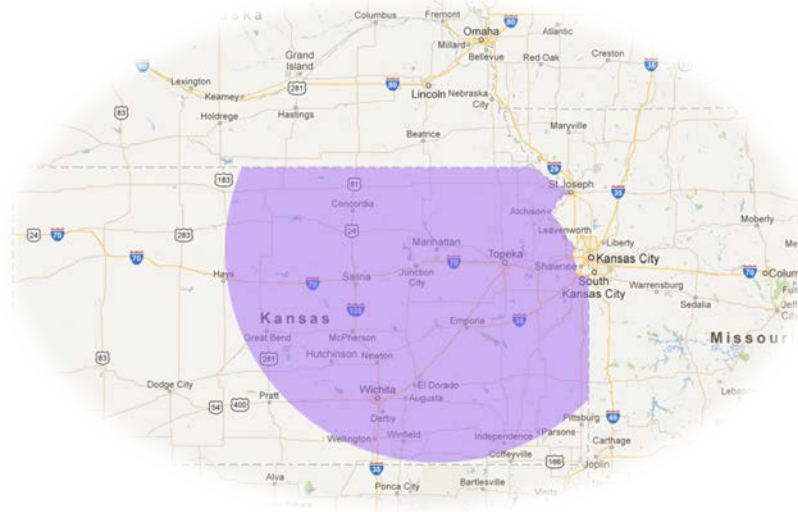


# Evaluating the Local Food System of Manhattan, KS: Producer and Institution Perspectives

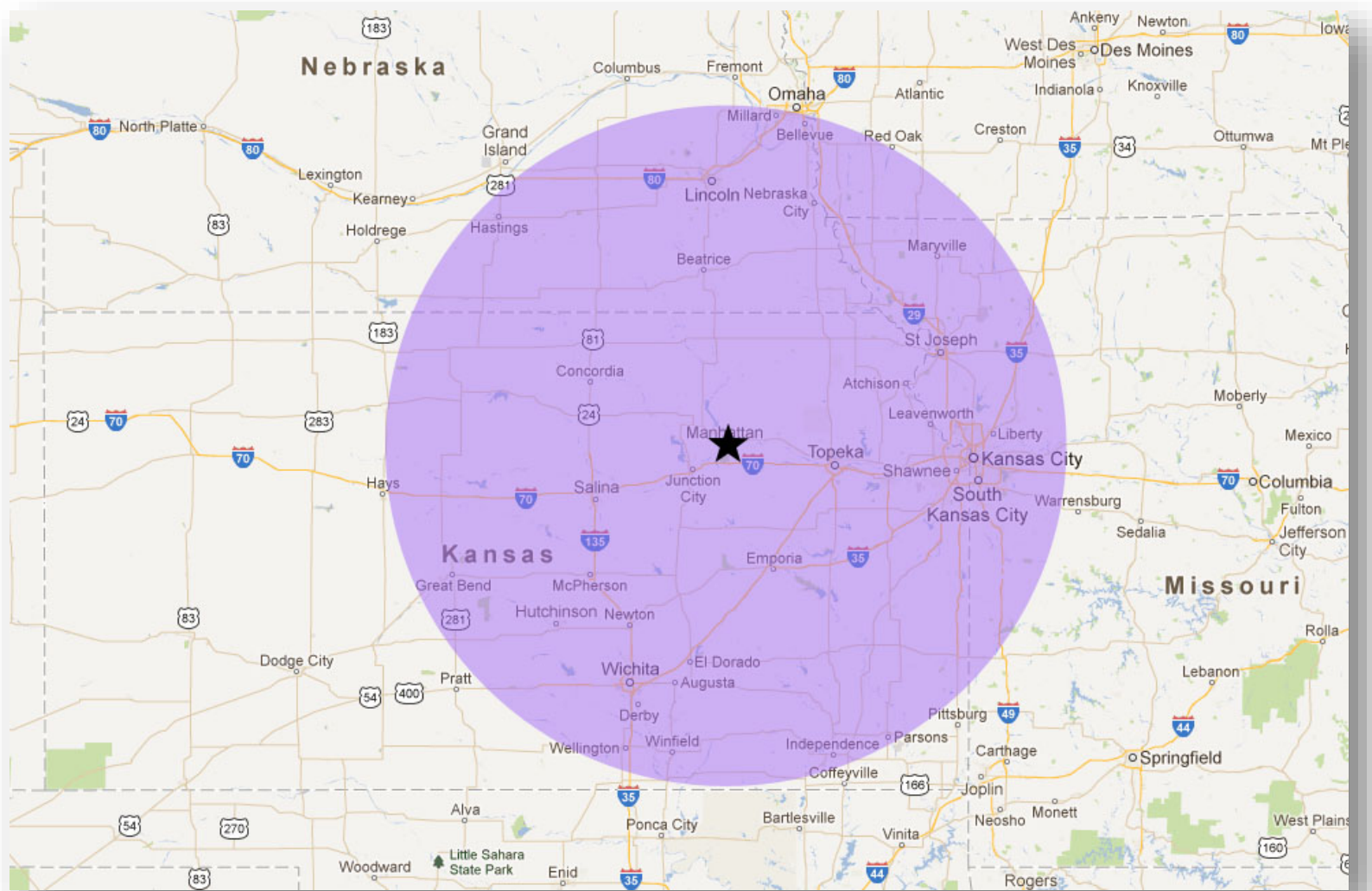


