

# CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

2023 CALENDAR & ANNUAL REPORT





Center for Rural Affairs staff members work with you to build a better rural future. Pictured above, staff following a meeting in West Point, Nebraska.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

Dear Friends,

The coming year marks 50 years since the founding of the Center for Rural Affairs.

Then, as now, rural people grappled with challenges and the future of their communities. Now, as then, what lies ahead is ours to create.

The challenges we face today have changed and evolved since 1973. What remains consistent is our commitment to coming together to create the future we want. A future that is welcoming and inclusive. A future with opportunity for everyone, with widespread ownership, and stewardship of our natural resources.

This calendar reflects a year of working toward those ideas. We invite you to celebrate the progress with us.

Brian Depew  
Executive Director

# YOUR 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- » Called, emailed, and met with policymakers at nearly all levels of government. One highlight was the Spanish-language testimony of two lending clients during a committee hearing in the Nebraska Legislature.
- » Paired eight beginning farmers with mentors experienced in conservation practices. This new program will prepare the next generation to be conservation champions.
- » Furthered economic equity by making 81 business and housing loans last year totaling \$3,494,972, with more than 80% to people with low- to moderate income or who identify as Latino, Nebraska's largest minority.
- » Offered support and education to 20 farmers and ranchers in selling fresh, delicious food directly to schools to strengthen school nutrition and local producers.
- » Won two bills in the Nebraska Capitol which funded no-cost business counseling, expanded small business loan access, and modernized the small business tax credit.
- » Placed more than \$28.5 million in loans throughout our history to strengthen rural communities through entrepreneurship and home ownership.
- » Provided 30 veterans interested in agriculture with education, networking, and peer support. Business and production lessons came directly from a practicing farmer.
- » Advocated for improving electrical grid reliability and access to renewable energy to ensure all rural areas have dependable, clean, and lower-cost power.
- » Connected producers who speak English as a second language to congressional offices and developed legislation to improve USDA language accessibility.
- » Helped 11 Nebraska families achieve their dreams of homeownership by providing housing loans totaling \$686,582.
- » Launched the "Sustainable Agriculture Policy with Ron Kroese" podcast, which includes interviews of early leaders in sustainable ag policy.
- » Taught 65 aspiring or beginning beekeepers about the economics and conservation of honeybees. Expanded these workshops to Iowa.
- » Brought together leaders and advocates from seven communities in eastern Nebraska to begin a support network. We're building inclusive communities through coaching, sharing, and learning opportunities.
- » Offered 35 multi-session academies attended by 155 people who learned how to run rural America's most in-demand small businesses including salons, trucking, child care, cleaning, restaurants, and construction.
- » Surveyed 430 producers and held roundtable discussions with 20 more about the Conservation Stewardship Program to develop improvements we will submit for the next farm bill.
- » Advocated successfully for changes to two crop insurance programs— Whole Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm—to expand access to risk management options for producers, particularly those with small or diversified operations.



# Building Local Economies

We worked with Nebraska lawmakers to win \$10 million in grants for local meat processing infrastructure. These investments secure local lockers, help farmers access markets, and connect consumers to local food. ASC Lockers in West Point, pictured, received a grant from the program.



**64 local lockers**  
received **\$4.9 million**  
in grants in the first round.  
A second round will follow.

# JANUARY 2023



Processors, we have information for you at [cfra.org/resources-meat-processors](https://cfra.org/resources-meat-processors).

DECEMBER 2022							FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3				1	2	3	4
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	26	27	28				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 Nat'l Trivia Day— Try tweeting a rural fact to @cfra!	5	6	7
8	9	10 Nat'l Cut Your Energy Costs Day	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Nat'l Seed Swap Day— Exchange with your friends!
29	30	31 Nat'l Compliment Day— Say something nice about rural America!				
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# Creating Inclusive Communities

Shared experiences build community. We hosted a sculpture and mural walk, along with a tour of local businesses, in Norfolk, Nebraska, connecting leaders from three communities. Pictured are community representatives, including Center Board member Karina Perez.



This year, we provided coaching to **7 community organizations** on inclusive practices and outreach to immigrant community members.



# FEBRUARY 2023



Our community work is featured at [cfra.org/small-towns](http://cfra.org/small-towns).

JANUARY							MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Black History Month			1	2 Groundhog Day	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		Nat'l Send a Card to a Friend Day—Send rural greetings!				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day—Why do you love rural? Share on social media with #LoveRuralAm.			Nat'l Random Acts of Kindness Day—What will you do?	Nat'l FFA Week (18 - 25)
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Presidents' Day, Washington's Birthday, and World Day of Social Justice					
26	27	28				
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# Lending a Hand

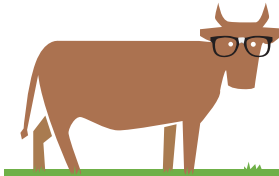
Entrepreneurship supports rural communities. When banks can't help with dreams of homeownership or growing a business, we step in to help people like Lynsi Steed, owner of Red Door Coffee in West Point, Nebraska.



