

2012 Internet Usage of South Dakota's Ag Producers

results by the numbers



Expanding high speed Internet for all South Dakotans.

SOUTH DAKOTA
BROADBAND



broadband.sd.gov



Contents of Information

- ✓ Introduction

- ✓ Executive Summary
 - ✓ Broadband and Agriculture: What We Know
 - ✓ Demographic Information
 - ✓ Broadband Usage by County
 - ✓ Data and Smartphone Usage
 - ✓ Bringing Home a Computer
 - ✓ Value of Broadband

- ✓ Final Thoughts

- ✓ Get on Board with Broadband in South Dakota

- ✓ Additional Resources and Contact Information



BROADBANDUSA
CONNECTING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES

This publication is funded by a grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) State Broadband Initiative as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

*Printed by the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications
1,000 copies at \$2.66 per copy / Prynt Comm / October 2012*

Introduction

Encouraging increased utilization of broadband in rural areas is a primary focus of South Dakota's Broadband Initiative (SDBI), which is part of a national effort to determine availability and capacity of broadband services throughout the country. This initiative is funded through a grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, a federal agency, through the State Broadband and Development Program. Under this program, broadband is defined as "high-speed, continuously available Internet access." Increased broadband utilization will be accomplished by providing broadband education, access, equipment and support; particularly where broadband technology has been underutilized.

Increasing utilization of services requires an assessment of current utilization. This is done by collecting service information from South Dakota's telecommunication providers, through mapping of Internet speed test results and through surveys designed to capture both utilization measures and anecdotal evidence on the impact of broadband access. These surveys will be delivered to various demographic subsets of South Dakota's population. The first such survey was delivered to South Dakota agricultural producers earlier this year. This document provides an overview of the results gleaned from that survey.



Executive Summary

In early 2012 (January - March) the South Dakota Broadband Initiative (SDBI) conducted the *Internet Usage in South Dakota's Agricultural Community* survey. This survey aimed to discover the impact of broadband on current agricultural operations in South Dakota.

In partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), this **24-question survey was delivered to 6,500 agricultural producers** across South Dakota. Advertising efforts helped promote and increase awareness of the survey. If USDA did not receive a completed survey a second survey was mailed and follow-up calls were made to any secondary non-respondents. **The results shown in the following pages are aggregated from 2,338 respondents, a 36 percent response rate.** Respondents who were not agricultural producers were excluded along with those indicating they received no income from agriculture production.

This publication provides a high-level overview of survey results. The full report can be found online at broadband.sd.gov or by email request to broadband@state.sd.us.

It is our hope that this publication helps describe how broadband services are utilized by South Dakota agricultural producers and the positive impact these services have had on their operations.

The survey was conducted as part of the South Dakota Broadband Initiative by the state Bureau of Information and Telecommunications in cooperation with the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Broadband & Agriculture what we know

#1 industry in
South Dakota
is agriculture

42% of respondents
utilize the
Internet daily

92%
of respondents
have a cell phone

\$41-\$60
average monthly rate paid for
broadband Internet services

**65% of agricultural producers utilize the Internet
to check the price of commodities with
30% of them checking the prices DAILY.**

\$20.7 billion
agricultural economic impact each year

"...agriculture is the life-blood of South Dakota."

Broadband & Agriculture more of what we know

Agricultural producers believe telecommunication providers supply a quality service.

92% are **SATISFIED** with the reliability of their broadband connection.

94% are **SATISFIED** with the different features and services offered.

While away from their agricultural operation, 66% of respondents indicated they *did not* connect wirelessly to the Internet. Of those who *did* connect, 1 in 3 utilized a “Wi-Fi Hotspot.”

