

CSU Extension Food Systems Newsletter

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74TH EDITION

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Welcome to the **74th edition** of the Colorado State University Extension Local Food Systems newsletter. As a key resource connecting our CSU team with local and state partners about events, news and opportunities, we are thrilled to see the momentum and growth happening in food systems across the state. As always, the Food Systems work team for CSU Extension is committed to building a stronger network of those who work on systems-based issues.

The distribution of this newsletter is one way to build that network. You can help us be better connected in three ways:

- **Forward** this newsletter to anyone with an interest in local food systems and CSU's programs in this area, and tell them they are welcome to contact us so we can add them to our mailing list.
- **Send us** any events and news from your organization and other partners so that we may share them with our growing readership!
- **Consider writing** a regional update so we can feature updates from Colorado regions in each newsletter. Contact us if you want to be a regional lead!

To assist our readers in finding information, events and programs we may have presented in the past, you can find old issues at: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/cis/localfood.html>.

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COLORADO MARKETMAKER: REGISTER NOW



In recent months the national MarketMaker team has made notable progress in bringing value to its partners. The development of a cattle portal, mobile app, a potential partnership with USDA Ag Marketing Service and updates to the mapping system are all projects underway. It is an exciting time! Throughout 2016, MarketMaker will transition away from Riverside Research to the Global Food and Agriculture Network (GFAN), managed by MarketMaker founders of MarketMaker, Dar and Rich Knipe and Dick Warner. Continue to watch for updates.



Summer is the perfect time to register your farm or agri-business through Colorado's MarketMaker Tool since many locals and travelers are searching for local farms, foods and agritourism options.

Showcase your business with a specialized profile and detail what you have to offer with products/services listings. Don't be left out, with MarketMaker's new Business Network feature, you can promote all of your connections with other businesses using MarketMaker. The new Buy/Sell Forum alerts provide you with real-time notices of posted ads so you can take advantage of the rapidly growing networks developing on this powerful tool.



Click [here](#) to register. For more information visit co.foodmarketmaker.com.

UPDATE: COLORADO FOOD POLICY NETWORK

The Colorado Food Policy Network (COFPN) is a collective of state, regional, and local food coalitions (often referred to as food policy councils) and related movements across the state of Colorado. The

COFPN adopted a formal charter in 2015 and outlined a 5-year plan of action in early 2016. Its purpose is to “promote healthy, community-based, economically viable food systems in Colorado that ensure all residents have access to affordable, nutritious food.” LiveWell Colorado coordinates the network and its activities through an eight-member leadership council that meets virtually each month.

The COFPN remains active through a Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/cofoodsystemcoalitions/), quarterly open networking calls, and multiple monthly e-updates from LiveWell that include state and federal policy advocacy opportunities, funding opportunities, new program and partner announcements and more. The COFPN has been actively pursuing items outlined in the 5-year plan as well. COFPN participants were involved in many activities so far in 2016 to strengthen their involvement with state policy, including LiveWell’s Day at the Capitol that focused entirely on healthy food access and brought together over 100 partners from across the state and the “community day” before the Day at the Capitol that included sessions on nutrition incentives, inclusive leadership development, and policy advocacy skills. COFPN participants proved vital to the development of LiveWell’s draft Direct Market Nutrition Incentive Program bill and several COFPN participants sit on LiveWell’s Policy Committee.

Current COFPN activities include:

- 1) expanding its “peer-to-peer” network in Summer 2016, with additional funds for supporting site visits, phone calls, and other collaborations across coalitions;
- 2) encouraging the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council’s development of a state food plan;
- 3) continuing to build out the Colorado Food Systems Digital Hub (<http://www.communitycommons.org/groups/colorado-food-system/>) that contains interactive reporting, mapping, and peer forums (going live in July); and
- 4) fundraising to support leadership council time and generate mini-grants for local food system coalitions, and supporting more connections between coalition members and their elected officials.

Contact Wendy Moschetti at (720) 353-4120 x 216 or wendymoschetti@livewellcolorado.org to learn more about COFPN or to sign up to receive regular updates.

WEBINAR: UNDERSTAND YOUR FARM’S PROFITABILITY USING A MARKET CHANNEL ASSESSMENT

Have you ever calculated your expenses or profitability by market channel? Improving profitability starts with accurate, current financial information, and the ability to analyze that information and take steps to improve your business bottom line. CSU can provide you with free technical assistance, and this webinar will explain the process.

When: July 6 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm MDT

To join: click the link below to join the webinar a few minutes before 12 pm on July 6.

