



# CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

YOUR RURAL NEWS FOR MORE THAN 45 YEARS | LYONS, NEBRASKA | POPULATION 851 | MARCH AND APRIL 2021

## VACCINES OFFER HOPE AND HEALING TO RURAL COMMUNITIES

BY LIZ STEWART

**T**he coronavirus pandemic has swept through the U.S., leaving devastation in its wake. In less than a year, our country has suffered the loss of over 400,000 souls due to COVID-19.

For the first time in months, Americans are starting to see a light peak through that darkness. Vaccines have been introduced, approved, and administered to medical personnel and health care workers around the country. Soon, all Americans will have the opportunity to receive a vaccination.

Nicole Fisher, of West Point, Nebraska, has worked in health care for more than four years, and is currently attending nursing school. Getting vaccinated was

—SEE [VACCINES](#) ON PAGE 3



Nicole Fisher works in the health care field and was one of the first Nebraskans to receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. She says her experience was pretty much as she expected it to be. | Photo by Kylie Kai

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## CATHOLIC PRIEST FINDS A NEW WAY TO SERVE HIS COMMUNITY

BY NATHAN BEACOM, [NATHANB@CFRA.ORG](mailto:NATHANB@CFRA.ORG)

**B**efore Father Bryce Lungen was a priest, he was a cowboy. Today, he gets to be both.

In the early 2000s, while working on a ranch in Montana, Bryce spent his days rounding up cattle, and was engaged to the rancher's daughter. But, he was still looking for his

life's purpose, for a way he could make a difference in the world. That's when he heard the call: "If you really want to make a difference, here's how to do it."

"When you're called, you drop the nets," Father Bryce said. "I don't think I even brought my boots."

—SEE [CATHOLIC PRIEST](#) ON PAGE 4

## EDITOR'S NOTE

BY RHEA LANDHOLM, RHEAL@CFRA.ORG

How has winter been in your corner of rural America? Where our home office is based in northeast Nebraska, we seem to be getting snowstorm after snowstorm. I am itching for spring when I can resume my walks around town.

In this edition, we chose stories to highlight our core value of "Citizen involvement and ACTION to shape the future." All I have to say is, "Wow!" I wish we could highlight all of you, but we just don't have room.

Featured in these pages are a young health care worker who stepped up to get the COVID-19 vaccine and to tell others about her experience, a Catholic priest-cowboy who started a processing unit to provide meat to his community, and a family who started a bakery.

We also tell you how you can get involved in sharing your own views.

And, tucked inside is our annual donors list. Thank you so much to all of you who took action this past year to support us. We



couldn't do our work without you.

As always, check out our website for more. A note: we have workshops for small business owners, farmers and ranchers, those interested in policy issues, and more, listed at [cfra.org/](http://cfra.org/) events. They all take place online, for now. Check it out.

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## BEING A RURAL ADVOCATE AT HOME, IN THE CAPITOL

BY TRENTON BUHR, TRENTONB@CFRA.ORG

"The Salvation of the State is the Watchfulness of the Citizen," reads an inscription over the main entrance to the Nebraska state Capitol in Lincoln.

Democracy needs input from citizens to thrive, but figuring out how to share your voice and have an impact on government can be challenging. Luckily, constituents can make a difference in several ways.

Whether you are interested in federal, state, or local policy, you can share your views by interacting directly with elected officials by writing, calling, or visiting your representatives. While testifying in person is the most effective way to ensure your voice is heard, we understand not everyone is comfortable in that setting. Other options

include writing letters to the editor or sharing information on social media.

Traveling to the Capitol or to a representative's office can be difficult for rural residents, and the global COVID-19 pandemic has created additional barriers. The good news is that most advocacy can take place remotely.

However you choose to engage with your representatives, providing an authentic constituent voice is important while making sure to keep your message simple, civil, and focused. The audience needs to know who you are, why the issue matters to you, and what action you want taken. In the case of legislation, this means urging the representative to vote yes or no on a specific proposal.

Whatever your medium, staying focused on the topic at hand is

important. Any policy proposal has important history and context, but limited time and space means you can only go into so much detail or risk missing your main point. Commenting on an issue should also be timely. Try to speak to representatives or place your story in the media at a key moment, such as before a hearing or floor debate.

