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Request for Proposal (RFP)

Connecting the Middle: Processing and Distribution Assessment for the Sedgwick County Food System

RFP Issued By: Shop Kansas Farms

Proposal Due Date: Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026, by 5 p.m. CDT

Project Period: June 1, 2026 – March 30, 2027

Overview

Shop Kansas Farms (SKF) is soliciting proposals from qualified organizations, research institutions, consulting firms, etc. to conduct an assessment of the availability and capability of processing and distribution in the Sedgwick County local food system.

The purpose of this project is to identify existing infrastructure, assess system gaps, evaluate capacity constraints and explore opportunities for grower diversification. Findings will support the Sedgwick County Harvest Hub's (SCHH) efforts to strengthen local food systems, improve market access, increase direct-to-consumer sales and guide strategic investments and collaborations.

Background

The food system in Sedgwick County includes a variety of growers, processors, distributors and retail markets. While substantial work has been done to understand production and consumer markets, less information exists regarding the middle-of-supply-chain infrastructure that connects producers to consumers.

SKF seeks a comprehensive review of processing and distribution resources, infrastructure capacity, system challenges and growth opportunities to strengthen the local and regional food economy.

Project Objectives

The selected contractor will:

- Identify and document food processing and distribution resources available within and 60 miles around Sedgwick County.



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- Assess existing capacity and infrastructure constraints.
- Gather stakeholder perspectives regarding current challenges and future opportunities.
- Analyze production and supply-side data to understand regional capacity.
- Identify opportunities for grower diversification and improved market access.
- Develop actionable recommendations to support the growth of the local food system.

Scope of Work

Task 1: Resource Identification

The contractor shall identify and document resources supporting food processing and distribution within the region.

Activities

- Conduct interviews with growers and processing/distribution stakeholders.
- Review websites, databases and published resources.
- Contact organizations and businesses as needed to gather information.
- Document current and maximum capacity, wait times and minimum volume requirements where applicable.
- Collect information regarding state-licensed food processors and packing facilities.

Deliverables

A comprehensive resource inventory that includes:

- Organization/business name
- Address and contact information
- Services provided
- Capacity and operational information where available
- Information suitable for inclusion in an online resource

Task 2: Stakeholder Data Collection

The contractor shall collect stakeholder input to identify system gaps and opportunities.

Activities



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- Conduct key stakeholder interviews with participants involved in food processing and distribution.
- Design and administer a grower survey.
- Analyze stakeholder feedback.

Deliverables

Report sections including:

- Survey methodology and findings
- Grower survey results and analysis
- Stakeholder interview findings and analysis

Task 3: Secondary Data Collection

The contractor shall analyze existing agricultural and production data.

Activities

- Review USDA Census of Agriculture and other relevant datasets.
- Assess regional production capacity.
- Compare secondary data findings with stakeholder-reported information.
- Identify trends and supply-side opportunities.

Deliverables

A report section summarizing:

- Data sources
- Key findings
- Capacity and production analysis
- Implications for food system

Task 4: Data Consolidation and Final Report

The contractor shall synthesize all research findings into a comprehensive final report.

Activities

- Integrate interviews, surveys and secondary data findings.
- Identify infrastructure gaps and capacity constraints.
- Analyze barriers and opportunities related to:



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- Processing infrastructure
- Distribution systems
- Grower diversification
- Land-use opportunities
- Develop recommendations for strategic investment and collaboration.

Deliverables

A final report containing:

- Executive summary
- Methodology
- Findings
- Gap analysis
- Capacity assessment
- Recommendations
- Supporting appendices

Task 5: Networking Session Planning and Facilitation

The contractor shall plan and facilitate a stakeholder networking event.

Activities

- Design the event agenda and objectives.
- Conduct outreach and participant recruitment.
- Manage registration.
- Facilitate the networking session.

Deliverables

- Completed networking session
- Participation summary and event outcomes report

Contractor Qualifications

Proposals should demonstrate experience in:

- Food systems research and planning.
- Agricultural economics or rural development.
- Stakeholder engagement and facilitation.



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- Survey development and data analysis.
- Geographic mapping and resource inventories.
- Strategic planning and report development.

Preference may be given to organizations with demonstrated experience in Sedgwick County, Kansas or Midwestern food systems.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include the following components:

Organizational Information

- Organization name
- Primary contact
- Address
- Phone and email
- Organizational overview

Relevant Experience

- Description of similar projects completed
- Qualifications of project team members
- References from comparable engagements

Technical Approach

- Proposed methodology
- Stakeholder engagement strategy
- Data collection and analysis approach
- Project management plan
- Anticipated challenges and mitigation strategies

Timeline

- Detailed work plan
- Key milestones and deliverables

Budget Proposal

- Total project cost



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- Budget narrative
- Fee structure
- Assumptions and exclusions

Submission Information

Proposals must be submitted by 5 p.m. CDT Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026, in PDF format to:

Shop Kansas Farms
Attention: Meagan Cramer
cramerm@kfb.org