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Simply Kansas is a trademark program designed to promote agricultural experiences and products grown, raised or produced in Kansas. [Click here for details.](#)

How We Can Help
The Rural Development Division works with various community developers and rural producers. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Office of Rural Opportunity
The ORO is designed to serve communities of 5,000 or less. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Division Events and Deadlines
Click here for [Rural Development events and deadlines.](#)

You're now reading *Rural Connections* *New e-newsletter designed for community development professionals, rural producers*

Wondering what the heck you're reading right now? Welcome to *Rural Connections*, a new e-newsletter from the Kansas Department of Commerce's [Rural Development Division](#) designed for community development professionals and rural producers like you.

Rural Connections will be issued every few months and include information on financial incentives, legislative initiatives, upcoming conferences and other tidbits to keep you in the loop on rural development in Kansas. We know you're busy, so we'll keep the info short and relevant ... and we'll try to use a picture or two.

Since you're reading the inaugural e-newsletter right now, we've got your e-mail address. But feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends and colleagues and tell them to subscribe. We also suggest you visit [KansasCommerce.com](#) for additional Kansas news. Enjoy the info.

Rural Development Division promotes ag producers at Kansas State Fair

Nearly 200 guests sample dozens of Kansas wines

The Rural Development Division sponsored a series of activities at the 2009 Kansas State Fair to showcase the state's agricultural producers. This year, the Division hosted the People's Choice Wine Judging, the Simply Kansas Showcase, daily "Meet the Winemaker" sessions and mini grape stomps.

To everyone who visited us at the State Fair: Thank you for your support of Kansas agriculture, and we look forward to seeing you next year.

[Click here for details.](#)

Department of Commerce to host Kansas Downtown Symposium

Community, business leaders invited to discuss, learn about downtown development in Kansas

The Kansas Department of Commerce will host the annual Kansas Downtown Symposium on Oct. 21-23 at the Riverfront Community Center in Leavenworth.

The Symposium is sponsored by the Department's [Kansas Main Street program](#) and will provide community developers and business leaders a chance to network, attend workshops and discuss downtown development in Kansas.

The conference is open to all business and community leaders interested in downtown development, including city and county officials, entrepreneurs and small-business owners, as well as Main Street directors, board members and volunteers.

[Click here for details.](#)



Let's go shopping at the MarketPlace!

The MarketPlace Conference is a two-day event focused on strengthening small businesses and rural communities. Participants will learn vital business skills, network with other entrepreneurs and service providers and discover ideas that work for small business and communities.



MarketPlace offers several ways to be involved through conference attendance and conference sponsorship.

[Click here for details.](#)

Department awards funding to eight community projects

Projects in Chanute, Holton, Hutchinson, Manhattan, Phillipsburg, Seneca to receive funding

The Kansas Department of Commerce will award \$75,000 in Incentives Without Walls funding for eight community improvement projects in Chanute, Holton, Hutchinson, Manhattan, Phillipsburg and Seneca, officials announced in September.

Department of Commerce funding will be matched by a combined \$737,360 in private funds, which equates to a 9.84-to-1 private-to-public funding ratio for the eight projects. The projects include five new businesses, one retention and two expansions, creating 20 full-time jobs and 10 part-time jobs.

[Click here for details.](#)

Forty-four Kansas communities to share \$13 million in CDBG funds

Awards to help rural Kansas cities, counties undertake community improvement projects

Forty-four Kansas communities will share a total of \$13,081,660 -- including \$4,370,331 in stimulus dollars -- in federal grants through the Community Development Block Grant program, the Kansas Department of Commerce announced earlier this summer.

The announcement follows the awarding of more than \$9 million in federal CDBG funds to Kansas communities earlier this year, bringing the 2009 total to approximately \$21 million.

[Click here for details.](#)



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