



SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF
RURAL HEALTH

Investment. Opportunity. Health.

**Non-Profit Office of Rural Health
Steps Up to Streamline State Efforts
for Rural**

Session Agenda

- ORH + SC = SCORH
- SCORH Food Systems History + Connections
- SC Community Food Alliance
- Up Next

Office of Rural Health 101

- All 50 states have a State Office of Rural Health (SORH).
- Every state receives a portion of their funding from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy through the SORH Grant program, which began in 1991.
- Primary Objectives with funding:
 - Coordinate rural healthcare activities in states in order to avoid duplication
 - Provide technical assistance to public and non-profit private entities

SOUTH CAROLINA AT A GLANCE

STATE POPULATION:

5,282,634

2022 US CENSUS ACS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES

Rural population **32%**

Urban population **68%**

NUMBER OF:

Critical access hospitals: **3**

Rural hospitals: **26**

Rural Health Clinics: **107**

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)/

Community Health Center (CHC) sites: **130**

Free clinic sites: **76**

SCORH ANNUAL BUDGET:

\$11,000,000

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES:

Federal: **21.5%**

State: **32%**

Other: **46.5%**

TYPES OF FEDERAL GRANT SUPPORT RECEIVED:

- **SORH**
- **FLEX**
- **SHIP**
- **OTHER**

Our Drive



With 32% of our state's residents living in rural areas, the South Carolina Office of Rural Health believes in preserving and celebrating the unique character of rural communities.

SCORH Objectives

South Carolina Office of Rural Health is the sole organization in South Carolina that is federally designated to address the health needs in rural communities.



SCORH works with local, state and national partners to:

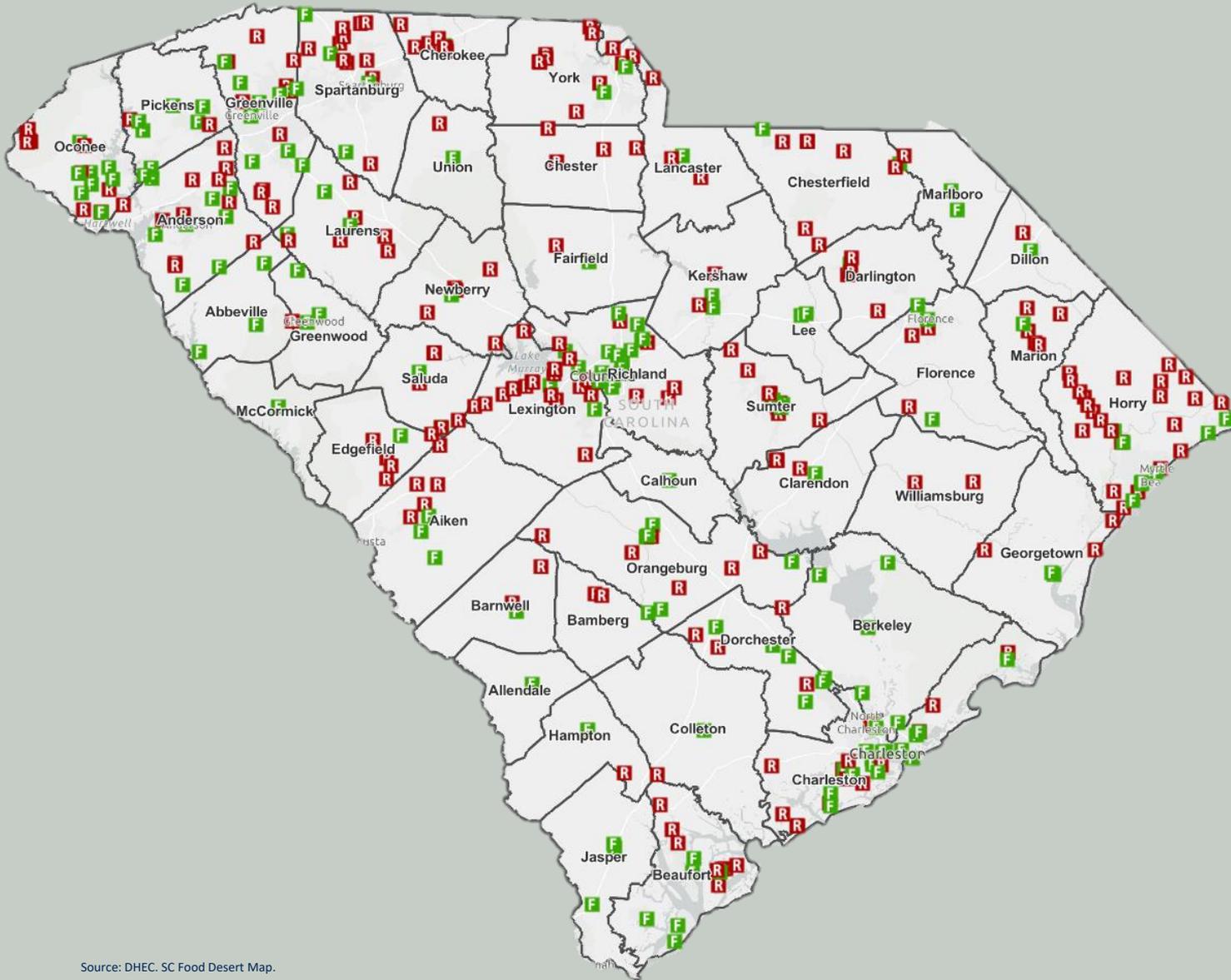
- ✓ increase access to quality health care,
- ✓ improve the social determinants, and
- ✓ connect available resources across the state with local needs in rural communities.