Angela Anegon  
Candice Shoemaker  
Department of Horticulture and Natural  
Resources

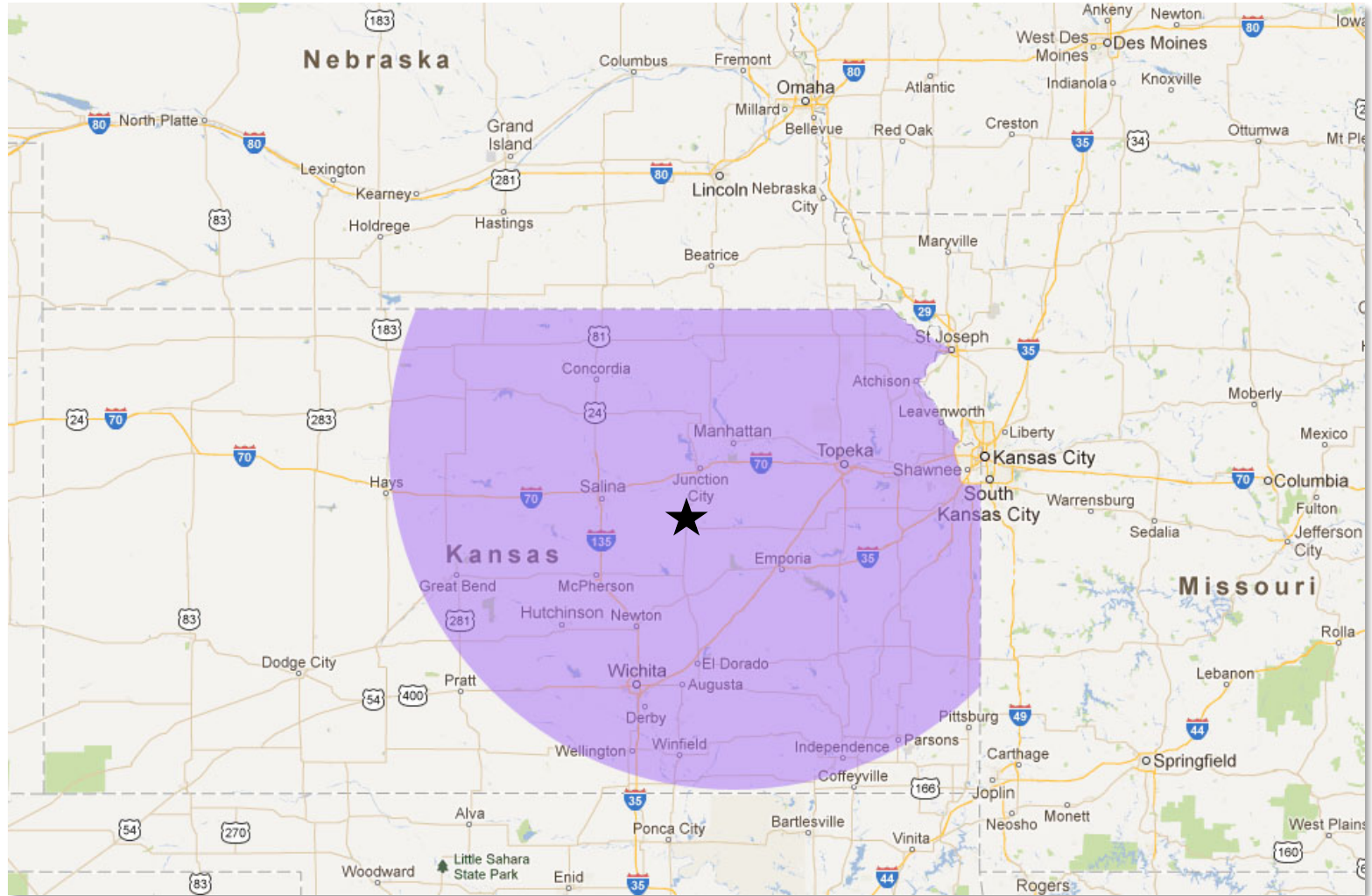
# Objectives: *Evaluate Manhattan, KS Food System*

