

# CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

## 2017 CALENDAR & ANNUAL REPORT



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

Dear Friends,

With the new year ahead, I invite you to reflect on the progress we made together this year.

With your help, new immigrants have a stronger sense of home in their new communities, more businesses are open in our small towns, and rural people across the country are making their voices heard.

Before you flip through the pages to see all you helped accomplish in 2016, I'd like to share a few of my favorites:

You and I both know that small towns are rich in history and culture. Our storefront theater project in our hometown of Lyons, Neb., won recognition from Americans for the Arts, a national program that recognizes the most compelling public art. Together we're proving that small towns everywhere are interesting places.

Your support helped us offer small business owners a hand up. In 2016, we placed \$1.7 million in loan capital with 123 small town businesses. This included \$470,350 lent to Latino entrepreneurs. This is money invested directly in our small towns.

Your voice helped lay the groundwork for a national campaign to reform crop insurance, bringing together farmers and partners from across the nation. We'll look to you again in the new year to help drive this campaign forward.

This coming year is sure to bring a new set of challenges for rural America and the people who call it home. We'll face these challenges head-on, and with you by our side, I'm confident that we'll turn challenges into opportunity again in 2017.

With deep gratitude for all you do,



Brian Depew,  
Executive Director



Executive Director Brian Depew stands on Main Street in Lyons, Neb. The Center's home office is in this small town of 850 people. Brian and the rest of Center staff are rooted in rural America, living the challenges and values of small towns and the rural way of life.

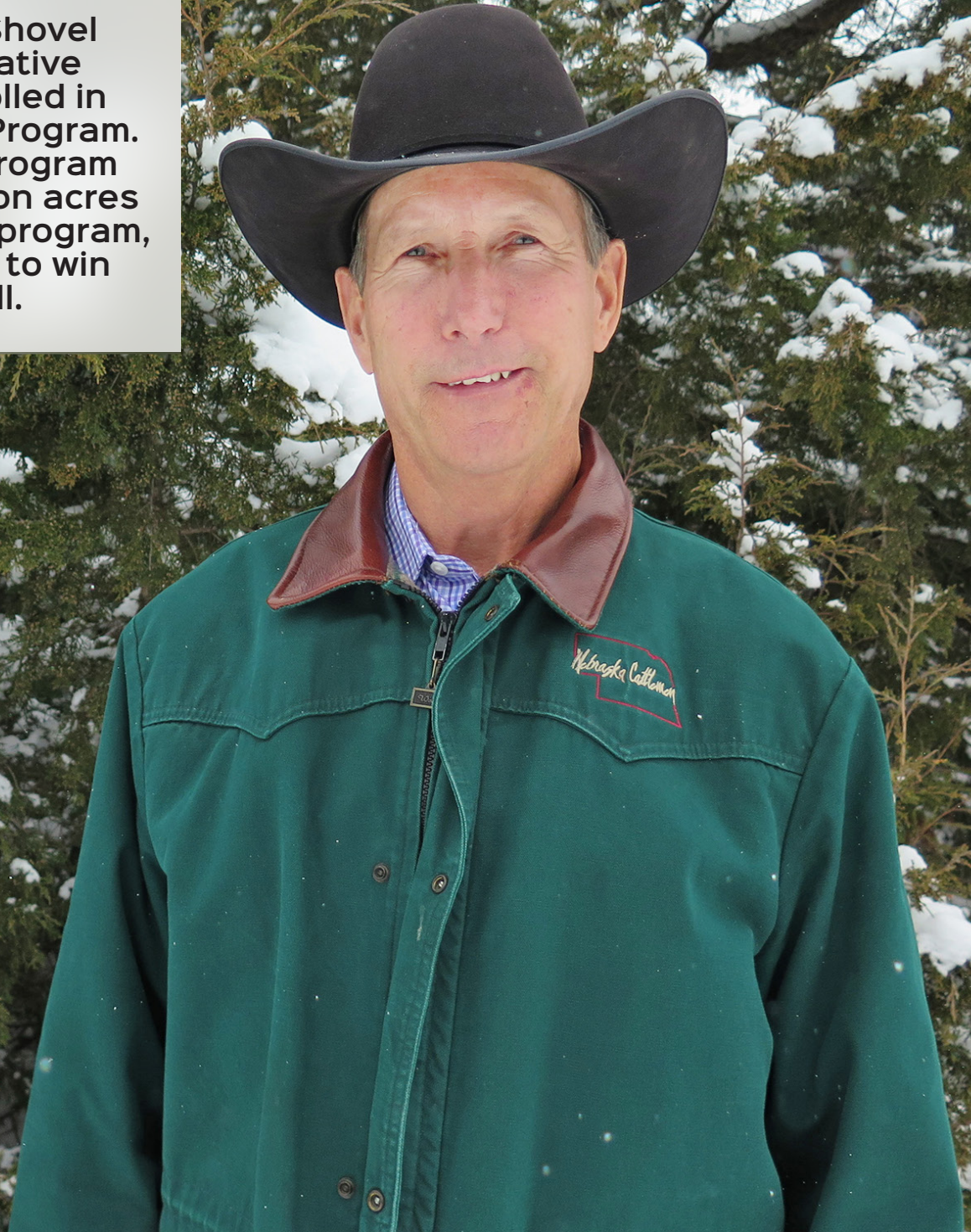
P.S. My work takes me to all corners of the country. Wherever I go, I try to visit with Center supporters. My conversations with you are among the most rewarding things I do. It's your support, your ideas and your energy that truly make all of the work we do possible. Thank you.

