



2026 EVENT IMPACT REPORT

This year's Eat Local & Organic Expo brought together **over 1,000 engaged attendees** and **40+ local farmers and businesses**.

A Kansas City tradition since 1988, the Expo plays a vital role in our local food community and is a celebration of local food and the folks who grow it. From small farms to caterers, food access organizations and all those in between, vendors show up with different goals for their day, but leave with shared outcomes. Each building new relationships, stronger visibility among eaters and many meaningful customer connections that stretch far beyond a single day at this beloved annual event.



IMPACT OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

Through education, collaboration and advocacy, **The Food Circle** is a nonprofit that focuses on increasing demand for locally grown food, uplifting small and beginning farmers and creating pathways for both institutions and consumers to buy local. We are proud to house the KC Food Circle program: a network of farmers, ranchers and food businesses, all located within a 120 mile radius of KC who pledge to meet sustainable and humane farming practices.

The **Eat Local & Organic Expo** is one example of how we're helping our mission come to life.

The promotion and education surrounding the Expo, ensures attendance, empowers eaters and drives more food dollars to stay within our regional economy. The event is designed to spark meaningful connections, while expanding access to fresh, local food and providing the farmers who nourish our region with the visibility, tools and support they need to succeed.

The 2026 Expo delivered impactful economic and marketing outcomes for participating vendors, with **71%** increasing their farm or business visibility and **65%** forming new business partnerships. Meanwhile **61%** of all selling vendors reported gaining new customers, reinforcing the event's role as both a marketplace and a catalyst for ongoing business growth.

Economic Impact

- 41 Vendors
 - 21 Local farmers
 - 11 Local businesses
 - 9 Community partners
- Over \$28,000 invested in local food purchases
- 65% of all vendors reported forming a new business partnership
- 61% of selling vendors reported gaining new customers

Community Engagement

- Over 1,000 total attendees
- 97% of attendees rated their overall Expo experience as excellent or good
- 50% were first time Expo attendees
- 26 Volunteers
 - 118 Volunteer hours clocked



I love that you all care for the vendors in such a thoughtful way with breakfast and lunch provided. This is still one of my favorite events to participate in because you care so much that vendors have a good experience. I appreciate you so very much! I did not participate in 2025 but this year I made more than I did in 2024, so I am quite happy with that outcome! Thank you for the opportunity and keep up the good work!

- Lori Trojan, Wild Ivy Herb Farm

REACH & ENGAGEMENT

Marketing & Visibility

- 71% of vendors reported an increase in farm or business visibility
- Over 1 Million billboard impressions
- 7 Community calendar listings
- 2 Earned media mentions

Digital Reach

- 242.6% Increase in social media engagement during Expo campaign
- 166,759 Paid and targeted Meta ad impressions
 - 2,509 Ad engagements
 - 1,831 Link clicks
 - 44% Conversion rate
- 173 Paid local ad link clicks
- 806 Eventbrite RSVPs



The Food Circle's work makes such an impact on our little family business (getting the word out and making great connections!) and on the KC community! Thank you for all your organizing efforts and letting us be a part of it. We look forward to this event every year and I was so glad to see it back this year!

- Carol Bahr, Mindfully Made



ONGOING IMPACT



Vendor & Farmer Outcomes

- 97% of vendors rated their overall Expo experience as excellent or good
- 12 Beginning farmer or rancher vendors were supported
 - 90% of shoppers reported meeting a beginning farmer or rancher
- 13 first-time Expo vendors participated
- 16 counties engaged across KS & MO

Vendor Connections Made

- 68% reported meeting someone new
- 65% reported forming a new business partnership

Among Selling Vendors

- 61% reported gaining new customers

Support Local Food Beyond the Expo

- Visit the [Eat Local Map](#) & [KC Food Circle Member Directory](#)
- Buy local food
- Become a [Friend of The Food Circle](#)

Thank you to our Sponsors!

The Andersons



Karen & Dennis Steeby



In-Kind Sponsors

Aileen Rueda-DaCosta



SIGNAGE BY:



Shopper Survey Comments

- I loved the diverse vendor list. Always great to talk to the vendors and hear about their passion!
- We had a great time and loved supporting local farmers!
- We had fun and found more places to shop local!
- I really enjoyed myself and I can't wait until next year!