- Understand both producer and institution perceptions of local food
- Identify producer concerns for selling to institutions
- Identify resources lacking for producers to access institutional markets
- Understand the purchasing protocols of local institutions and their preferences in local purchasing

# Manhattan's Food System



# Manhattan's Food System



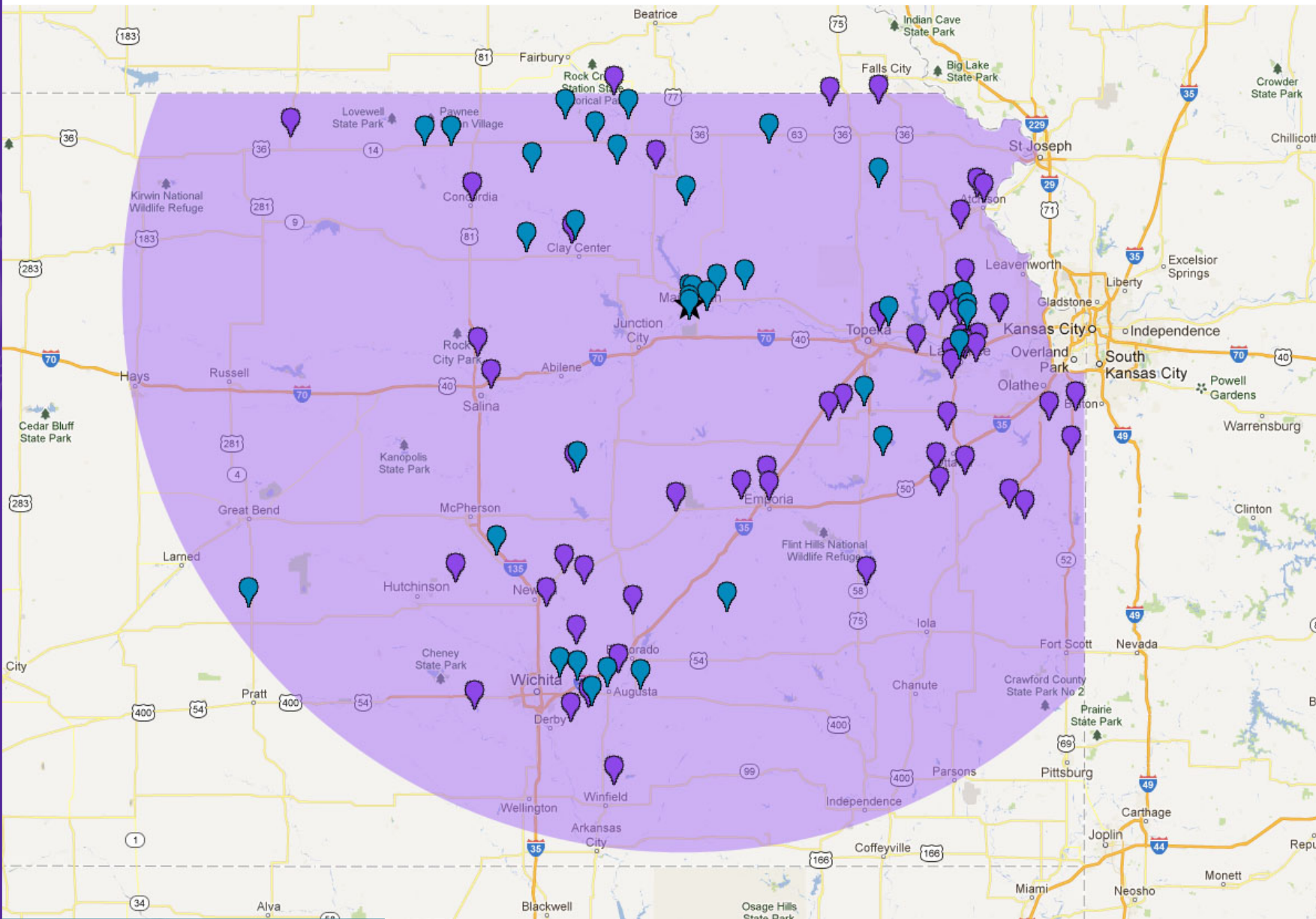
# Methods: *Producer survey*

- Survey was a mix of open-ended, multiple choice, and Likert-type questions that measured 5 themes:
  - Farmer demographic data
  - Farm characteristics
  - Marketing and farm operations
  - Perceptions of local food and selling to institutions
  - Selling to institutions in MHK

# Methods: Producers Survey

- Identified 162 farms within 150 mile driving distance of MHK through online databases and farmers' market lists
- Followed Dillman's method for mailed survey design





Survey responses

# Methods: Institution Interviews

- Produce managers of area grocery stores
- Food purchasers at local school districts
- Purchasing manager at KSU dining and Mercy Regional Hospital





*Evaluating  
Producer and  
Institutional  
Definitions of  
Local Food in  
North Central  
Kansas*



# Objective Explored





- Understand both producer and institution perceptions of local food

*How is “local” defined within MHK’s food system?*

# Results: Producer Survey

*What is your definition of a  
“local food system”?*



| Theme regarding a characteristic of a "local" food system   | N                     |    |
|---|-----------------------|----|
|  By road miles and/or driving distance | 27                    |    |
|  Ambiguous response                   | 23                    |    |
|  Market typology                       | Direct-to-consumer    | 11 |