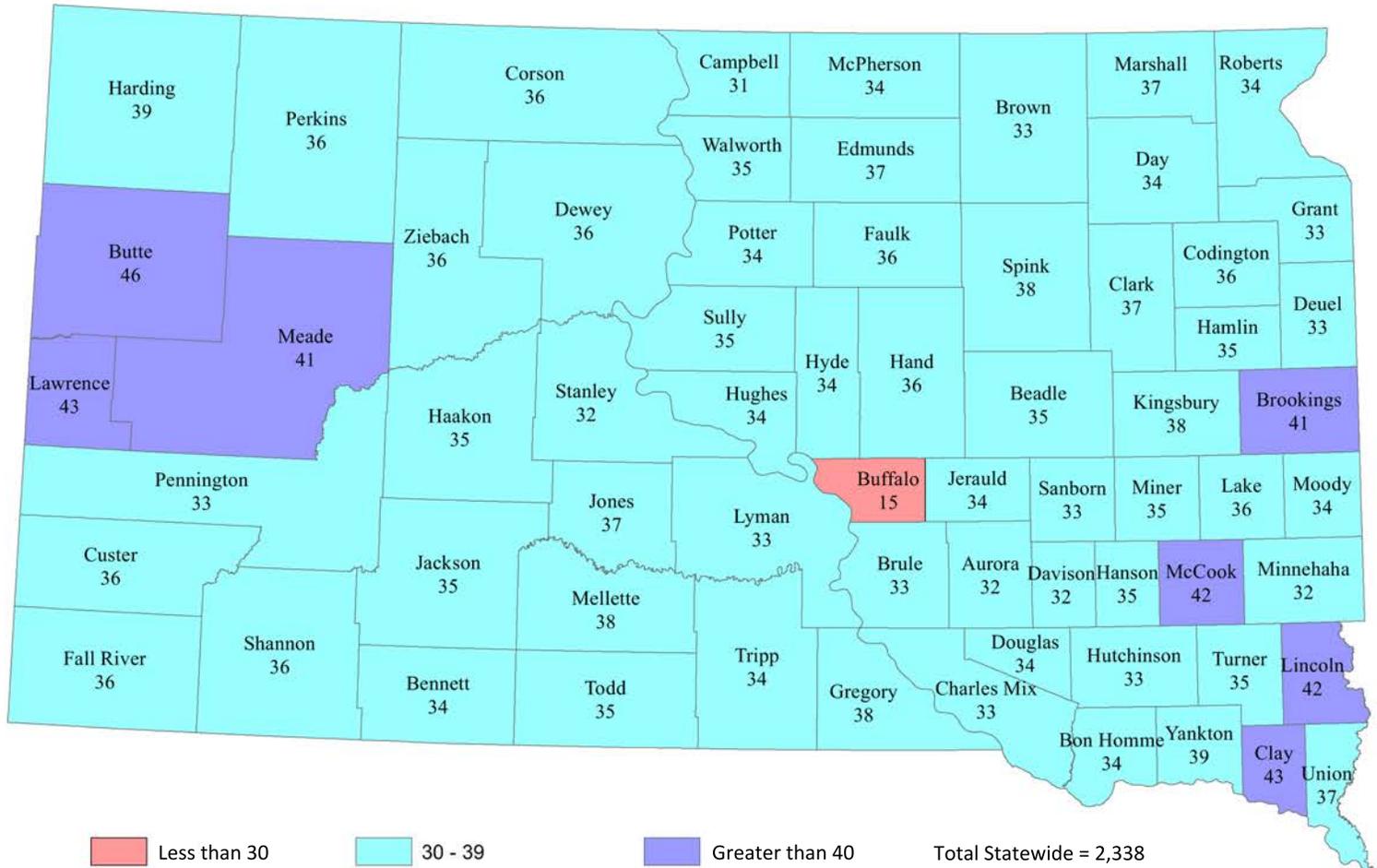
92% of **28-34 year olds** use the Internet for multiple agriculture related activities and those who are **55-64 years old** use it **79%** of the time for multiple agriculture related activities.

75% of those with a higher education beyond high school said the Internet is a “must have.”



Demographic Information

Internet Usage in South Dakota's Agricultural Community
Survey Responses by County



Survey responses were received from agricultural producers in all counties. Some respondents who live across the border, but farm or ranch in South Dakota, are also included in the survey.

