



RURAL PROSPERITY NEBRASKA

4th Quarter 2024



2024 Rural Poll Reports

The longest-running poll of rural life in the United States

The Rural Poll is back! Two reports have already been released this year, focusing on well-being and civil discourse in rural Nebraska. You can read the reports and see the statistics for yourself on the newly-designed Rural Poll website. You can also join in the discussions on what the findings mean for families, schools, businesses and communities in Nebraska. The first webinar is Wednesday, Oct. 2, 12:30 p.m. Central Time. If you're interested in submitting questions to be included in next year's poll, that option's available, too.



How many years in a row has Nebraska won the National Crunch-off?



Every year, Buy Fresh Buy Local and Nebraska team up with the Nebraska Department of Education and seven other states in the Great Plains and Inter-mountain region for the annual Crunch-off, encouraging children to eat locally-grown "crunchy" produce. **Click on the orange button above** to answer this quarter's question:

How many years in a row has Nebraska won the National Crunch-off?

- A. 1 year
- B. 2 years
- C. 3 years
- D. 4 years
- E. 5 years

Last quarter's answer: For how long has the Nebraska Tourism Commission sponsored the Nebraska Passport program? **14 years.**



Small Business Credit Survey

RPN and the Federal Reserve have teamed up on a survey capturing the **experiences of small-business owners and key financial decision-makers**, and how they use debt, what financial conditions they face, and more. Survey is anonymous and closes Nov. 1.





Latino Business Conferences

The final session of the **2024 Latino Small Business Conference** is happening in Gering, Oct. 5. The Spanish-language conference aims to ignite the entrepreneurial spirit among Latino business owners with this year's theme, "All About Business."

All About Groceries

The second annual Grocery Industry Summit takes place Oct. 3 in Kearney, offering a unique opportunity for **grocers, wholesalers, vendors, policymakers and other stakeholders** to discuss how to tackle the challenges facing the grocery industry.



Business Builder Grants

The USDA and Heartland Regional Food Business Center have unveiled **\$3.7 million in Business Builder grants** to support local food and farm entrepreneurs. The funding aims to drive business growth, job creation and increase the availability of local products.



Are You Ready for Market?



From the cafeteria to the classroom to the community, **farm-to-school programs are thriving in Nebraska.** Join us Oct. 16-17 for the biannual Farm to School Summit to learn about the resources available to make farm-to-school a reality in your community.



FEATURED PROGRAMS

Farm to School



The Nebraska Farm to School program bridges the gap between local farmers and schools, bringing fresh, nutritious food to students across the state. By fostering strong partnerships, this initiative supports both local agriculture and healthier school meals, enriching students' understanding of where their food comes from. With a focus on sustainability, education, and community engagement, Farm to School helps schools create farm-fresh menus while empowering students to make healthier choices. Explore the program's resources, success stories, and how it benefits farmers, students, and communities alike.

Nebraska Rural Poll



The longest-running poll of rural life in the United States, the Nebraska Rural Poll is an annual survey conducted by Nebraska Extension and RPN. Traditionally rural Nebraskans have had little say in state policy decisions, especially when compared the metropolitan and micropolitan areas of the state. The Nebraska Rural Poll changes that. Acting as an aggregated voice of rural Nebraskans, the Poll relays its findings to state lawmakers, ensuring rural opinions are heard. Focusing on issues such as community, government policy, well-being, and employment, the goal of the Nebraska Rural Poll is to give local and state leaders a better understanding of the needs, priorities, and viewpoints of Nebraska's rural citizens.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Click on the date for more details)

Rural Poll Webinar: Civil Discourse

Learn about the 2024 Nebraska Rural Poll civil discourse data through a brief presentation by L.J. McElravy, who will discuss the data with invited guests.

October 2

October 3

Grocery Industry Summit

The summit offers a unique opportunity for grocers, wholesalers, vendors, policymakers and other stakeholders to collaborate and discuss the grocery industry.

Latino Small Business Conference

The Latino Small Business Conference kicks off in Grand Island with the theme “All About Business” to ignite the entrepreneurial spirit among Latino business owners.

October 5

October 9

Rural Rendezvous

Speakers cover topics from entrepreneurship and leadership, as well as community health and well being. Plus, there’s time for networking and some Q&A.

NERFSI Networking Meeting

Join the NERFSI team to discuss how the Nebraska Extension Urban Agriculture Program offers for new, seasoned, and aspiring urban producers in the Omaha area.

October 16

Oct. 17-18

Farm to School Summit

At the event, we will launch our statewide Nebraska Farm to School Network and walk you through resources to stay connected with Farm to School year-round.

Aprende más Sobre cómo Administrar tu Negocio

UBT y Nebraska Extension se enorgullecen de ofrecer los siguientes eventos GRATUITOS. Si su negocio está listo para crecer, nuestro equipo está listo para ayudarlo.

November 6

November 6

Rural Rendezvous

Discuss what’s going on in Rural Nebraska. Speakers cover topics from entrepreneurship and leadership, as well as community health and well being.

NERFSI Networking Meeting

Join the NERFSI team to discuss the new and updated Cottage Food Law, which expands the types of foods cottage food producers could sell.

November
20

December 11

Rural Rendezvous

Discuss what’s going on in Rural Nebraska. Speakers cover topics from entrepreneurship and leadership, as well as community health and well being.

Data & Research Series for Community Impact

Part 2 of the UNO Center for Public Affairs Research's seminar on utilizing demographic, social, economic, and housing data from the US Census Bureau.

December 19

FEATURED PHOTO



An attendee at the **Hoop of Learning welcome event** in August creates a rose with traditional Native beadwork. The Hoop of Learning program is a bridge program that helps Native American students earn college credits while still in high school and enroll in college courses after graduation.

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