Rural SC Grocers Inventory

Grocery Source	# SC Locations	# in Rural SC	% in Rural SC
IGA	23	12	52%
Piggly Wiggly	47	24	51%
DG Market	18	8	44%
Save-A-Lot	7	3	43%
Roadside markets	161	56	35%
Food Lion	172	39	23%
Aldi's	50	8	16%
Lowe's	18	0	0%

Farmers' and Roadside

Market Locations



Source: DHEC. SC Food Desert Map.

Shrinking rural population and closing of stores

Decreased access to healthy foods; more packaged, highly processed foods

Nutrition crisis in Allendale County - Single IGA store to support 8,000 residents, Since the 2000s, multiple failed attempts to open new stores

Loss of main grocery store in the town of Whitmire

Single Food Lion and farmer's market to accommodate 18,000 residents in Saluda County

Dedicated grocery store finally established in North, SC after 12 years

Grocery tales from Rural South Carolina

de Castro (2023). Years of decline shuttered Allendale County grocery stores. *The People Sentinel*. <https://www.thepeoplesentinel.com/stories/years-of-decline-shuttered-allendale-county-grocery-stores,15020>

SCORH Trajectory into Food Systems

Nearly 1.4 million South Carolina residents call a rural community their home.

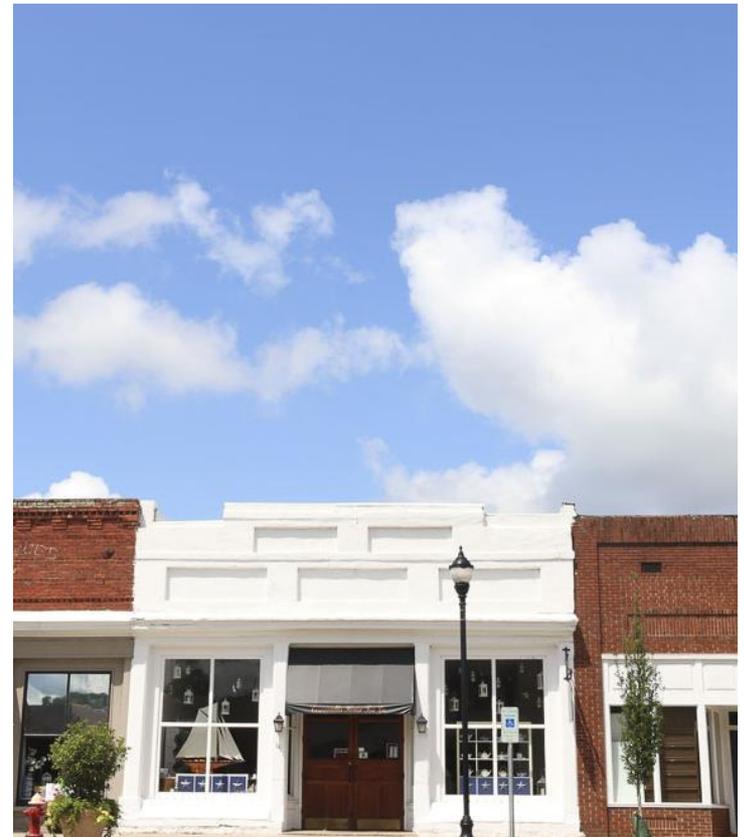
2017 Rural Health Action Plan

- Broad roadmap improving the health status
- Community leader inclusion
- 15 recommendations and 50+ action steps

RuralForwardSC puts the Rural Health Action Plan into motion, in our office and across the state, by:

- Celebrating and replicating successful endeavors in rural communities in South Carolina and across the nation
- Eliminating redundancies and breaking down silos between sectors
- Providing financial and logistical support to innovative, cross-sector ideas
- Coordinating existing federal, state and philanthropic assets

SC Community Food Alliance was formed in 2023 with 5 strategic partners to discuss the specific needs of rural communities around food retail (Grocery Stores)