The Center for Rural Affairs is here to help you keep track of issues important to you, find opportunities for you to advocate, and craft your message. If you haven't already, take a look at our current legislative priorities and keep track of our legislative updates to know what proposals are affecting rural areas. You can also contact us and let us know you want to help—I promise we will be glad to hear from you.

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### PAPER & E-NEWS

This newsletter is available both electronically and in print. To receive it online, sign up at the Center's website, [cfra.org](http://cfra.org), or email us at [info@cfra.org](mailto:info@cfra.org).

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## VACCINES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

high on her list of priorities for several reasons.

"I wanted to know I was doing everything I could to protect my residents at work from being exposed and getting sick, as well as keeping my family and friends from getting sick through me," she said. "Our community has lost many loved ones to this pandemic, and when you're from a small town, everyone is like family, so it's just as much about the community too."

Researching the topic is a crucial step in deciding whether or not to be vaccinated. Nicole says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are trustworthy, reputable resources, and good places to begin looking for information. Local research is also beneficial.

"Look at what your local health department is putting out there for resources," she said. "There is way too much false information out there right now that is making people afraid of this vaccine."

Nicole encourages people to also look at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) website, where they can find explanations for emergency authorizations, the different types of vaccinations available in the U.S.,

Though many rural Americans are hesitant to get vaccinated, Nicole reassures those in doubt there were no shortcuts taken when making this vaccine.

"We know there are many types of coronaviruses," she said. "Two in particular are SARS and MERS. Vaccine trials had been in the works for SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV for a few years. To make a really long point short, since COVID-19 is the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, scientists didn't have to start from scratch when trying to create a vaccine for COVID-19, a large portion was already there."

"I WANTED TO KNOW I WAS DOING EVERYTHING I COULD TO PROTECT MY RESIDENTS AT WORK FROM BEING EXPOSED AND GETTING SICK, AS WELL AS KEEPING MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS FROM GETTING SICK THROUGH ME."  
—NICOLE FISHER

common ingredients in vaccines in the U.S., and more.

Since Nicole works in the health care field, she was one of the first Nebraskans to receive both doses of the vaccine and says her experience, especially as someone with underlying health issues involving inflammation, was much as she expected it to be.

After the first dose, she had mild arm soreness for about two days and no other side effects. Several hours after her second dose, Nicole felt weak and fatigued, and had a headache that lasted a few days, which kept her home resting in bed. She said not all people will have that experience, and a person's immune response may vary based on their own health considerations, though, ultimately, the response shows your immune system is working.

"The rest of my coworkers who got the same second dose the same day as myself only had a headache for the evening, so it really just depends on your own body," she said. "At least I know the first dose worked to teach my body what COVID-19 looks like."

The vaccine was free for Nicole, as it should be to anyone who receives it. Nicole and her coworkers were able to get vaccinated whether they had health insurance or not—a grant covered the cost of the vaccination for everyone.

As for when others should expect to have the vaccine available to them, Nicole urges the public to rely on their local health departments for that information. Most districts have been utilizing social media to relay updates.

"The vaccines are being rolled out in tiers of prioritization that the state/federal government decided, so I would say everyone should check with their local health department to find out where they're at," Nicole said.

Ultimately, the choice to be vaccinated belongs to each individual, though Nicole urges everyone to get vaccinated to do their part to protect themselves, their neighbors, and to stop the spread of COVID-19.

"Rural Americans make up a large percentage of the population, and we need as many Americans as possible to get vaccinated to stop this pandemic," she said.

Nicole points out that the more people who get vaccinated, the less rural hospitals become overwhelmed.

"We don't love watching our beloved hometown health care workers being pushed to the edge with limited resources because the bigger hospitals in the cities are too full to take our rural patients who need more help," she said. "Our critical access hospitals can get overwhelmed very quickly if we have a large outbreak here and the bigger hospitals are too full. That's an incredibly important reason why rural Americans need to get vaccinated—let's help our health care heroes."

