

CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

2021 CALENDAR & ANNUAL REPORT



YEAR IN REVIEW



The Center for Rural Affairs staff, gathered November 2019, works alongside you to create vibrant rural communities.

Dear Friends,

Coronavirus defined 2020. Small businesses fought for survival. Community life turned upside down. Families struggled with economic uncertainty.

This year brought the fight for social and economic justice into renewed focus.

Thanks to your support, the Center transformed our work to meet the needs of rural people and rural places. We took on new fights, delivered services in new ways, and used new tools to keep long-term work moving forward.

It wasn't an easy year. I want to thank you for being there for rural America's small business owners, farmers, and communities when it mattered.

As we emerge from 2020, our central focus must be on pulling together to create a more resilient future for our planet, for our communities, and for all people who call rural America home.

Brian Depew, Executive Director

YOUR 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- » Offered seeds and workshops to foster cultural traditions, better health, and to support families growing fruits and vegetables, including residents of two Native Nations who grew 195 gardens.
- » Lent \$1.3 million to people with dreams of running a successful small business. Your support gives rural Americans a fair chance to improve their economic situation through hard work.
- » Co-hosted a film and discussion about pollinators in our food system attended by 50 people, and created a growing Facebook group dedicated to pollinator health, habitat, and beekeeping.
- » Provided resources to small businesses on rapidly changing state and federal programs during COVID-19. Our staff remain available and ready to offer education and support for businesses navigating new waters.
- » Authored a bill to upgrade rural broadband access in Nebraska. This legislation received unanimous support in the Nebraska Unicameral and was signed into law.
- » Assisted 10 rural school districts in revamping greenhouse programs for food production. These schools now teach kids how to grow food while producing healthy fruits and vegetables for the lunch room.
- » Collaborated with policymakers to draft the bipartisan Rural Equal Aid Act. This bill supports small businesses hurt by the pandemic who have loans through U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development programs.
- » Organized volunteers during the pandemic to unload and hand out 300 food boxes every other week to both Native and non-Native residents of the Omaha Nation.
- » Gave a hand up to entrepreneurs with a new Express Loan to help bridge temporary revenue loss. Approved 31 loans totaling \$235,120 in the early days of the pandemic.
- » Supported the newly-created Nebraska Food Council with three virtual food chats that brought together 75 participants including farmers, educators, and market managers.
- » Championed important rural policy. Many of you joined us in calling, emailing, and meeting virtually with policymakers at nearly all levels of government, from rural electric boards to the halls of Congress.
- » Worked with local meat processors to identify a policy response to ongoing industry challenges. These proposals informed the Strengthening Local Processing Act, a bipartisan measure introduced in Congress.
- » Advised more than 130 beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as landowners, on farm startup and transition. These folks are helping keep rural communities vibrant.
- » Counseled 963 people on business practices, including adapting to the pandemic and navigating the Paycheck Protection Program. These hard-working entrepreneurs were 51 percent women, 41 percent Latino, and 76 percent low- to moderate-income.
- » Contributed thought leadership on race and meatpacking plant issues through five panel discussions reaching more than 600 people.



Expanding Business Assistance

With your support, we expanded our small business services in Nebraska. We opened a satellite office in Grand Island in March, pictured, and added three business development specialists to assist with training.



THE CENTER SERVES YOU FROM OFFICES IN LYONS, HARTINGTON, GRAND ISLAND, SCOTTSBLUFF, LINCOLN, AND SCHUYLER, NEBRASKA, AND NEVADA, IOWA, WITH STAFF IN **NEBRASKA, IOWA, MINNESOTA, AND SOUTH DAKOTA.**



DECEMBER 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY						
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 Check out small business training opportunities, apply for a loan, and find your business specialist at cfra.org/small-business.					1	2
					New Year's Day	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Nat'l Trivia Day—Try tweeting a rural fact to @cfra!					
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Nat'l Cut Your Energy Costs Day						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Martin Luther King Jr. Day					
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Nat'l Compliment Day—Say something nice about rural America!						Nat'l Seed Swap Day—Exchange with your friends!
31						
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Amplifying Your Voice

Our voices are stronger when we speak together on issues that matter. Mike Tabbert, pictured, testified at the Nebraska Unicameral for broadband legislation in February. The bill was signed into law.



THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC DROVE SCHOOL, WORK, AND PUBLIC MEETINGS ONLINE, HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND. **THIS BILL WILL HELP CLOSE THE GAP.**



FEBRUARY 2021



Find out how your voice can be heard. Visit cfra.org/advocate.

JANUARY							MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31			
31													

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Black History Month	1	2 Groundhog Day	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Nat'l Send a Card to a Friend Day—Send rural greetings!					Lincoln's Birthday	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Valentine's Day—Why do you love rural? Share on social media with #LoveRuralAm.	Presidents' Day and Washington's Birthday		Nat'l Random Acts of Kindness Day—What will you do?			World Day of Social Justice and Nat'l FFA Week (20 - 27)
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						
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Black Experience in Rural Nebraska

As the national Black Lives Matter movement gained momentum, hundreds of you joined us in two virtual conversations with community leaders who spoke about their experience as Black men living in rural Nebraska.