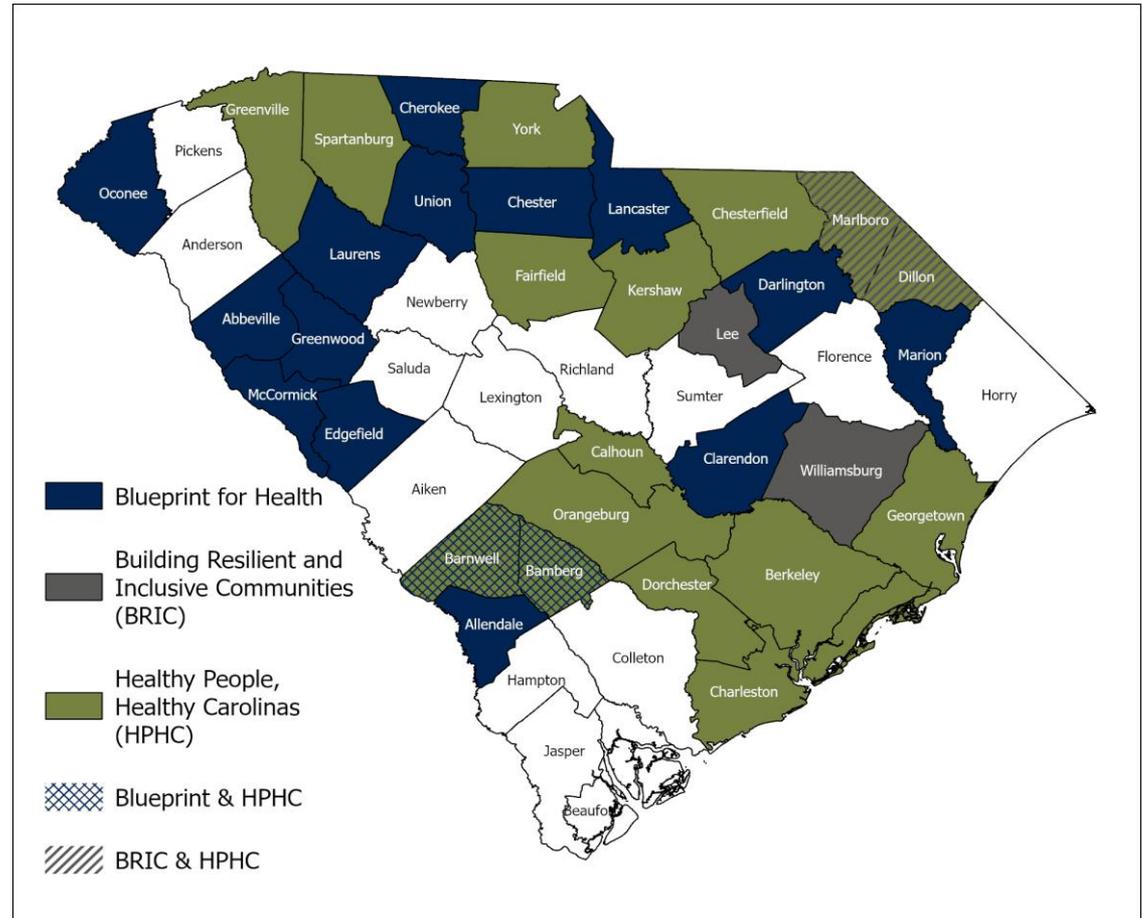
SCORH Food Systems Touchpoints

Statewide

- Food As Medicine
- Rural Resource Coalition
- SC Food Systems Network
- Growing Local SC

Community Support

- Blueprint For Health
- BRIC



Food Programs in Action in SC



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Community Food Alliance



- SC Dept of Commerce
- SC Community Loan Fund
- SC Association of Community Economic Development
- SC Small Business Development Center
- SC Office of Rural Health

Community Food Alliance

The South Carolina Community Food Alliance is a collaborative effort between SCORH, SCACED, SC Department of Commerce, and SCCLF. The partnership is a result of **Growing Local SC**, a 2021 USDA-awarded Regional Food System Partnership (RFSP) project working to formalize a cross-sector local food system network that cultivates a thriving, equitable, inclusive, and resilient food economy providing access to healthy food for all. Guided by Growing Local SC's leadership, the partners formed SC Community Food Alliance, which aligns with the RFSP project goals to **address food system gaps** and **facilitate food access solutions in rural communities** using a multi-prong approach.

Pathways to Food Access

1. Create a Community Food Access Toolkit: Self Assessment and Resource Guide to evaluate the options available, resources they have and may need, and a process for engaging with community members.
2. SCORH's Community Health Transformation team would offer technical assistance to selected Rural community leaders to activate the toolkit and develop a plan for action towards business development.
 - Utilize the Community Food Access Toolkit: Self Assessment and Resource Guide in the community; Discuss the Assessment results; Review Results Based Accountability Action Plan; and, Develop plan to survey community members.
 - Review rural models of food retail with community leaders informed by the results of the Community Food Access Toolkit using examples from the Rural Grocery Institute.
 - At this point, leaders would identify and evaluate potential spaces for revitalization with local officials.
3. Selected entrepreneurs/small business leaders would transition into the Community Loan Fund's entrepreneurship program, where they would complete a pitch deck and business plan with an opportunity to receive seed money.
4. As needed, work with the Small Business Development Center to create business plans and/or operating structure and business entity procedures.

Can we chat?

What challenges have you faced and how did you approach your response?

Who else has proven to be an untraditional ally?

What can I share that I haven't already?

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Thank you!

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