|   | Direct-to-institution | 8  |
|   | Other                 | 15 |
|  Geo-political definition             | 13                    |    |
| Road miles + Other definition   | 12                    |    |
| No response   | 11                    |    |
| Production practices (sustainable, organic) and/or product quality  | 9                     |    |
| Involvement of whole food system  | 9                     |    |
| More than one definition (other than road miles)  | 9                     |    |
| Knowing the farmer  | 5                     |    |

# Institution Perspectives of Local Food

| Institution Type                              | Definitions of Local   | % that had sourced locally |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Conventional supermarkets</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30-40 miles</li> <li>- Kansas grown</li> <li>- Mid-West/Great Plains grown</li> <li>- Freshness of product</li> </ul> | 100%                       |
| <b>“Green” grocery store</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 60 miles</li> <li>- As little transportation as possible</li> <li>- High quality produce</li> </ul>                   | 100%                       |
| <b>School Districts and University Dining</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50-100 miles</li> <li>- Kansas grown</li> <li>- Defined by farmer</li> </ul>  | 75%                        |
| <b>Hospital</b>                               | - Kansas and bordering states  | 0%                         |

# Summary

- Producers and institutions were aware of the various attributes associated with local food systems
- Distance definitions were predominate
  - 100 miles or less most pervasive amongst producers

