FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**KRC to Host Local Food Connections Virtual Conference**

Wichita, KS - The Kansas Rural Center will host a virtual Local Food Connections conference on May 7, 2021 from 8:45am- 3:30pm. The conference will include panelists and speakers from across the region who are actively involved in strengthening local food systems and Farm to School programs. Farmers, food producers, school nutrition personnel, grassroots organizers and community stakeholders in food systems are encouraged to attend this event. This virtual conference will help promote new relationships in our foodshed and increase awareness on access to healthful local foods. This conference is partially supported by a USDA Farm to School grant.

This year’s conference series theme, “Feeding Neighbors, Forging Community, Growing Together,” highlights the ways in which a robust local and regional farm and food system positively impacts and strengthens bonds within communities at all levels – from soil microbes to human beings. The Local Food Connections conference in May is the second in the conference series and focuses on how socially just local food and farm systems increase the health of Kansas communities and the environment.

Keynote presenters include land-based educator Brett Ramey of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the University of Missouri, John Ikerd. Ramey’s work sits at the intersections of ecological, cultural, and community health and includes designing courses on Indigenous foodways and climate change at a Tribal University, conducting community-based health research, facilitating healing retreats for cancer survivors, and advising on numerous national and tribal climate justice and conservation initiatives.

Ikerd orients his work toward agricultural and economic sustainability as a means of supporting small family farms and rural communities, has authored numerous books, and is recognized as a longtime leading voice in the sustainable agriculture movement.

Four breakout sessions will host panelists from across the state who will discuss Farm to School partnerships, community food hubs, and the status of local grocery stores in rural communities.

Over the lunch hour, Chef Rick Martin, Hospitality Consultant for the Lawrence Restaurant Association and Co-founder of Kitchen Scratch will give a cooking demonstration.
A more detailed agenda will be available on our website soon - https://kansasruralcenter.org/join-us-for-krcs-local-food-connections-virtual-conference/.

The cost of registration is $15 which helps support our panelists, speakers and includes access to recorded conference sessions. Scholarships are available to cover the cost of the conference for those who need financial assistance. Please register at http://bit.ly/LocalFoodConnections. Or you can reach KRC staff for scholarship information or assistance registering at info@kansasruralcenter.org or 866.579.5469 ext. 705.

For more information, please contact Kaitlin Stanley at kstanley@kansasruralcenter.org or 866-579-5469 Ext. 705.

To sponsor the conference or our conference series, please visit - https://kansasruralcenter.org/sponsor-our-conference-2021/.

The mission of KRC, a non-profit organization founded in 1979, is to promote the long-term health of the land and its people through research, education and advocacy that advance an economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just food and farming system. For more information, visit www.kansasruralcenter.org.

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