In the meantime, while vaccines become more readily available to the general population, Nicole offers a few simple guidelines to help continue slowing the spread.

"Wash your hands, wear your mask, and be kind," she said. "Please, believe in science and get vaccinated."



## CATHOLIC PRIEST, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

After that, he put cowboying behind him and joined the seminary. Through years of study and preparation, he was able to become a priest, and returned to his home state of Wyoming, where he currently shepherds St. Matthew's Catholic Church, in Gillette.

To his surprise, Father Bryce's ranching days were not over. A 2020 amendment to Wyoming's Food Freedom Act enabled customers to buy directly from farmers using herd shares, which opened the door for Father Bryce to start a herd of cattle and provide his small community with local meat during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"I'm a cowboy by nature," he said. "Being a priest is actually about following my heart's desires."

Following his heart also led him back into ranching and his love of the land, dirt, and animals. For Father Bryce, being a priest is about finding ways his qualities, skills, and proclivities as a human being can be put to the service of others.

As it turned out, one of Father's Bryce's parishioners had pasture he was looking to sell at the same time the priest was wishing for an opportunity to get back into the cattle business. Father Bryce bought a few acres "to ride herd on, just for fun." Little did he know that he'd soon be growing and cutting beef for more than 65 customers.

"Doors just kept opening up," he said.

Another opportunity arose, and the priest bought 11 heifers from his uncle to start his herd. Just a few months earlier, Wyoming began allowing the purchase of shares in a live animal or animal herd, and Father Bryce had an idea. With help from parishioners, he put together a processing unit. Not long after, he was signing contracts for shares in his beef,



Father Bryce thought he put cowboying behind him, but doors kept opening up. After purchasing a pasture and 11 heifers, a Wyoming law offered even more opportunity for the Catholic priest to serve his community. | Photo submitted

butchering that beef, and selling high-quality, grass-fed, finished animals to his community at a decent price.

"Not everybody can buy, or has space for, a whole, half, or quarter of beef," Father Bryce said.

Customers generally have more room for smaller purchases, and the demand for those animal shares continues to be high. Previously, the only option was supermarket beef. However, he said, folks turn out for quality, local meat at a good price.

Nebraska processors and farmers are hoping their state follows in Wyoming's footsteps, so that setups similar to Father Bryce's will soon be possible under a bill being considered by the Nebraska Legislature. Legislative Bill

324 was introduced by Sen. Tom Brandt of Plymouth.

"The lord has given me so many things back to be used for his greater glory, for the building up of his kingdom, or however you want to call it," Father Bryce said. "Things I love to do, like cowboying. I haven't missed anything. I'm more satisfied now than I ever was."

To those who see a contradiction in a priest-cowboy, Father Bryce says, "The priest God wanted me to be is the man God wanted me to be."

And, that man is a cowhand.

"There's a little cowboy in all of us," he said. "It's just a matter of getting down close to the roots and to reality and seeing what that means for you."



Wendy Alfaro (pictured), her sister Marta Gomez, and her mother Marina Gomez always wanted their own family-run business and love baking and decorating cakes. They opened Lupe's Bakery in Columbus, Nebraska, in 2017. | Photo by Kylie Kai

## BUSINESS OWNERS BAKE THEIR WAY TO SUCCESS

BY LIZ STEWART AND VERONICA REYES SPINDOLA, VERONICAS@CFRA.ORG

Spending time with family is a top priority for Marina Gomez and her daughters, Wendy Alfaro and Marta Gomez. The three women have always cherished their time baking together as a family. Their love of creating confectionery treats is so strong that it led to them opening their own business.

In 2017, the women took a chance on their dream and opened Lupe's Bakery, in Columbus, Nebraska. At their establishment, they offer fresh-baked Mexican breads and pastries, wedding and birthday cakes, custom orders, and much more.

"We always wanted our own family-run business, and we love baking and decorating cakes," said Wendy. "We thought there was a need for a bakery in our area, and we decided to take the opportunity in front of us."

Before they opened the doors to their bakery, Marina, Wendy, and Marta looked to the Center for Rural Affairs' Rural Enterprise Assistance Project for all the information they'd need to run a business.