*Evaluating producer  
and institution  
perspectives of the  
local food system of  
Manhattan, Kansas:  
Concerns and  
opportunities for  
direct-to-institution*



# Objectives Explored

1. Understand producer perceptions of selling to institutions in Manhattan, KS
2. Identify resources needed by producers to access institutional markets
3. Understand the preferences of local institutions in local purchasing



# Highest Concern Top Three

| All Producers                                      |     | Specialty Producers   |     | Non-Specialty Producers   |     |
|--|-----|---|-----|---|-----|
| Institutions demand too low of a price for product | 66% | Institutions demand too low of a price for product  | 78% | Production quantities are too small   | 68% |
| Production quantities are too small                | 65% | Production quantities are too small   | 65% | Costs associated with transportation for delivery   | 63% |
| Cost associated with transportation for delivery   | 56% | Do not produce year-round to meet demand AND Institutions want uniform boxes and/or packaging (tie) | 57% | Institutions demand too low of a price for product AND Buyers don't guarantee advanced purchases of product (tie) | 58% |

# Lowest Concern Top Three

| All Producers                             |     | Specialty Producers   |     | Non-Specialty Producers  |     |
|---|-----|---|-----|--|-----|
| Not enough local buyers or local interest | 53% | Do not have GAP certification AND Not enough local buyers or local interest (tie)         | 57% | Don't have time to contact institutions  | 58% |
| Don't have time to contact institutions   | 51% | Don't have time to contact institutions AND Buyers want product liability insurance (tie) | 52% | Lack on-farm labor to help meet demand AND Not enough local buyers or local interest (tie) | 53% |
| Buyers want product liability insurance   | 47% | Lack on-farm labor to help meet demand  | 48% | Institutions want uniform boxes and/or packaging   | 47% |

|  | Conventional supermarkets   | “Green” grocery store   | School Districts and University Dining   | Hospital   |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>% Interviewees that had sourced locally</b> | 100%  | 100%  | 50%  | 0%   |
| <b>Top concerns for purchasing locally</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food safety</li> <li>- Quality</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality</li> <li>- Year-round consistency</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quantity</li> <li>- Price</li> <li>- Labor involved in prepping fresh product</li> <li>- Good communication</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food safety</li> <li>- Price</li> <li>- Quality</li> </ul>            |
| <b>Preferences for local purchasing</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seasonal products</li> <li>- Good communication</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standardized packing</li> <li>-Uniform quality</li> <li>-Good communication</li> <li>- Local branding</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easy pick-up/delivery</li> <li>- Low price</li> <li>- High quality</li> <li>- Guaranteed quantity</li> <li>- Seasonal products</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No preferences: cannot purchase outside approved purveyors</li> </ul> |

# *Producer resource needs for direct-to-institution in Manhattan*

Producers indicated that they would be very likely to scale up if an institution had expressed interest in purchasing locally