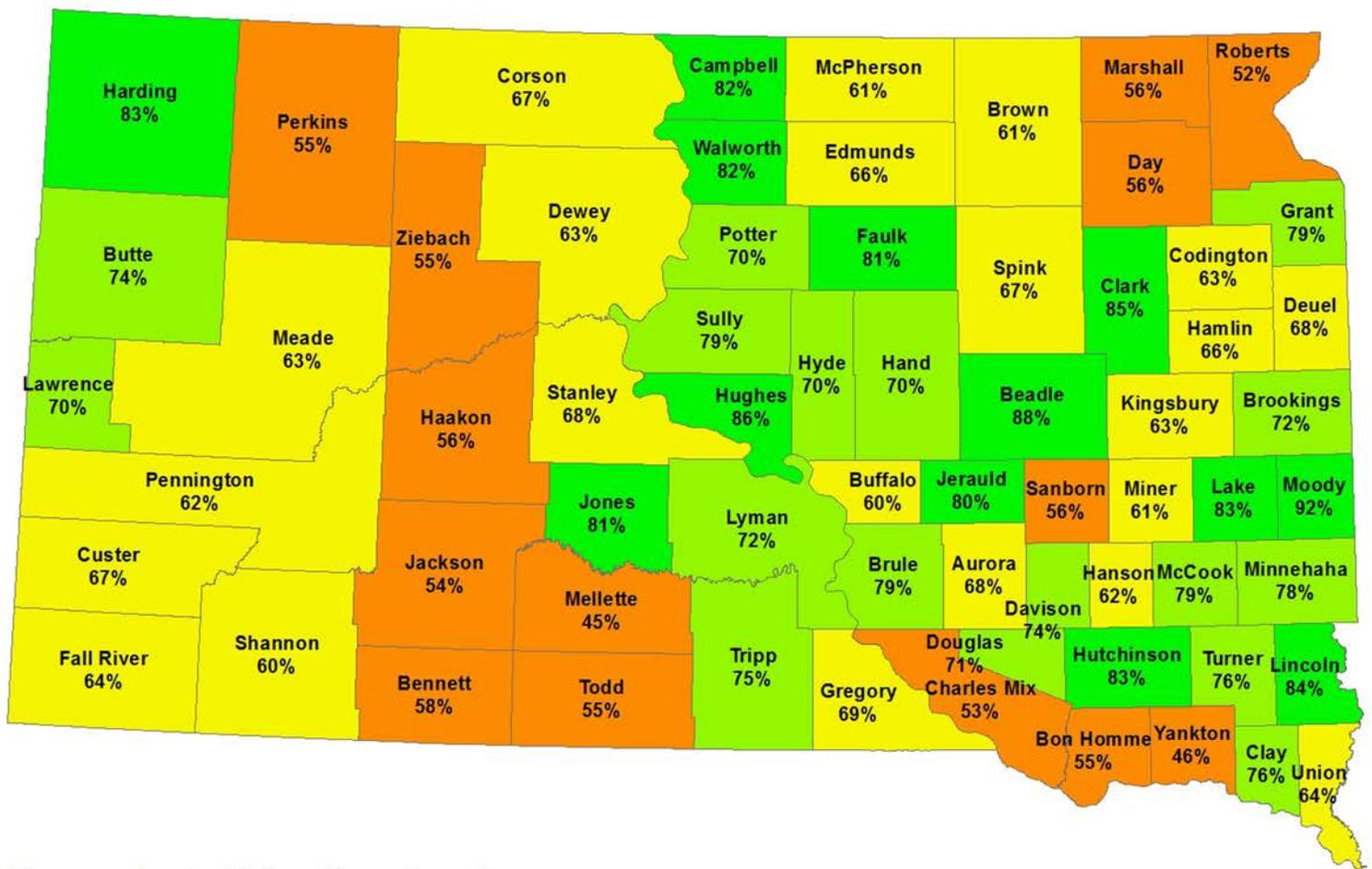
MORE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- 83% of respondents are age 45 or older
- 59% of respondents are over the age of 55
- 69% utilize the Internet at some point for ag operations
- 64% have an education beyond a high school diploma
- 52% have a gross farm income of less than \$100,000

Broadband Usage by County

The map below depicts the percentage of survey respondents who utilize broadband services by county. A “broadband user” is identified as a respondent who indicated they used the Internet as part of their agricultural operation multiple times a day, daily, monthly or occasionally.