"We got advice from professionals, the experienced people at the Center, who could guide us on the correct path to get things set up according to the laws and rules of the state of Nebraska," Marina said.

Veronica Reyes Spindola, Latino loan specialist with the Center, has worked with the women since May 2017, when she assisted them with start-up counseling. Later on, they also received assistance with different aspects of running the business, including registering their bakery as an LLC, preparing for inspections, taxes, and more.

"These three ladies are hard-working, self-driven women," said Veronica. "They don't wait for opportunities to show up at their door, they go out, chase them, and make them the best they can be. They take calculated risks and evaluate the different situations very thoroughly. It has been a pleasure to work with such an amazing family, and I look forward to continuing coaching them and tasting their delicious creations."

Because of their dedication, the women have been successful in their business endeavors.

"We are blessed," said Marta. "From the very beginning, things have gone quite well. The Center guided us step by step and has always supported us."

Marina, Wendy, and Marta split up shifts at the bakery and take on the responsibilities equally. They take pride in their secret family recipes, and, along with one other employee, have run the business by themselves since opening.

By making a few improvements along the way, including upgrading the quality and variety of their products, the women hope to continue down a successful path. They know they always have the Center to turn to if they need any further assistance.

"Working with the Center has been very good," said Wendy. "We can always count on them for what we need. The Center is a good support option for people who want to start their own business and do not know how to do it. I highly recommend it."



CORPORATE FARMING NOTES

# 'RECYCLING' PESTICIDE-TREATED SEEDS + MORE

BY BRIAN DEPEW, BRIAND@CFRA.ORG

State regulators ordered an ethanol plant in Mead, Nebraska, to stop producing ethanol from seed corn treated with insecticides and fungicides.

The plant had been thrust into the spotlight after local residents raised concerns.

Because the plant was using treated seed, the byproduct could not be sold as animal feed.

Initially, the waste was spread on nearby farm fields but, after state regulators objected, the company began accumulating the waste in storage piles. Recent on-site testing recorded high levels of pesticides, including in wastewater.

Before the company began to attract scrutiny for the practice, it had advertised the plant nationally as a location for "recycling" pesticide-treated seeds.

Local Sen. Bruce Bostelman has introduced a bill in the Nebraska Legislature to ban the practice.

## UNLIMITED CHECKS FUEL CONSOLIDATION

Federal farm spending exceeded \$50 billion in 2020, accounting for 44% of farm income and pushing aggregate farm income to its highest level since 2013. The number includes ad hoc trade war payments, pandemic relief payments, crop insurance subsidies, forgivable Paycheck Protection Program loans, and conventional farm and farm conservation payments.

Due to a lack of effective payment limits, the largest operations cashed the biggest checks. For instance, the top 1% of farms receiving trade war payments collected 16% of total program payments, with each top 1% operation collecting an average of \$524,000.

Meanwhile, the bottom 80% of



COVID-19 is still spreading within meatpacking plants. More than 500 facilities in the U.S. have recorded outbreaks totaling more than 57,000 cases. Gladys Godinez, the daughter of retired packing plant workers, testified in January in the Nebraska Legislature on behalf of better protections for workers. | Photo by Chris Cox

all farms received just 23% of program payments, with an average payment of \$9,109.

For decades, the Center for Rural Affairs has called for payment caps to ensure spending is targeted to small and mid-size family operators. Unlimited checks to the largest operators fuel consolidation, drive up land rents, and contribute to rural population decline.

## 57,000 COVID CASES AT 500+ MEATPACKING PLANTS

COVID-19 is still spreading within meatpacking plants. One Smithfield plant in California recorded 247 new cases in a one-week period in January, accord-

ing to the Food and Environment Reporting Network. In total, more than 500 meatpacking plants have recorded outbreaks amounting to more than 57,000 cases.

In September, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) fined Smithfield a mere \$13,494 for safety violations at its Sioux Falls, South Dakota, plant for an outbreak that caused 1,294 confirmed infections and four deaths among employees.

