

You are receiving this letter because you are a member of the agricultural community and/or in a position of leadership in our community, and we would love for you to participate in a community visioning event hosted by Rural Revival on Saturday, April 13th at the Prairie Arboretum in Freeman.

The recent USDA census revealed that the number of farms in South Dakota has decreased by nearly 20% in the past 35 years, and the average age of SD farmers is now 56. Because the primary natural resource available to us is farmland (making agriculture the region's economic driver), the health and vitality of our small communities is inextricably linked to the presence and wellbeing of family farms and businesses. Given that there are fewer (and older) people farming, and that we have already witnessed the slow demise of many small towns in the area, it is imperative that we be proactive rather than reactive when it comes to the many demographic and economic changes taking place today. Together, we can begin to form a vision of what we want our future to look like—the first step in ensuring the vitality of the place we call home for generations to come.

Round tables composed of members of agribusinesses, community development, and local schools, as well as current farmers are invited to engage in a morning of discussion & visioning, and we value your insight!

Together, we will explore the following:

- Your hopes and dreams as well as your concerns for the local agriculture and economy.
- What can we (farmers, business people, Rural Revival) be doing to help promote agriculture and its future in this area?

There will be baked goods and coffee available starting at 9:00 a.m. and we will begin discussion at 9:30 a.m., wrapping up close to noon. Names will be drawn for 5 - \$20 Freeman Bucks door prizes. Mark your calendar and please plan to attend!

Sincerely,

Brent Brockmueller,
Rural Revival, President