OUR SERIES OF VIRTUAL EVENTS
ON THE BLACK EXPERIENCE, MENTAL
HEALTH AND RACE, NATIVE AMERICAN
EXPERIENCE, AND LATINO EXPERIENCE
**HIGHLIGHTED THE DIVERSITY OF
RURAL AMERICA.**

FEBRUARY							APRIL							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
	1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
28							25	26	27	28	29	30		

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Assisting Latino Businesses

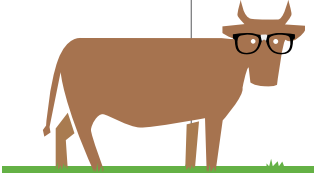
Your values make it possible for small business owners like Mary Rosa and Eduardo Morales of Venemex Productions to receive the loans and training they need to succeed. We also offered loan deferrals to help businesses through the pandemic.



THIS YEAR,
WE APPROVED
37 LOANS
TO LATINO ENTREPRENEURS
WORTH ALMOST
\$750,000.

APRIL 2021

MARCH							MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6								1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
 We provide bilingual services to entrepreneurs in Nebraska. Visit cfra.org/small-business.				April Fools' Day		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Easter Sunday and Nat'l Library Week (4 - 10) —Visit your local library!			World Health Day			Nat'l Farm Animals Day
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
				Tax Day		Nat'l Haiku Poetry Day— Can you write one about rural living?
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Nat'l Garlic Day		Administrative Professionals Day	Earth Day—Plant a tree!		
25	26	27	28	29	30	
					Arbor Day	

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Working for Meatpacking Safety

We stood with workers and protected communities when meatpacking plants became COVID-19 hotspots. Staff member Gladys Godinez, pictured outside of Tyson Foods in Lexington, spoke about the importance of safe working conditions with policymakers, the media, and community members.

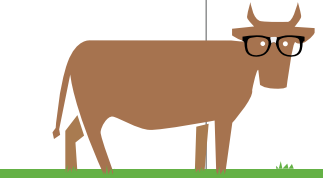


**WE DO NOT HAVE TO
CHOOSE BETWEEN
FOOD PRODUCTION AND
WORKER SAFETY.**

RELIABLE FOOD PRODUCTION
DEPENDS ON SAFE WORKING
CONDITIONS.

MAY 2021

APRIL							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30		27	28	29	30			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	 Read more about the latest rural news at cfra.org/blog.					1 May Day—Leave a May basket on your neighbor's doorstep!
2 Nat'l Small Business Week (2-8) #DreamSmallBiz	3	4	5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7	8
9 Mother's Day	10	11	12	13	14	15 Armed Forces Day
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Memorial Day	CENTER <i>for</i> RURAL AFFAIRS CFRA.ORG				

Stewarding Water Quality

Working with Iowans, we are promoting cooperative efforts among cities, counties, and conservation districts to improve the quality of water in rural areas of the state. These efforts empower local communities to tackle critical water quality issues.



WE **WORKED IN TWO COMMUNITIES** TO LAUNCH WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES, AND **FOUGHT FOR FUNDING** TO EXPAND THE NUTRIENT REDUCTION STRATEGY.

MAY							JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30	31												

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Nat'l Weed Your Garden Day—Stay in control of your garden this year.	Flag Day	Global Wind Day				Juneteenth
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Father's Day and First Day of Summer						
27	28	29	30			
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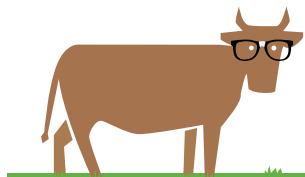
Providing Fresh Food

We collaborated with producers and market managers to make local markets a safe place to buy and sell fresh food during the pandemic. With your support, growers like Diane Vanecek, pictured, were able to continue to serve local customers.

IN 2020, WE PROVIDED
ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE TO
98 FARMERS MARKET MANAGERS
AND ONLINE MARKET TRAINING TO
60 INDIVIDUALS.



JULY 2021



Learn more at cfra.org/food-systems.

JUNE							AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Independence Day						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Parents' Day						Nat'l Day of the Cowboy
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Providing Academy Trainings

With your support, we expanded our small business trainings to include sector specific academies. The Restaurant Academy, pictured, attracted 12 participants in February 2020. Academies also include cleaning, construction, and child care, all offered in Spanish and English.



WE PROVIDED **127 TRAININGS** LAST YEAR
WITH **501 PARTICIPANTS**. **65 CLASSES** WERE
PRESENTED IN SPANISH.



JULY							SEPTEMBER								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
					1	2	3					1	2	3	4
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	26	27	28	29	30				

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Involving the Next Generation

When the presidential candidates campaigned in Iowa, sixth graders Jack Spence and Thomas Sauer were there to ask candidates about the impact of a changing climate on rural Iowa. We work with rural people to support common sense action to mitigate climate change.