In February, a U.S. House subcommittee launched an investigation into the industry's response to COVID-19. Federal vaccine guidelines urge states to prioritize meatpacking workers for early access to the vaccine.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## KRISTINE CULTIVATES GROWTH IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES

BY LIZ STEWART

After several years assisting the Center for Rural Affairs with its Tribal programs, Kristine Flyinghawk is bringing her community development talents to the Center full time.

Recently hired as Native communities manager, Kristine believes in the Center and is happy to take on a permanent role.

"In working with the Center for several years as a contractor, I have come to love and appreciate their kindness and the focused work each person on the team does," Kristine said.

She now oversees the staff and work being done in the Santee Sioux and Omaha Nations, as well as providing outreach to other Tribes in the region.

"I have assisted with the Center's work on community gardening, small business development, food sustainability, and food demonstrations," said Kristine. "I'm looking forward to being a part of the growth in the programs we offer, as well as brainstorming new ideas on how to approach some of our goals as a team."

Before joining the Center full time, Kristine taught family and consumer science classes at San-



Kristine Flyinghawk

tee Community School, as well as Native American Beading, Native American Textile Construction, and Introduction to Entrepreneurship as dual-credit classes at Nebraska Indian Community College. And, she recently completed her master's degree in family and consumer science through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Her years of experience have sparked plenty of ideas on how

to best execute her role as Native communities manager.

"As a team, I hope to expand some of our programs, and include additional Tribes," she said. "A personal goal of mine is to start some youth activities and projects to raise up a generation that sees this as a lifelong goal."

A mother of three, Kristine knows firsthand how important it is to involve the younger generation in these programs.

"I grew up on a farm near Crofton, Nebraska, and have always lived in rural America," she said. "This is where my family is and comes from. I want to raise my boys here, as I believe being raised in the area comes with security and a strong belief in values."

When she's not facilitating outreach to Tribal communities, Kristine's three young sons keep her on her toes. The family enjoys spending time outdoors swimming or getting dirty in the sandbox or garden.

Kristine oversees projects in Santee, Macy, and Walthill, and seeks to serve Native American communities in the region. She can be reached at her home office in Niobrara at 402.380.7006 or [kristinef@cfra.org](mailto:kristinef@cfra.org).

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## MEDIA NARRATIVE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

business success.

Policymakers must also confront corporate power. Rural advocates have long pressed for meaningful antitrust action against big corporate agriculture interests. Now-unchecked corporations like Amazon and Dollar General are reshaping our communities and pose new threats to rural economies.

The conversation must also be

more inclusive. Too often, the media narrative about rural falls prey to the trap of focusing solely on white people in the Midwest. Some white people are left behind by the current system, but so, too, are there Native Americans, new immigrants, and Black people across rural America who have been left out and who face overwhelming systemic barriers.

While the dominant narrative keeps us divided from one another, a renewed focus on how our elected representatives can improve the lives of everyday people could serve to unite. As people see government acting as a force to improve their lives and their communities, the perceived cultural divides will recede into the background.



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03/21



**Inside: Cowboy priest serves community**

New Wyoming law opened doors

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## MEDIA NARRATIVE DISTRACTS FROM FOCUS ON IMPROVING LIVES

BY BRIAN DEPEW, BRIAND@CFRA.ORG

Each of the past several elections has thrust rural people into the media spotlight. Rural and urban people are divided, the pundits tell us. Neither understands the lives of the other, the news reports read.

I find the entire narrative rather tired. It is rife with inaccuracies that I won't try to unpack here.

It is also a distraction. Spending our energy debating an unhelpful caricature of cultural divides keeps both voters and policymakers distracted from making changes that

matter.

I suggest we focus our energy instead on a simple question: What action can policymakers take today to materially improve the lives of people regardless of where they live?

There are relatively popular ideas like investing in broadband and supporting entrepreneurship. Also critical is the need for acting on immigration reform, investing in clean energy, and near-term pandemic relief.

We must take our thinking a step further.

Elected officials should adopt policies to encourage a wider geographic distribution of economic growth. For decades, policymakers pursued the opposite, contributing to an acute housing affordability crisis in many urban areas and a lack of quality housing in many rural areas.