- By video: <https://zoom.us/j/713816182>
- By phone: dial: +1 646 558 8656 (US Toll) or +1 408 638 0968 (US Toll)
- Webinar ID: 713 816 182

The webinar will cover the following topics:

- importance of benchmarking and the USDA data available to support these efforts;
- the Market Channel Assessment Tool and its benefit to participating growers; and
- opportunities to participate in a market channel assessment for your farm in 2016.

Producers will be paid for their participation and receive detailed information that will tie their business profitability to input use. Data collected will also be used to produce benchmarks by market channel. Benchmarking is a helpful tool to compare one fruit and vegetable production business to other similar operations, including identifying business strengths and weaknesses.

This Colorado State University Extension project is funded by the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, in partnership with the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the Colorado Department of Agriculture, and the Colorado Farmers Market Association.

WORKSHOP: ON-FARM MOCK GAPS AUDIT IN PUEBLO

Food Safety Mock Audit Tuesday, July 12 | 8 - Noon | Pueblo

The Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) invites Colorado produce growers to attend an educational program to learn about new regulations and to improve their food safety practices. A *Mock Good Agricultural Practices Audit* will be held Tuesday, July 12, 8am-noon, at Milberger Farms, 28570 Hwy. 50 East, Pueblo, CO 81006.

The mock audit will begin with a walk-through of Milberger Farms production operation, led by Colorado Department of Agriculture fruit and vegetable Inspectors. The focus will be on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs). Participants will learn how to adapt their production practices to produce safer food crops and how to document these practices in a food safety plan.

The half-day *Mock Good Agricultural Practices Audit* is free for CFVGA members and \$30 for non-members. All participants (free and paying) are expected to register through Eventbrite at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cfvga-mock-good-agricultural-practices-audit-milberger-farms-tickets-26080669986>.

Questions? Contact Dominic DiSanti (disantifarms@gmail.com) or Martha Sullins (martha.sullins@colostate.edu).

WORKSHOP: MESSAGING FOR BEHAVIOR CHANGE

WHAT: Messaging for Change Workshop presented by Virginia Till, Recycling Specialist/Sustainable Food Management Lead for EPA Region 8 - An introduction to community-based-social marketing.

This training will provide ideas for community messaging to facilitate behavior change and may be applied to any environmental, health, or other community-based initiative targeted at a specific audience. Not sure what community-based social marketing is? Check out: www.cbsm.com.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 12, 9:00am to 12:30pm

WHERE: EPA Region 8 Headquarters, 1595 Wynkoop St., Denver, CO 80202

WHO: Open to federal, state, municipal, organizational entities interested in community-based messaging.

RSVP: Attendance is limited. Please RSVP in advance to Virginia Till, EPA Region 8 Recycling Specialist (presenter) till.virginia@epa.gov to attend.

GRANTS: AGRICULTURE AND FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

This summer the USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is offering grants for research topics. Although these are generally targeted at Universities, non-profits, industry research units and academic research organizations, the need for stakeholder involvement, advising and outreach makes it important that you engage your academic partners if you want work done on a topic in Colorado, and there are many possibilities to shape, guide and participate in this work.

Research grants competing this summer include:

[Food Security Challenge](#) (Deadline: 7/7/2016)

The AFRI Food Security Challenge Area focuses on the societal challenge to keep American agriculture competitive and end world hunger by ensuring the availability and accessibility of safe and nutritious food. The long-term goal of the AFRI Food Security Challenge Area is to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and the availability and accessibility of safe and nutritious food.

[AFRI Foundational Program](#) (Multiple Deadlines between 7/13/2016 and 8/31/2016)

The AFRI Foundational Program is offered to support grants in the six AFRI priority areas to continue building a foundation of knowledge critical for solving current and future societal challenges. The six priority areas are: Plant Health and Production and Plant Products; Animal Health and Production and Animal Products; Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health; Bioenergy, Natural Resources, and Environment; Agriculture Systems and Technology; and Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities.

[Food Safety Challenge](#) (Deadline: 8/3/2016)

This AFRI Challenge Area promotes and enhances the scientific discipline of food safety, with an overall aim of protecting consumers from microbial and chemical contaminants that may occur during all stages of the food chain, from production to consumption. This requires an understanding of the interdependencies of human, animal, and ecosystem health as it pertains to foodborne pathogens.

[Water for Agriculture Challenge](#) (Deadline: 8/4/2016)

This AFRI Challenge Area addresses critical water resources issues such as drought, excess soil moisture, flooding, quality and others in an agricultural context. Funding will be used to develop management practices, technologies, and tools for farmers, ranchers, forest owners and managers, public decision makers, public and private managers, and citizens to improve water resource quantity and quality.

Note that the Requests for Applications (RFAs) for many of these are complex, but there are very nice summaries of priority topics and, in many cases, links to past projects to learn more about what is generally funded. For more information on grant opportunities offered by AFRI and the USDA, click [here](#).