In 2022, the Center placed **81 loans** totaling **\$3,494,372**. The most ever in one year.



# MARCH 2023



Apply for a small business or home loan at [cfra.org/lending](http://cfra.org/lending).

FEBRUARY							APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28					23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	●	7	8	9	10
			Int'l Women's Day			11
12	13	◐	14	15	16	17
Daylight Saving Time Begins					St. Patrick's Day—Do you have the luck o' the Irish?	18
19	20	●	21	22	23	24
Nat'l Poultry Day	First Day of Spring	Nat'l Ag Day—Celebrate on social media with #AgDay23				25
26	27	◑	28	29	30	31
Nat'l Spinach Day						
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			Nat'l Mom and Pop Business Owners Day			

# Champions for Clean Water

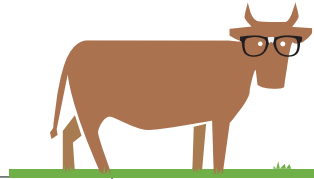
We work with you to keep watershed management flowing forward. Your support brought together local leaders and legislators to explore solutions for Iowa waterways. Center Board member Barbara Dilly is pictured by the Shell Rock River in Iowa.



We helped the Shell Rock River Watershed Management Coalition secure **\$100,000** to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan.



# APRIL 2023



Water is a fundamental resource.  
Learn more at [cfra.org/water](http://cfra.org/water).

MARCH							MAY							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
26	27	28	29	30	31		28	29	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b>
						April Fools' Day
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	●	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>
					World Health Day	
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	◐	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
Easter Sunday	Nat'l Farm Animals Day					<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	●	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
	Nat'l Haiku Poetry Day— Can you write one about rural living?	Tax Day	Nat'l Garlic Day			Earth Day—Plant a tree!
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	◑	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
Nat'l Library Week (23 - 29) —Visit your local library!			Administrative Professionals Day		Arbor Day	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>						

# Latina Leadership

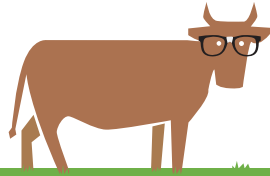
Latina business leaders found fellowship at our 2022 Women's Business Center Conference in South Sioux City. Presented entirely in Spanish, the annual event helped women entrepreneurs overcome barriers to success.



This conference brought together  
**13 business support organizations** and  
empowered **63 entrepreneurs** from **3 states.**



# MAY 2023



A list of events and on-demand training can be found at [cfra.org/wbc](http://cfra.org/wbc).

APRIL							JUNE							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
						1						1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	25	26	27	28	29	30		
						30								

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nat'l Small Business Week (April 30 - May 6) #DreamSmallBiz	May Day				Cinco de Mayo	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mother's Day						Armed Forces Day
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
Memorial Day						

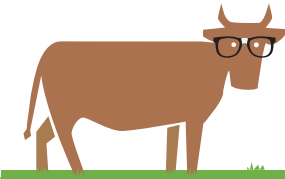
# Learning From Others

Learning Circles connect women landowners with programs, resources, and one another. They work together through challenges, share wisdom, bring about change, and celebrate successes. The women pictured are discussing farm conservation and land transition.



In 2022, over **330 people** attended agriculture classes, soil health events, and other sessions made possible by your support.

# JUNE 2023



Ag resources can be found at [cfra.org/farmers](http://cfra.org/farmers).

MAY							JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6								1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		Nat'l Weed Your Garden Day—Stay in control of your garden this year.	Flag Day	Global Wind Day		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Father's Day	Juneteenth		First Day of Summer			
25	26	27	28	29	30	
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# Connecting Communities

Broadband is still lacking in many corners of rural America, including Wakonda, South Dakota, where Doug Riediger, and his daughter, Tara, live.

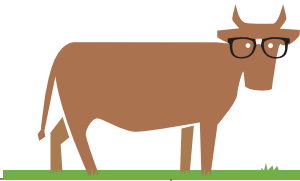
“Our lack of broadband is a major problem. People living in rural areas aren’t using the internet to play video games; this is our life,” Doug says.



To address broadband in South Dakota, we surveyed **100 households**, did in-depth interviews, and sent results to **200 rural leaders.**



# JULY 2023



The South Dakota Broadband Resource Guide, and all other publications, can be found at [cfra.org/publications](http://cfra.org/publications).

JUNE							AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30		27	28	29	30	31		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	●	3	4	5	6	8
		Independence Day				
●	9	10	11	12	13	14
16	●	17	18	19	20	21
						Nat'l Day of the Cowboy
23	24	●	25	26	27	28
Parents' Day						29
30	31					
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# One-on-one Business Assistance

We offer free coaching on topics like accounting, marketing, and business planning. At Brain & Body Balancing in North Platte, Nebraska, Desiree Aragon provides empowerment coaching. She helps young people build successful lives, and the Center helps her build a thriving business.



With your support,  
we assisted **930 clients**  
in **4,324 one-on-one**  
**counseling sessions** this year.