Agricultural Users of Broadband - By County - 2012

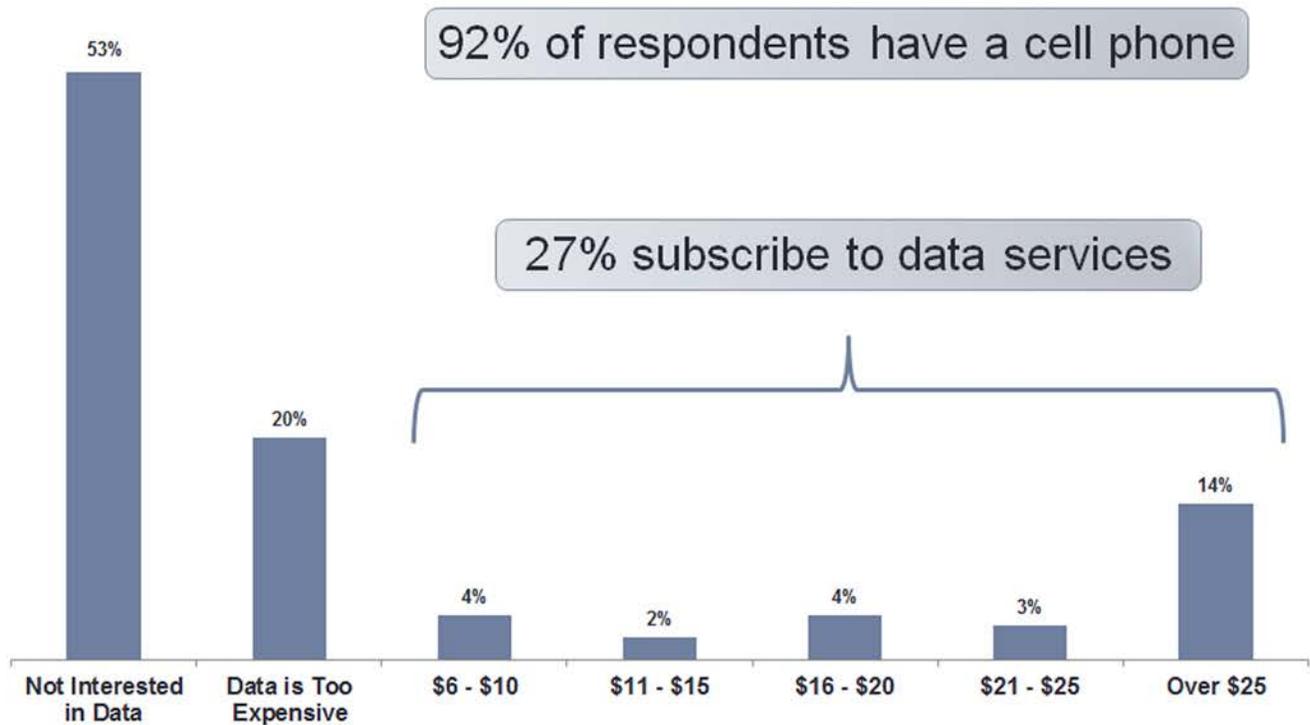


Respondents Using Broadband



Data & Smartphone Usage

Data Services / Smartphone Usage in Ag Operations



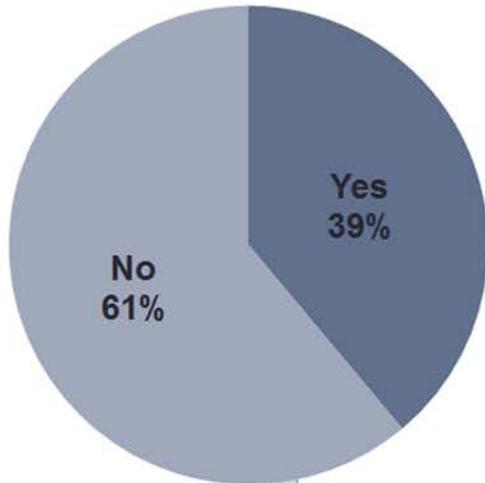
Cellular coverage is a concern with many respondents. Smartphones and data plans are of interest if reliable services are available; however basic cell phone coverage is unreliable in many locations throughout the state. Learn more by viewing the broadband maps at broadband.sd.gov/Mapping.aspx.