GRANTS: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS GRANT PROGRAM

Introduction to Community Food Projects Grant Program

Thursday, August 4 - 1 pm EST / 11 am MST

[Register](#) - Meeting # 736 227 204

Join this webinar to learn about the USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture's [Community Food Projects \(CFP\)](#) Grant Program. We will introduce the grant program and talk about eligibility, the types of projects that are funded through this grant program and important considerations in putting together an application.

[New Entry Sustainable Farming Project](#) is the Training and Technical Assistance Provider for the CFP grant program and provides one-on-one support to applicants. To learn more or request support, please visit our [website](#), or request support [here](#).

The primary goals of the Community Food Projects grant program are to:

- Meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in Federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service;
- Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities;
- Promote comprehensive responses to local food access, farm, and nutrition issues; and
- Meet specific state, local or neighborhood food and agricultural needs including needs relating to:
 - Equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project;
 - Planning for long-term solutions; or
 - The creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

This grant program is NOT currently accepting applications, but this webinar is designed to help you think about the next RFA period.

RESEARCH: 2016 COLORADO CSA SURVEY RELEASED

In February 2016, CSU Extension released a follow up to a 2009 survey of Colorado Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms, in partnership with Farmshares.info and Weathervane Farm.

56 Colorado CSAs responded that sold over 5,000 shares statewide, so there is some great information on how CSAs operate in our state. Many respondents were members of Colorado Proud or the Colorado Fruit and Vegetables Growers Association, and the majority of managers still want more marketing support and business development training from CSU and our community partners.

The full summary of survey results are online in [for your review](#). See also the 2009 survey [here](#).

As the CSA distribution season moves into more diverse and abundant harvests, we wish all CSA farms a successful year!

NEWS: USDA OFFERS NEW TOOLKIT TO ASSESS ECONOMIC IMPACT OF LOCAL FOODS

The Secretary released details about "[The Economics of Local Food Systems: A Toolkit to Guide Community Discussions, Assessments and Choices](#)" in his keynote remarks at the 12th Annual Good Food Festival and Conference in Chicago. The Local Food System Toolkit was developed by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to help communities reliably evaluate the economic impact of investing in local and regional food systems. Colorado State University was the lead institution on the team that will help communities and businesses evaluate the economic benefits of investing in local food systems.

The Local Food System Toolkit provides detailed guidance in seven modules to measure and assess the expected economic impacts of local food investments. Using real-world projects, experiences, and applied research, it provides grounded, credible, and useable assessment methods. The Local Food System Toolkit can be used by policy makers, community leaders, private businesses or foundations to offer specific estimates that will help them decide whether to invest in initiatives that increase local food activity.

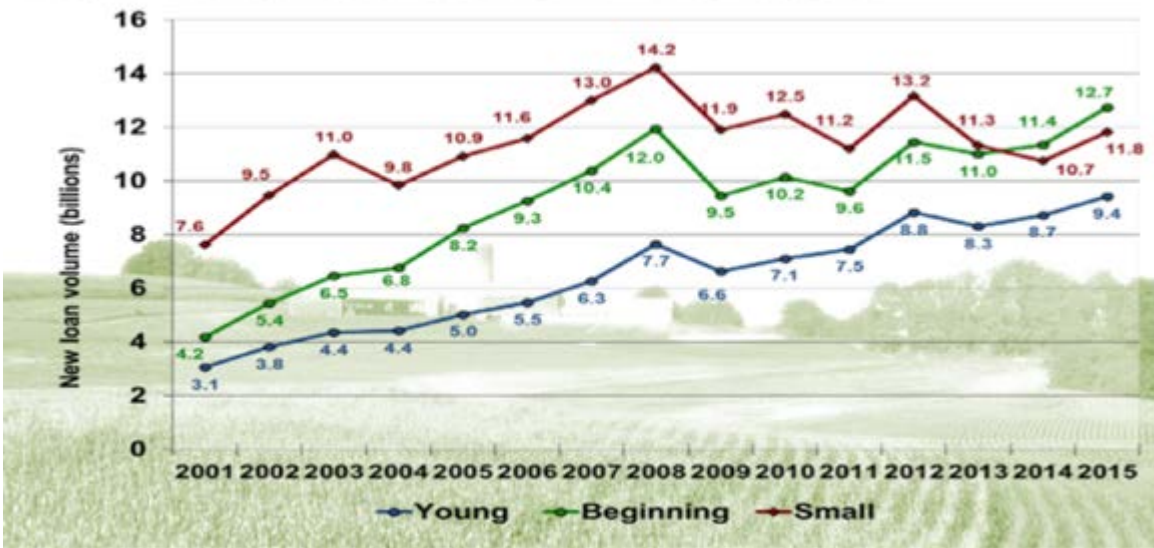
Secretary Vilsack has identified strengthening local and regional food systems as one of the [four pillars](#) of USDA's commitment to rural economic development. AMS plays a key role in supporting farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), food hubs, and local food businesses by offering technical assistance, conducting research, and awarding grants. The Local Food System Toolkit is the latest resource offered by [AMS in support of local and regional food systems](#).

