

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Small Business Week: Celebrating the Heart of Southeast Kansas

Each year, communities across the country pause to celebrate the impact of local entrepreneurs during National Small Business Week, held this year May 3-9th. In Southeast Kansas, we have an opportunity to celebrate the dedication, innovation, and resilience of small business owners who keep our communities healthy and strong. Beyond the products and services they provide, small businesses play a vital role in our economy and make a lasting impact in many ways.

1. Small businesses are the backbone of our communities. Nationally, small businesses make up 99% of all businesses in our country and create two out of every three jobs. In Southeast Kansas, the impact is more personal as these are the businesses that sponsor youth sports, donate to local fundraisers, and remember your name when you walk through the door. When you shop local and support a small business, you're investing in your entire community.
2. From main street shops to farms and service providers across rural communities, small businesses represent opportunity. Families build livelihoods, pass down skills, and create something meaningful for the next generation. In challenging times, small business owners pivot to meet needs and keep local economies moving forward.
3. Supporting local businesses strengthens our future. Small Business Week is more than a celebration – it's a reminder to shop local when possible and support those business owners who continually invest in our communities. When dollars stay in SEK, they circulate and support schools, infrastructure, and future development.

Today, I'd like to encourage you to look around at your own community. The local café, the repair shop on the corner, the home-based entrepreneur – those are the lifeblood of Southeast Kansas. Celebrate this week by supporting local businesses and thanking local business owners for their constant dedication to your community. Use social media to highlight your favorite local business by sharing a positive experience and a photo. Happy National Small Business Week from all of us at K-State Extension.

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