# YOUR 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Sat down with 35 policymakers in Nebraska, across the Midwest and in Washington, D.C. to make sure your voice is heard in policy debates. Some of you joined us on these visits. Thank you!
- Exceeded \$14 million in small business lending in the history of the Center. Each loan represents a hard working entrepreneur working to create opportunity and a vibrant community.
- Worked to rebuild food systems on two reservations, assisting 150 families with gardens, 80 local members with market vending, and hosting over 2,200 customers at a local market.
- Launched an effort to connect beginning farmers to retiring farmers with expiring federal farm conservation contracts. The project will expand use of a provision you helped win in the 2014 Farm Bill.
- Hosted three Women's Learning Circles with 42 participants focusing on soil health, greenhouses and livestock management. Women are leaders in expanding conservation practices on farmland.
- Launched a new loan to provide financing up to \$150,000, and created a new credit builder loan to give everyone the chance to build good credit history. This was based on input from loan clients.
- Laid the groundwork for a campaign to win reforms in the upcoming farm bill debate to invest in conservation, give beginning farmers a hand up, and boost rural development programs.
- Enrolled nearly 10 million acres in the Conservation Stewardship Program, a federal farm conservation program you helped win. That's 2.3 million more acres than last year's sign-up.
- Provided coaching to 50 Latino beginning farmers. Three received USDA loans for land or equipment, sparking widespread interest among other Latino farmers in their communities.
- Hosted the play "Map of My Kingdom" about farmland transfer. Following the play, local farm families exploring their own farm transitions engaged in dialogue with one another.
- Hosted the Midwest Farm to School Conference with 150 participants from five states, a network working together to boost local farm sales and increase healthy food on school lunch trays.
- Led a five-state network working to develop clean energy infrastructure in ways that reflect local priorities and that address community concerns.
- Worked alongside you and in partnership with allies to close the health insurance gap that leaves 2.6 million Americans without health insurance.
- Reached 2,372 businesses with planning, accounting and marketing training. More than 63 percent were women, 48 percent Latino, and 75 percent low to moderate income. We work where the need is greatest.
- Reached out to lawmakers to support legislation strengthening rural hospital funding, in response to data showing 76 rural hospitals closed since 2010, and that one-third of rural hospitals are suffering financial distress.

# Conservation

Homer Buell and his family run Shovel Dot Ranch. The Buells are innovative conservationists, and have enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program. That is a federal conservation program that has helped protect 86 million acres nationwide. You helped win the program, and soon we will need your help to win renewal of it in the 2018 Farm Bill.



# JANUARY 2017

90 percent of American land is rural.  
#RuralMatters



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 Nat'l Compliment Day - Say something nice about rural America	25	26	27	28 Nat'l Seed Swap Day - Exchange with your friends!
29	30	31				



## Arts and Culture

The Good Living Tour stopped in 12 Nebraska small towns, bringing all original, live bands with them. With your help, we sponsored the tour. You are helping demonstrate that small towns can be interesting places. This month, show your love for the arts and rural America by posting on social media using #LoveRuralAm.

# FEBRUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>Take a photo, compose a poem or write a story on why you #LoveRuralAm. Email info@cfra.org or share with us on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. We can't wait to hear from you!</p>		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	Groundhog Day	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day			Nat'l Random Acts of Kindness Day - What will you do?	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Nat'l FFA Week (Feb. 19 - 25)	Presidents' Day & Washington's Birthday					
26	27	28				



## **New Americans**

**An influx of immigrant families is driving change in many rural communities. In Schuyler, Neb., individuals saw the potential to harness this change for good. They started a committee with the idea that “we are all proud to live in this community – it is home.” We are working with community leaders to help build places where all voices are heard.**



# MARCH 2017



Check out our leadership guide for rural communities at [cfra.org/community-development](http://cfra.org/community-development)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Nat'l Pig Day			
● 5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			Int'l Women's Day			
● 12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Daylight Savings Begins					St. Patrick's Day	
19	● 20	21	22	23	24	25
Nat'l Poultry Day	First Day of Spring	Nat'l Ag Day				
26	● 27	28	29	30	31	
Nat'l Spinach Day			Nat'l Mom and Pop Business Owners Day			

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## Your Voices Heard

Charlie Johnson talks about organic farming and conservation on his farm near Madison, S.D. We visited with 33 farmers, ranchers and others on topics from soil conservation to crop insurance to federal farm policy. This stop was one of three on our Let's Talk Tour in South Dakota. We make sure voices like Charlie's are heard in local and national policy debates.



# APRIL 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday				
	<p>Making a donation to the Center for Rural Affairs means more work can be done to support the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Visit <a href="http://cfra.org/give">cfra.org/give</a> to keep this work strong.</p>					1				
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 April Fool's Day				
9	10	11	12	13	14 World Health Day	15				
Nat'l Library Week (April 9 - 15) - visit your rural library	Nat'l Farm Animals Day	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
Easter Sunday	Nat'l Haiku Poetry Day - Can you write one about rural living?	Tax Day	Nat'l Garlic Day	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
			Administrative Professionals Day		Arbor Day					
30										
Nat'l Small Business Week (April 30 - May 6) #DreamSmallBiz										

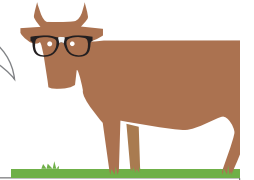


## Small Business

In 2016, we invested \$1,739,880 in 123 businesses. This puts us at #7 in the nation for Small Business Administration microloans placed. An additional 2,372 entrepreneurs benefited from training and one-on-one assistance. We work one business at a time to build the rural economy. Entrepreneurs who work hard and dream big make it possible.

# MAY 2017

Need business training?  
 Wondering about financing options?  
 Look into our assistance and training  
 opportunities at [cfra.org/reap](http://cfra.org/reap)



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						



## Local Food Systems

Sharon Freemont's granddaughter, Maddy, benefits from one of the more than 150 gardens we helped community members plant last summer on the Santee Sioux and Omaha Nation Reservations. With your help, we are working with the community to improve access to fresh and nutritious food. These are some proud gardeners!

# JUNE 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				● 1	2	3
	<p>Our goal is to create food production and distribution systems that will provide affordable fresh food for all, protect the environment, and keep money circulating in the local economy.</p>					
4	5	6	7	8	● 9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	● 17
		Nat'l Weed Your Garden Day	Flag Day	Global Wind Day		
18	19	20	21	22	● 23	24
Father's Day			First Day of Summer			
25	26	27	28	29	● 30	
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## Beginning, Latino Farmers

Hilda Moreno, Carlos Alvarado Vega, and their two sons raise chickens, pheasants, geese and goats. They are beginning Latino farmers who wanted better, fresher food, so they took the challenge to grow it themselves. Now they want to grow enough to sell to area schools, too! Your gifts support our work with families like Hilda's.