NEWS: HOW WELL IS THE FARM CREDIT SYSTEM SERVING YOUNG, BEGINNING, AND SMALL FARMERS?

In June the Farm Credit Administration released their annual report outlining lending trends towards young, beginning, and small borrowers (YBS) across Farm Credit System (FCS) institutions nationwide. The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) summarized the report in a recent article. Some highlights from NSAC's article include:

- In 2015, FCS increased overall lending to YBS farmers both in terms of number of loans and total capital made available, with the biggest increase to new farmers (7.5% increase from 2014).
- The percentage of loans made to small farms has been in long-term decline, while loans for young and beginning farmers have remained stagnant.
- Roughly 40% of all FCS loans made in 2015 were to small farmers, with just under a quarter supporting beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Young farmers received slightly over 17% of all loans made by FCS last year.
- USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has less than \$100 million remaining for the rest of the fiscal year to finance annual operating expenses for farmers who are turned down by commercial lenders, leaving FCS, commercial banks, and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to fill in the gap.

Loan Volumes on New YBS Loans



Source: Farm Credit Association

For the complete article click [here](#).

NEWS: “FOOD HUBS” EMERGE AS A VIABLE SOLUTION TO MEET CONSUMER DEMAND FOR LOCAL FOOD

The results from a study of food hubs conducted by Michigan State University’s Center for Regional Food Systems are now available!

Food hubs are businesses that aggregate and distribute source-identified food products. As consumer interest in local and regional food grows, the market for food hub services also grows. The 2015 National Food Hub Survey indicates that the food hub model can be financially successful across a variety of legal structures and geographic or customer markets.

A summary of the survey include these key findings:

- New food hubs continue to open for business and established food hubs continue to thrive.
- Food hub suppliers and customers are almost entirely regional.
- Food hubs are good for small- and medium-sized agricultural operations.
- Food hubs actively work to increase community food access and improve health outcomes.
- Compliance with the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) is a challenge that food hubs must address.
- Food hubs are concerned about maintaining product supply and keeping up with business growth.
- Communities of practice and informal networks are important information sources for food hubs.

Click [here](#) for the full report.

NEWS: GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The recent Colorado Food Resource Collaborative meeting held in Denver discussed the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to assist in ensuring youth across Colorado are connected to food resources.

Ashley Moen from the Colorado Department of Education provided an overview of the Summer Food Service Program. She discussed the requirements to be a sponsor of SFSP, as well as what is needed to be a meal site. Meal components and meal patterns were also discussed in addition to monitoring and recordkeeping for sponsors and sites. View her PowerPoint presentation [here](#).

Andrea Garcia with the City and County of Denver discussed how people can get involved with SFSP. You can view her handout [here](#).

For more information contact [Wendy Moschetti](#), the Director of Food Systems for LiveWell Colorado.

NEWS: FOOD SAFETY FROM FARM TO TABLE

A growing number of buyers require farms to demonstrate compliance with a food safety standard, often through an audit and certification program. That takes work for any farmer, but small and mid-sized farmers can face unique challenges in accessing and paying for food safety training, audits and certification. Luckily, USDA has a tool designed specifically for you.

The new GroupGAP program allows small and mid-sized farmers to band together and become GAP-certified as a group. A group certification can help cut individual producer costs while assuring buyers that participating farmers are following rigorous, trusted GAP protocols. GroupGAP empowers members of the group to determine their own composition and decide which commodities are covered by the certification. Groups can certify with any GAP standard audit.

The USDA is now working closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to align the GAP and GroupGAP programs with the requirements of FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act so that as FSMA takes effect, growers participating in GAP know they are also meeting FSMA requirements.

For more information visit <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/groupgap> or email AMS at groupgap@ams.gov.

RESOURCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Don't forget! Colorado State University Extension Food Systems and Agricultural Policy Resources:

- [Consumer Resources](#)
- [Producer Resources](#)
- [Linking Producers to Restaurants, Workplaces and Other Institutions](#)
- [Linking Producers to Schools - Networks, Directories and Guides](#)
- [Community Assessments and Toolkits](#)
- [Calculators and Databases](#)

- [Policy Articles, Resources and Case Studies](#)
- [Research and Other Resources](#)

To add your ideas and news, contact [Jeremy Christensen](#).

To subscribe and unsubscribe to this newsletter, contact [Martha Sullins](#).