THE CENTER BOARD LAUNCHED A NEW CLIMATE COMMITTEE

TO INCREASE OUR FOCUS ON
POLICY AND PRACTICE TO
ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE.



Yom Kippur (27 - 28)

AUGUST							OCTOBER							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
29	30	31					24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
							31							

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
 Want to learn more about what you can do in the face of climate change? Visit cfra.org/climate.						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Center for Rural Affairs founded on this day in 1973	Labor Day	Nat'l Acorn Squash Day			Stand Up to Cancer Day	Patriot Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Grandparents' Day						Rosh Hashanah (18 - 20)
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Nat'l Farm Safety & Health Week (19 - 25) and Talk like a Pirate Day—Celebrate RRRural Amerrrica!			First Day of Autumn—Take a drive through rural America to find fall colors!			
26	27	28	29	30		
	Yom Kippur (27 - 28)					

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Celebrating Rural Communities

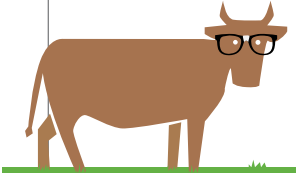
Communities thrive by bringing people together, learning from each other, and celebrating our collective differences. Alongside 12 partner organizations, we helped host a cultural festival in Hastings, Nebraska, bringing together more than 600 residents.

THIS YEAR, 76 COMMUNITY LEADERS PARTICIPATED IN **DEVELOPING THEIR INTERCULTURAL AND WELCOMING SKILLS.**



OCTOBER 2021

SEPTEMBER							NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30			28	29	30				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Learn more about community development at cfra.org/small-towns.			1	2
3	4	5 ●	6	7	8	9
10	11 ●	12	13	14	15	16
	Indigenous Peoples' Day	Nat'l Farmer's Day— #ThankAFarmer on social media.				Boss's Day
17	18	19 ●	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 ●	28	29	30
		Nat'l Pumpkin Day				
31						
Halloween and Día de los Muertos						
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Accessing Credit

Independent businesses keep small towns vibrant. With access to capital, Brent and Leah Daehling, pictured, were able to open a storefront for their antique and vintage furnishings business. Entrepreneurs like the Daehlings are taking control of their future, creating jobs and supporting community.



LAST YEAR,
WE PROVIDED
76 BUSINESS LOANS
TOTALING ALMOST
\$1.3 MILLION.

NOVEMBER 2021



Need business training?
Wondering about financing
options? Visit cfra.org/loans.

OCTOBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2				1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	
31													

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
National Native American Heritage Month	1	2 Election Day— Get out and vote!	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day—Thank you to all who have served!	12	13
Daylight Saving Time Ends	14	15 Philanthropy Day	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Day	26 Native American Heritage Day	27 Small Business Saturday—What's your favorite rural business? #ShopSmall
28	29	30 Giving Tuesday— Make a gift to the Center! (cfra.org/give)				

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Processing Local Foods

When the pandemic caused large meatpackers to stumble, farmers flooded local lockers. We worked with national lawmakers to introduce the Strengthening Local Processing Act to expand options for producers like Everett Lunquist and Ruth Chantry, pictured.



AT THE HEIGHT OF THE PANDEMIC, LOCAL LOCKERS WERE BOOKED A YEAR AHEAD. **OUR BILL WILL EMPOWER MEAT LOCKERS TO EXPAND AND HELP BUILD LOCAL ECONOMIES.**

DECEMBER 2021

NOVEMBER							JANUARY 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6								1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30					23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 We work hard for family farms and ranches year round. For up-to-date info, visit cfra.org/farm-and-food.			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day			Hanukkah (10 - 18) and Human Rights Day	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		First Day of Winter			Christmas Eve	Christmas
26	27	28	29	30	31	
CENTER <i>for</i> RURAL AFFAIRS						CFRA.ORG
				New Year's Eve		

Our Dedicated Board and Staff

Our board meets quarterly to drive forward our Center for Rural Affairs mission and values. Pictured are staff and board members at our December 2019 meeting near Louisville, Nebraska.



MEMBERS
INCLUDE:

Krista Dittman, President
Dennis Demmel, Vice President
Jay Hall, Secretary
Chuck Karpf, Treasurer
Leverne Barrett, Executive Committee
Melissa Florell, Executive Committee
Amanda McKinney
Barbara Dilly
Greg Fripp

Jane Yule
Keith Mahaney
Nancy Meyer
Paul Swanson
Ross Larson
Bob Warrick, Director Emeritus
Clark Nichols, Director Emeritus
Don Reeves, Director Emeritus

This calendar illustrates the impact you helped achieve during the last year. We appreciate your commitment to creating vibrant family farms and ranches, small businesses, and communities. Thank you from the staff and board of the Center for Rural Affairs.



CENTER *for*
RURAL AFFAIRS

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For our latest financial and donor information, please visit cfa.org.
The Center for Rural Affairs is an equal opportunity employer and provider.