

Rural Prosperity Nebraska Impact At-A-Glance



In 2023 over 1,500 entrepreneurs applied to start a business in Nebraska. Rural Prosperity Nebraska is a resource that helps communities create and expand their entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Of Nebraska's 3,000+ childcare centers, Our Place in Hastings is unique—it provides care for special needs teens. Founded by Adeline Johnson for her daughter, Zoe, the center opened in the basement of a local church but soon outgrew its space. Then Johnson turned to Rural Prosperity Nebraska's grant-funded eCommunities team. The team helped Johnson secure a larger stand-alone building for Our Place, and open the Freedom Factory consignment store, which sells crafts made by the teens. The center thrives on donations, but all profits from the store go to the teens.

“Entrepreneur-led development builds community capacity for entrepreneurs and community development. Human talent is the building block of today’s successful economies and communities.”

Shawn Kaskie,
Extension Educator

**69 full-time &
59 part-time**

employees added by
eCommunities-supported
businesses since 2021

\$2,447,000

increase in revenues of 129
eCommunities-supported
businesses

20

communities in 12 Nebraska
counties participating in
eCommunities programs

Rural Prosperity Nebraska



Inspire Nebraskans and Their Communities Through Extension, rural communities find ways to engage residents of every age, interest, and background in reimagining the trajectory of the place they call home by helping them discover their strengths and transforming them into prosperous actions; encouraging diversity, entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment; leveraging the research and resources of the university; and convening stakeholders to envision the future of their hometown.

4 Cooperative Grocery Stores

Opened since 2021 with assistance from the grant-funded Nebraska Cooperative Development Center

Leadership Chautauqua Re-envision Community Leadership Development

- 120 Nebraska community leaders gathered for a grant-funded Chautauqua to identify actionable opportunities for community leadership development change.
- The findings of the Chautauqua will further research on community leadership development and practice in Nebraska.



NERFSI's expertise secured USDA grant support to create the six-state Heartland Regional Food Business Center. The Center provides technical and financial assistance to farm and food enterprises, and network coordination to bring healthy and fresh local foods to market and dinner tables.



\$25 Million

USDA grant awarded to create the Heartland Regional Food Business Center as part of the Nebraska Regional Food Systems Initiative (NERFSI)