the county administers its own funding programs, I support designing them to be transparent, user-friendly, and accessible to organizations of all sizes. Success shouldn't depend on whether an organization has the staff or resources to navigate bureaucracy. That is a barrier and by reducing those administrative barriers and improving access to funding, we can strengthen local agriculture, improve food security, support neighborhood economic development, and positively impact public health outcomes.

5. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My family and I move around from market to market because they all have unique things to offer! We love the Brookside Market, City Market, and the Young Family Farm.

Kansas Secretary of State

Jennifer Day: *Democrat, Kansas Secretary of State*

1. Please share your top three priorities related to food and agriculture in your district.

Food and agriculture are essential to Kansas' economy and the success of communities across our state. As I mentioned previously, the Secretary of State does not develop agricultural policy or oversee food and farm programs, but the office does play an important role in serving the businesses that make up one of Kansas' largest industries. In that context, my priorities would be ensuring the Secretary of State's office provides efficient, reliable business services for farmers, ranchers, cooperatives, and agricultural businesses. Whether registering a new business, filing required documents, or accessing state services, these processes should be straightforward and responsive.

I would also focus on continuing to modernize the office so business services are accessible, secure, and easy to use. Agricultural producers already face enough challenges, and interacting with state government should not be one of them.

Another priority would be maintaining an open line of communication with Kansas' agricultural community. By listening to producers, agricultural organizations, and rural business leaders, I can better understand how the Secretary of State's office can improve the services it provides to one of our state's most important business sectors.

2. 20,000 Kansans have lost their SNAP benefits since July 2025. Meanwhile, individuals with and without SNAP benefits face increasing barriers to food access. Low income earners spend, on average, 30% of their income on food, while high income earners spend only 8%. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food costs have risen more than 30% and incomes are not keeping up. What solutions do you propose to address these food security issues? How do you plan to support food insecure Kansans who do not or have not received SNAP benefits?

Food security is an important issue because every Kansan deserves the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families. Rising costs have created real challenges for many households, and we should recognize the impact that food insecurity can have on children, working families, and communities across our state.

The Secretary of State does not oversee SNAP, determine eligibility for food assistance programs, or manage nutrition services. However, public officials at every level have a responsibility to understand the challenges Kansans are facing and work together to ensure government resources and community support systems are accessible to those who need them ensuring no one is left behind simply because they do not know where to turn for help.

Helping Kansas families access nutritious food should be an issue where we set politics aside and focus on our shared responsibility to one another. When we work together, we can support stronger communities and help ensure every Kansan has the opportunity to succeed.

3. Community eligibility provisions for free and reduced school meals are being challenged at the federal level. Do you support expanding access to free school meals for Kansas kids?

Yes, I would actively support the program's expansion

4. If "Yes" on Question 3, what policies and programs would you support or propose to achieve this goal and ensure access to nutritious food for Kansas students? What budget offsets or financial reallocations do you propose to fund these programs?

Ensuring Kansas children have access to nutritious food requires strong partnerships between schools, families, communities, and state agencies. I support efforts that increase awareness of available programs, connect families with the resources they need, and help ensure children have the opportunity to thrive.

We should continue evaluating how these programs are reaching children and identifying ways to improve coordination, outreach, and communication with families. The goal should be a system that is easy to understand, works effectively, and ensures children who need assistance are not left behind.

Ultimately, making sure Kansas children have access to nutritious meals should not be a partisan issue. Our focus should be on what is best for children, helping them come to school ready to learn, grow, and succeed. By working together across party lines, we can find responsible solutions that put children and their future first.

5. In Kansas, kids on SNAP are automatically certified for school meals. Since July 2025, 10,000 Kansas kids have lost their SNAP benefits. How will you support those kids in applying for and certifying access to school meals? What solutions do you propose for the kids who will no longer be able to receive school meals?

No child in Kansas should go hungry, and every family should have access to the resources they need to support their children. School meals are an important part of ensuring students are ready to learn, grow, and succeed.

While the Secretary of State does not administer SNAP or school meal programs, I believe state leaders should work together to make sure families can easily access the services available to them. That includes improving awareness of available resources and ensuring families have clear information about how to apply and maintain eligibility.

6. What is your favorite local farmers market or local produce item?

My favorite farmers market is in Overland Park. My favorite vendor is a tough choice, but I've never met a donut I didn't like from Mr. D's. Also, I've supported KC Compost Collective since 2019.