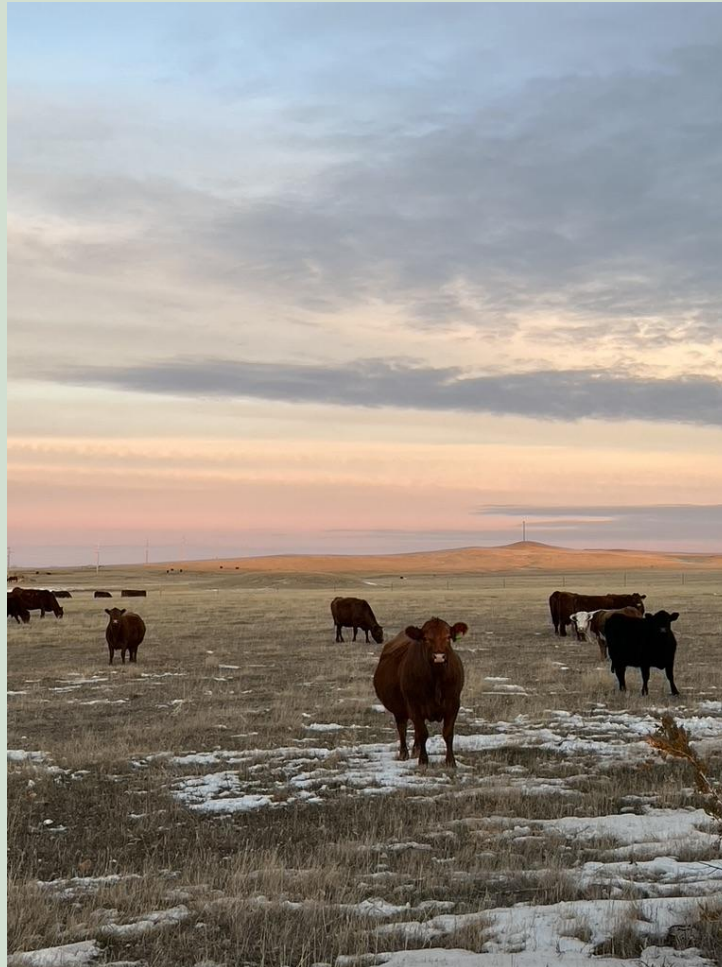


START SMALL, DREAM BIG



Perkins County, SD



The Plan:



We will create an artisan-in-residence program for short- and long-term residencies. Selection of artisans will focus on craftspeople whose source materials are readily available in our region, with an educational component that will benefit the whole community.

Why Artisans?



According to Springboard for the Arts, “Research on creative placemaking and creative community development has demonstrated that there is great impact from art projects and programs across almost all sectors of communities. Economic impact studies of the arts have proved that arts activity is a valuable asset to cities and neighborhoods.”



From late 2020 to early 2021, I served on a strategic planning committee for the South Dakota Arts Council. Our objective was to collate and synthesize data for the SDAC to use in updating their granting policies and other programming, particularly for underserved rural communities such as the one where I reside. Inevitably, when I asked folks "what is the most important problem facing our small towns?" they mentioned rebuilding “Main Streets” and bringing back local commerce as a solution to the grave economic impacts globalization of the supply chain has wrought on our rural communities.

Where we have an economic advantage, however, is with agricultural products that are already being produced here. If operators can find unique and regionally specific methods to brand what they are already producing by adding value in any myriad of ways, we could see a fundamental shift in our local economies.

Goals:



Agritourism

This is not a one-size-fits-all problem. Each producer has their own distinctive infrastructure, needs, interests, and talents, but by presenting versatile, in-person workshops and classes, as well as simply creating the opportunity for spontaneous, informal chats over coffee at the cafe or during visiting hours at the library, ranchers, farmers, and other business owners here will have the chance to bump into creative solutions and innovative strategies for problem solving, as well as learning skills that they can they use to create their own business model.

Supply Chain

Bioregionalism is going to be essential as we lurch toward the uncertain future of a climate changed world. There are movements in that direction occurring all across the country, but because of our isolation, it often takes a while for new ideas to reach us. (Though, ironically, the concept of bioregionalism is not new -- indigenous cultures thrived within it for thousands of years.) An artisan-in-residence program is an opportunity to jumpstart the conversation around some of these big ideas while also creating practical, hands-on instruction as to what this kind of a shift could look like.

Fiber Retreat w/ Kelly Knispel

July 15-17th, 2022



Demo + Workshop at Bison Public Library



Interactive! So fun!



Sheep to Shawl (using local products)



Natural Dyeing



Felting



But most importantly:
multi-generational skill
sharing!!