Respondents wonder if data plans are worthwhile when basic cell phone coverage is not consistent; indicating they do not want to buy something and not get what they are paying for.

72% of those with a cell phone indicate they use broadband in their ag operation.

Bringing Home a Computer

Does anyone in your family ever bring home a computer in order to work from home?

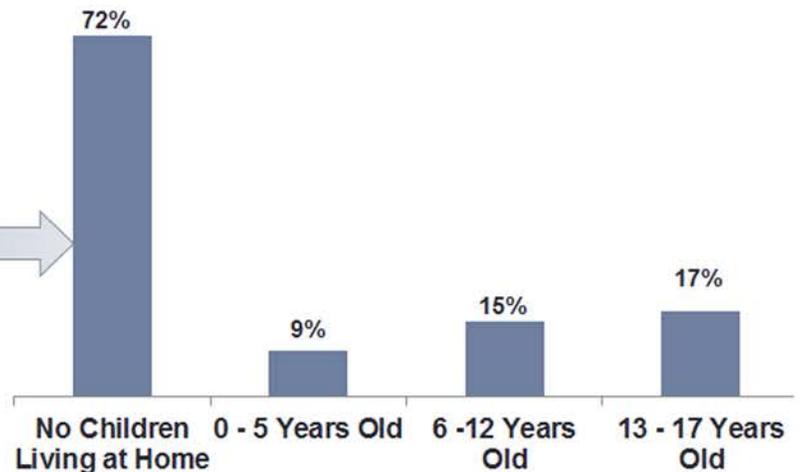


Challenge to ensure providers cover agricultural locations

If no children there, why build?

Initially alarming, but explained by a lack of school-age children at home

Do you have school-age children living with you?



At first glance, it was a concern that only 39 percent of respondents were bringing home a computer. After analyzing the data, the real cause for the lower percentage is that the majority of those filling out the survey do not have children living at home.

If a respondent has children living at home, 57 percent bring home a computer. That percentage increases to as high as 70 percent if the children are between 13-17 years old, which can be attributed to the K-12 one-to-one laptop initiatives in school districts across South Dakota.

Value of Broadband

As we looked closer at the age of the producer and their usage of broadband, the likelihood of not being a user increases with age.



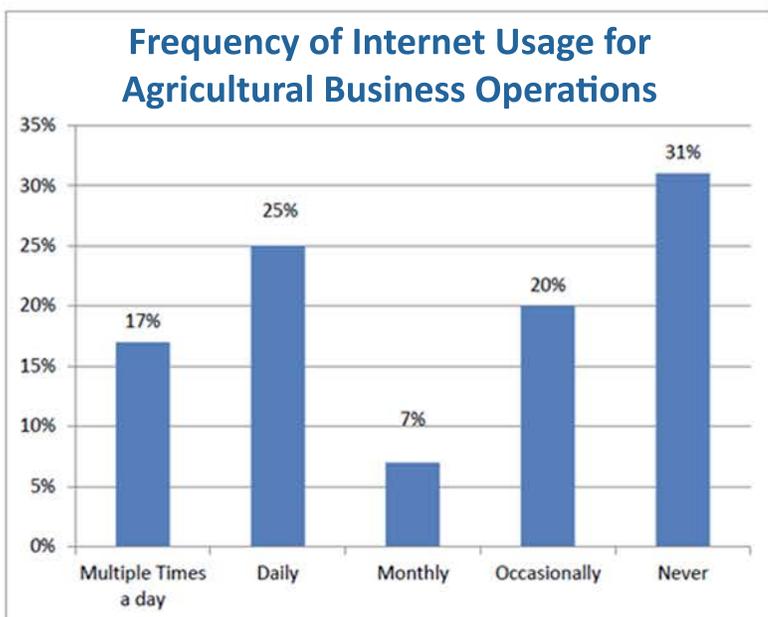
34%

rank the value of the Internet to their agricultural operation as a “must have.”

85%

indicate the Internet adds value to their agricultural operations, driving desires to push harder to increase broadband for agricultural producers.

Results below are based on reports from South Dakota agricultural producers, with the two main types of operations being livestock/poultry (52%) and crops (48%).



42% utilize the Internet daily for their agricultural operation needs.

45% access weather reports daily.

30% check prices of commodities daily.