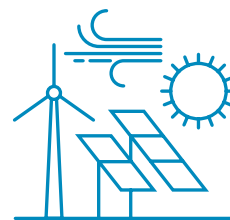
# AUGUST 2023

JULY							SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31												

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		● 1	2	3	4	5
 <div data-bbox="262 406 735 511" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Our staff is available for one-on-one business counseling. Call 402.687.2100 or email <a href="mailto:wbc@cfra.org">wbc@cfra.org</a>.</p> </div>				Nat'l Watermelon Day		
6	7	● 8	9	10	11	12
Nat'l Farmers Market Week (6 - 12)—Visit your community market for fresh produce and locally-made products!		Nat'l Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day—Need we say more?	Nat'l Book Lovers Day			
13	14	15	● 16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	● 24	25	26
27	28	29	● 30	31		Women's Equality Day
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# Clean Energy Future


The future of renewable energy is being decided in county-level board rooms across rural America. Local officials determine zoning standards, draft ordinances, and approve permits. With your input and support, we provide resources on setback distances, environmental compliance, and decommissioning plans.



We engaged **163 people**— including local decision makers— on transitioning to a clean power grid. Pictured, supporters in Polk County, Iowa.

# SEPTEMBER 2023

AUGUST							OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			29	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>Learn more at <a href="https://cfra.org/clean-energy">cfra.org/clean-energy</a>.</p>					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Labor Day	Center for Rural Affairs founded on this day in 1973—50 years of serving Rural America!		Nat'l Acorn Squash Day	Stand Up to Cancer Day	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Grandparents' Day	Patriot Day				Rosh Hashanah (15 - 17)	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Nat'l Farm Safety & Health Week (17 - 23)		Talk Like a Pirate Day—Celebrate RRRural Amerrrica!				First Day of Autumn—Take a drive through rural America to find fall colors!
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Yom Kippur (24 - 25)						
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# Increasing Latino Entrepreneurship

Our new immigrant neighbors are helping revitalize many rural communities. Providing small business workshops, coaching, and access to capital removes barriers to opportunity for entrepreneurs like Veronica Piñon of Piñon Market in Kearney, Nebraska.



Last year, we provided **23 loans** totaling **\$1,409,010** to Latino entrepreneurs and home owners.



# OCTOBER 2023



Interested in starting a small business in Nebraska? Find your local loan specialist at [cfra.org/lending-staff](http://cfra.org/lending-staff).

SEPTEMBER							NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2				1	2	3	4	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 Indigenous Peoples' Day	10	11	12 Nat'l Farmer's Day— #ThankAFarmer on social media.	13	14
15 International Day of Rural Women	16 Boss's Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 Halloween		Nat'l Pumpkin Day		

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# Nurturing Native Food Systems

All rural communities deserve opportunities to flourish. The Center partners with UMÓ<sup>n</sup>HO<sup>n</sup> Nation and Santee Sioux to empower local residents in growing healthy food and creating business. Your support builds community-based solutions for equity, justice, and prosperity.



We provided **43 food and nutrition workshops** attended by **456 participants**.





# Preserving Soil Health

We work with farmers like Sharon Oamek to protect soil in sensitive areas like the Loess Hills of Iowa. Sharon's dairy goats eat invasive species while helping reinvigorate the native prairie grasses.



Sharon benefited from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, a USDA program that invested **\$1.26 billion** in working lands conservation practices last year.



# DECEMBER 2023

NOVEMBER							JANUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30			28	29	30	31			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>Hear from Sharon Oamek on our YouTube Channel at <a href="https://youtube.com/c/CfraOrg">youtube.com/c/CfraOrg</a>.</p>					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> ●	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
				Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and Hanukkah (7 - 15)		
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> ●	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
Human Rights Day						
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> ●	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
				First Day of Winter		
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> ●	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
Christmas Eve	Christmas					
<b>31</b>						
New Year's Eve	<b>CENTER <i>for</i> RURAL AFFAIRS</b>   <b>CFRA.ORG</b>					

# Working for Rural America

With you, the Center is a change and thought leader in rural America. Our staff spans four states, and our supporters span the nation. We live in, work in, and love our rural communities. Pictured are board, staff, clients, and supporters from the past year.

Thank you 2022 Board Members:

Dennis Demmel, President  
Jay Hall, Vice President  
Barbara Dilly, Secretary  
Chuck Karpf, Treasurer  
Leverne Barrett  
Krista Dittman  
Melissa Florell  
Greg Fripp  
Ross Larson  
Amanda McKinney  
Nancy Meyer  
Karina Perez  
Amy Sandeen  
Paul Swanson  
Jane Yule



This calendar illustrates the impact you helped achieve during the past year. We appreciate your commitment to creating vibrant family farms and ranches, small businesses, and communities. Thank you from the staff and board of the Center for Rural Affairs.



CENTER for  
RURAL AFFAIRS

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For our latest financial and donor information, please visit [cfra.org](http://cfra.org). The Center for Rural Affairs is an equal opportunity employer and provider.