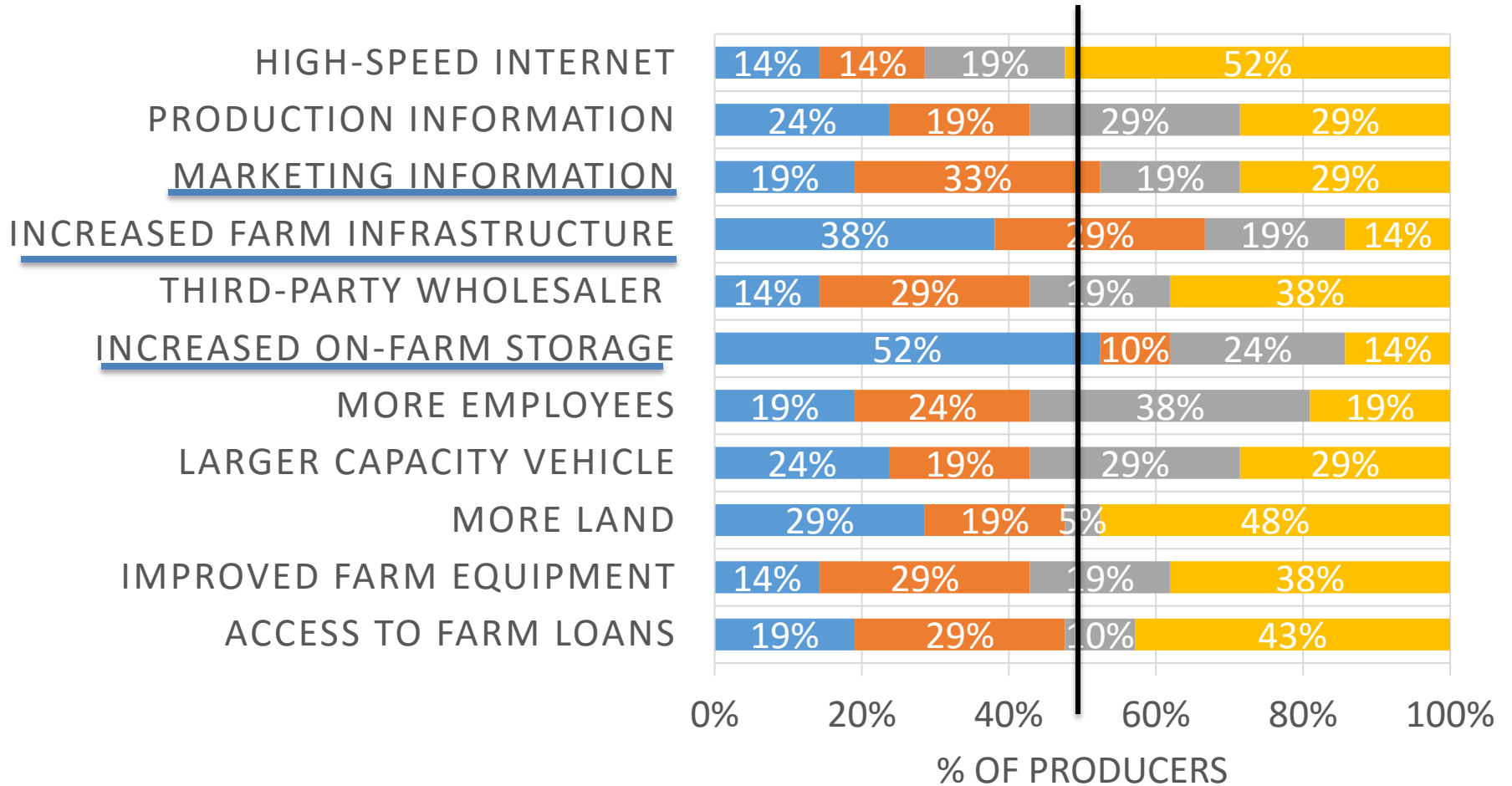
+

Producers that indicated that would like to expand to markets in Manhattan, KS

= 21 producers

# RESOURCE NEEDS OF PRODUCERS LIKELY TO SCALE UP TO MEET INSTITUTIONAL DEMAND IN MANHATTAN, KS (N=21)

■ Very Important ■ Somewhat important ■ Slightly important ■ Not important



# Summary

- Overall, main producer concerns:
  - Institutions demand too low of a price for products
  - Farm production quantities are too small
  - They do not produce year round to meet demand
  - Costs associated with transportation

# Summary

- Overall, main institution concerns:
  - Food safety
  - Price
  - Consistent quality, quantity
  - Quality of communication

*Closely match the concerns of producers*

# Summary

- Overall top resources needed by producers to scale-up:
  - Increased farm infrastructure
  - Increased on farm storage
  - Marketing information
  - (Plus many honorable mentions...)



# Study Conclusions and Next Steps

- Opportunities exist for connections to be made between the producers and institutions in MHK's food system
- Investing in the production needs of small and mid-sized farms and existing direct-to-consumer markets
- Further research on MHK consumer interest in local foods
- Beginning farmer education

*Who are going to be the next generation of producers in this food system?*

# Acknowledgements

- Dr. Rhonda Janke
- Dr. Hikaru Peterson
- Fellow Urban Food Systems Graduate Students
- Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) for funding this project