Final Thoughts

If you were one of the 2,338 agricultural producers who helped our state's broadband team gather data and information, **we thank you**. With your responses and comments to the *2012 Internet Usage in South Dakota's Agricultural Community* survey, you have contributed to a state and national effort to help improve broadband connectivity in rural areas, and most importantly, in your communities.

Based on comments received, it may be prudent to run the survey again in the future, as many respondents indicate they are just now obtaining connections or new services. Some who had Internet services for a short time are still learning how to use them effectively, therefore we know it is important to continue with our research and continue to provide education and outreach on how important broadband, speed and connections are to agricultural operations throughout South Dakota.



Get on Board with Broadband in South Dakota

Take a Broadband Speed Test.

The quickest and easiest way to help is to take a broadband speed test at speedtest.sd.gov. We encourage everyone in South Dakota to support the state Broadband Initiative by conducting the speed test, as many times in as many places as possible. In fact, take the speed test more than once, since speeds will vary, based on many variables such as time of day.

Tell us more about the services.

In addition to conducting the speed test, contact us with any additional details on broadband services or the lack of services in your area.

Tell us your story.

How has broadband changed your life? Do you have a story you would like to share? Please share your story by visiting broadband.sd.gov.

Be Informed - Stay Informed.

Educate yourself on the benefits of broadband. Find out what new and innovative technologies are available as a result of “always on” high speed Internet. Check out broadband.sd.gov to stay informed with the most current information and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

Take a survey.

As part of our planning and strategies we need to first determine the current broadband availability and usage. These surveys help determine how citizens are currently utilizing broadband Internet, if they have access, if they do not have access and what barriers exist, as well as other future needs of relevant sectors across the state. All online surveys are available at broadband.sd.gov. If you need a paper survey, contact us and one can be mailed to you.

Tell us where Public Wi-Fi Hotspots are located.

Let us know where you access broadband from Public Wi-Fi Hotspot locations. As we collect this data, it will be mapped out for all citizens to know where they can connect to these locations.

How can telecommunication providers get involved?

Participation from telecommunication providers is critical to the success of the Broadband Initiative. Almost all providers in South Dakota are involved in helping provide data or other methods of involvement.

What is a Community Anchor Institution and what role do they play in the initiative?

Community Anchor Institutions include libraries, community centers, schools, universities, police departments, fire stations, clinics, government and tribal offices. Community Anchor Institutions need a solid computing environment to be successful. Technical consulting and planning is available at no cost to qualifying participants. Visit broadband.sd.gov to learn more.

Additional Resources

For more information on the results of the *2012 Internet Usage in South Dakota's Agricultural Community* survey, please visit broadband.sd.gov. A more in-depth analysis of the survey data is available in different ways:

- ✓ Results of each individual survey question.
- ✓ Cross tabulation tables to understand how two survey items relate.
- ✓ Question results by county to compare with others.

For detailed information and additional documentation of the statements made and data gathered in this publication, please visit any of the resources listed below.

SOUTH DAKOTA LINKS

South Dakota Broadband Initiative

- ✓ www.broadband.sd.gov

State Broadband Grantees in South Dakota

- ✓ www2.ntia.doc.gov/south-dakota

Project Descriptions and Reports

- ✓ www2.ntia.doc.gov/grantee/south-dakota-bureau-of-information-telecommunications

Agriculture in South Dakota

- ✓ www.sdda.sd.gov/
- ✓ www.sdreadytowork.com/media/docs/Misc/SDProfile.pdf
- ✓ www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/state-fact-sheets.aspx
- ✓ www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/South_Dakota/index.asp
- ✓ www.agclassroom.org/kids/stats/southdakota.pdf

FEDERAL LINKS

National Broadband Plan

- ✓ www.broadband.gov

State Broadband Initiative

- ✓ www2.ntia.doc.gov/SBDD

Expanding high speed Internet for all South Dakotans.

**SOUTH DAKOTA
BROADBAND**
broadband.sd.gov



**South Dakota Bureau of Information & Telecommunications
700 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501
605.773.4165 | broadband.sd.gov | broadband@state.sd.us**



**Facebook.com/broadbandsd | YouTube.com/broadbandsd
@broadbandsd**