We should create the frameworks and support to encourage cooperative and employee ownership of businesses and assets to provide more ways for workers to share in economic growth and

—SEE [MEDIA NARRATIVE](#) ON PAGE 7



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Cornelia & Jan Flora  
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—CONTINUED ON PAGE B2



WITH YOUR HELP, WE 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.

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 James & Cheryl Erb  
 Mark Erlander  
 Claudia Escobedo  
 Steven Espeland  
 Beth Everett  
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—CONTINUED ON PAGE B3



IN 2020, WE 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.

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 Natalie Hahn  
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 Jay Hall  
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 Andrew Hansen  
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 Katie Jantzen  
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 Charlie & Bette Johnson  
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 Jeanne Johnson  
 Maxine Johnson  
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 Barbara & James Kalbach  
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 Roy Kaufman  
 Elias Keim  
 John Kellogg  
 Dean Kenkel  
 Beth Kernes Krause  
 Jack & Kathryn Kibbie  
 Charles Kimpston  
 Kenneth Kirchner  
 Fred Kirschenmann &  
 Carolyn Raffensperger  
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—CONTINUED ON PAGE B4



LAST YEAR, WE 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.



**\$1 TO \$249, CONTINUED**

Betty Lucas  
 Randy Lukasiewicz  
 Patricia MacRae  
 Charles Manlove  
 Karen Manning  
 Paula Mares  
 Philip Margolis  
 Donald & Laurie Marsden  
 Annikki Marttila  
 Martin Massengale  
 Robin Matthews  
 Kevin McCarron  
 Alexandra McClanahan Shively  
 Mark McConnell  
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 Richard McManus  
 Robert McNeill  
 Jean Meier  
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 Melvin & Delores Meister  
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 Margaret Mellon  
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 Chris Mondak  
 Sharon Moore  
 Eduardo & Mary Morales  
 Allen & Diane Moravec  
 Michael & Becky Mordhorst  
 Andrea Morgan  
 Dan Morgan  
 Robert Mortenson  
 Terry & Kim Mosel  
 Mark Moseman  
 Stephen Mott  
 Henry Wayne Moyer  
 Arland & Deloris Mozer  
 Delmar Mueller  
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 Mark Muller  
 Michael Muller

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 Kari O'Neill  
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 Roger & Gail Osten  
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 Erica & Michael Parde  
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 Mary & Jerry Partridge  
 Patti Patrie  
 Eileen Paulsen  
 Emilee Pease  
 David Peck  
 Donald Pedersen  
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 Sandra Renner\*  
 Stephen Reno  
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 Bob & Matilda Rupp  
 Pat & Adell Ryan  
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 Barbara Sanders  
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 Bob & Connie Scharlau  
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—CONTINUED ON PAGE B5



WITH YOUR HELP, WE 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.

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 William & Michelle Timp  
 Sharon Tinker  
 Paul Tippery  
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Dennis & Monica Tomka  
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 Tomiko Townley  
 Alfred & Carol Turek  
 Virgil & Mary Tworek-Hofstetter  
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 Alan Venable  
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   Daniel Rosmann  
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 Jon Welch  
 Thomas Wellington  
 Betty Wells  
 Sarah Wentzel-Fisher  
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 Roger Wess  
 Norm & Susan West  
 Lorrie Whitaker  
 Mark Wilke  
 Larry & Rebecca Williams  
 Tad & Erin Williams  
 Vernon Williams  
 Sara Wilmes  
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*Institutional funders are government agencies, foundations, and businesses that provide funding for specific initiatives.*