# JULY 2017



Watch your mailbox this month for a special opportunity to help fund our work. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Independence Day				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Nat'l Independent Retailers Week (July 16 - 22) #shoplocal						Nat'l Day of the Cowboy
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Parents' Day						
30	31					
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## Farm Policy

Center staff Anna Johnson, third from left, talks about farm policy reform with U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley, far right, in Washington, D.C. We work with you and allies to make sure our voices are heard in Washington. Together we are a voice speaking out on farm policy, clean energy, rural development and health policy.

# AUGUST 2017

We focus on the issues you care about - strong rural communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship and genuine opportunity for all.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Nat'l Watermelon Day	11	12
Nat'l Farmers Market Week (Aug. 6 - 12)		Nat'l Sneak Some Zucchini Into Your Neighbor's Porch Day	Nat'l Book Lovers Day			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						Women's Equality Day
27	28	29	30	31		
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# Expanded Services

Brittany Sage opened Cut It Out Salon in her hometown. A loan from our Rural Enterprise Assistance Project helped her with equipment, inventory and working capital. When she had the opportunity to purchase a building, we helped finance that, too! In 2016, we also launched a new credit builder loan. This will help entrepreneurs like Brittany build their credit at the same time as they build their businesses.

This business matters.

**REAP**  
RURAL ENTERPRISE ASSISTANCE PROJECT



**CUT IT OUT**  
SALON  
308-745-5266



# SEPTEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>Holy cow! Our lending program exceeded \$14 million in small business loans in more than 26 years. Your donations make work supporting rural businesses and communities possible. Donate here: <a href="http://cfra.org/give">cfra.org/give</a></p>					1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Labor Day	The Center founded this day in 1973		Nat'l Acorn Squash Day	Stand up to Cancer Day	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Grandparents Day	Patriot Day					
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Nat'l Farm Safety & Health Week (Sept. 17 - 23)		Talk Like a Pirate Day - celebrate in RRRural Arrmerica			First Day of Autumn	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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## Farm to School

We believe all students should have access to fresh and local food. Your support is helping us connect local farmers to local schools, putting fresh and healthy food on lunch trays and creating new markets for farmers. We work with schools like Prairie Hill Learning Center (pictured), where the administration is committed to serving 75 percent local food during the growing season.

# OCTOBER 2017

October is National Farm to School Month. Check out [cfra.org/f2s](http://cfra.org/f2s) to see how we're celebrating. #F2SMonth



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Boss's Day

45th Anniversary of Clean Water Act

Nat'l Farmer's Day  
#ThankAFarmer

Nat'l Nut Day

Nat'l Pumpkin Day

Halloween



## Clean Energy

We are working across eight states to facilitate clean energy development. In Mower County, Minn., the revenue from local wind farms is dedicated to road repair and maintenance. Wind energy injects new tax revenue into local budgets, provides payments to landowners, and creates jobs in manufacturing, construction and maintenance.



# NOVEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>We've done quite a bit of research on clean energy. Take a look at fact sheets, white papers and more at: <a href="http://cfra.org/publications">cfra.org/publications</a></p>		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Daylight Savings Time Ends		Election Day				Veterans Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
			Philanthropy Day			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
						Small Business Saturday - What's your favorite rural business? #ShopSmall
26	27	28	29	30		
		#GivingTuesday - Will you donate to our rural work today? <a href="http://www.cfra.org/give">www.cfra.org/give</a>				



## Standing Up for Family Farms

With you, we confronted corporate agribusiness power. In 2016, we spoke out against mega-mergers in the seed and chemical sector. Years of pressure in D.C. helped push livestock market fairness rules toward the finish line. And we cheered on as voters in North Dakota restored the state's corporate farming ban.

# DECEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
	<p>Join us in supporting family farms and ranches by including the Center for Rural Affairs in your year-end giving plans. Donate here: <a href="http://cfra.org/give">cfra.org/give</a></p>					
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Human Rights Day				Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
				First Day of Winter		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Christmas Eve	Christmas					
31						
New Year's Eve						



# CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

## 2017 CALENDAR & ANNUAL REPORT



This calendar illustrates the impact your support helped us achieve in the last 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.

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FOR OUR LATEST FINANCIAL AND DONOR INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT [www.CFRA.ORG](http://www.CFRA.ORG)