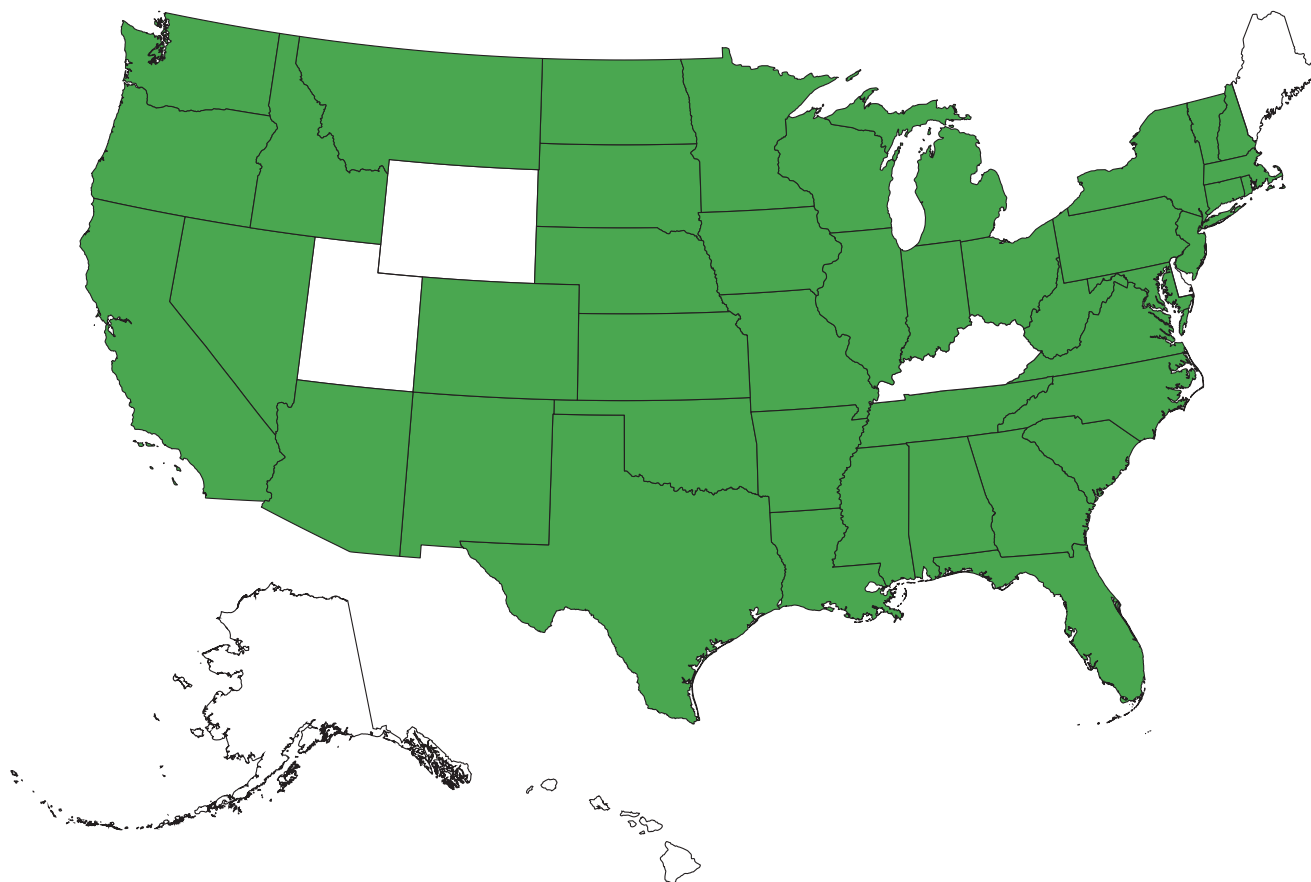
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LAST YEAR, WE ADVISED MORE THAN 130 BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS, AS WELL AS LANDOWNERS, ON FARM STARTUP AND TRANSITION. THESE FOLKS ARE HELPING KEEP RURAL COMMUNITIES VIBRANT.



Donors to the Center for Rural Affairs and its subsidiaries span 44 states. With you, the Center for Rural Affairs will continue to stand like a rock to represent the best of rural America. Thank you for your support.

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Risk Management Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Rural Development
- U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Sustainable Agriculture Research  
and Education
- U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Office of Partnerships and  
Public Engagement

U.S. Department of Treasury,  
Community Development Financial  
Institutions Fund

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,  
Office of Environmental Justice

U.S. Small Business Administration,  
Office of Capital Access

U.S. Small Business Administration,  
Office of Women's Business  
Ownership

Voices for Healthy Kids

Walton Family Foundation

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Wells Fargo

William and Ruth Scott Family  
Foundation

Women, Food and Agriculture Network

Woods Charitable Fund, Inc.



IN 2020, WE 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.