

CSU Extension Food Systems Newsletter

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Dept. of Ag and Resource Economics

78TH EDITION

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Welcome to the **78th 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 begin featuring 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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REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT: GOLDEN PLAINS AREA

CSU Extension conducts outreach to all demographics, including those incarcerated in the Yuma County Jail. Linda Langelo, CSU Golden Plains Extension Horticulture Program Associate, contacted the jail's Programs Coordinator, Laurie Clemons, about the possibility of inmates caring for the community gardens. After approval from the sheriff's department, several inmates were cleared to begin the initial planning and planting. Golden Plains Extension provided curriculum and support for the gardens and Master Gardener certification. Langelo has worked for Extension for 10 years, this being the first year for the inmates to assume responsibility for the gardens. Working in the garden has benefitted the inmates and the community in many ways. Beyond earning their Master Gardener's certification and obtaining job skills that could translate into a career after leaving the jail, inmates have additionally learned positive decision making skills and have experienced less depression.

Recidivism rates will hopefully decrease. The (literal) fruits of the inmates' labor are incorporated into the facility's kitchen, thus reducing some costs of feeding inmates and staff while also increasing nutritional quality of the meals. The jail extends the impact of this program by donating any unused produce to the community food pantry. Langelo credits the success of this project to the willingness of the county jail to allow inmates to participate, as well as a community willingness to try something new. She hopes to expand this project to allow more inmates to "find their place and purpose in life while doing useful and purposeful service." Golden Plains Extension is planting the seeds for access to nutritious food both inside and outside the Yuma County Jail. For more information about this project, please read the article posted on Extension's CO-Horts blog (<http://csuhort.blogspot.com/>) or the article featured in The Yuma Pioneer (link found on the Yuma County Sheriff's website, <http://www.yumacountysheriff.net/jail-garden-featured-in-yuma-pioneer/>). Information about other events and projects lead by Golden Plains Area Extension office can be found at <http://goldenplains.colostate.edu/>.

Written by Rachael Latta, CSU Dept. of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture

COLORADO MARKETMAKER



MarketMaker Business Profile:

KW Farms

Alamosa, Colorado

Email: [Contact Us](#)

Phone: (719) 589-0429

Address: 7725 Rd. 1 South, Alamosa, Colorado 81101

<http://co.foodmarketmaker.com/business/6577-kw-farms>

Colorado MarketMaker can give you information about different producers throughout the state of Colorado. Later in the newsletter, there is a news item on Value-Added Producer Grants award winners, and one of those producers can be found in MarketMaker.

Colorado MarketMaker can help find information about different producers across the state, and even allows you to search via a specific industry, such as wineries, farms/ranches, and restaurants.

For more information visit co.foodmarketmaker.com.

GRANTS: FARM TO SCHOOL

The purpose of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. On an annual basis, USDA awards up to \$5 million in competitive grants. Specific grant areas are:

- **Support service grants** – intended for state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers, and non-profit entities working with schools or school districts to further develop and provide broad reaching support services to farm to school initiatives
 - Awards ranging from \$65,000 to \$100,000
- **Implementation grants** – intended to help schools or school districts scale or further develop existing farm to school initiatives
 - Awards ranging from \$65,000 to \$100,000
- **Planning grants** – intended for schools or school districts just getting started on farm to school activities and are intended to help these entities organize and structure their efforts for maximum impact by embedding known best practices into early design considerations
 - Awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$45,000

- **Training grants** – intended for state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers, and non-profit entities to support trainings that strengthen farm to school supply chains, or trainings that provide technical assistance in the area of local procurement, food safety, culinary education, and/or integration of agricultural-based curriculum
 - Awards ranging from \$15,000 to \$50,000

Applications for 2017 Farm to School grant funding are due by December 8th by 11:59 p.m. EST. For more information click [here](#).

GRANTS: ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) grants program is currently accepting research proposals. In particular, OFRF encourages farmers, ranchers, graduate students, early career researchers, veterans, and Extension personnel to consider applying for funding.

Priority areas for this year's research projects:

- Small grain production, especially related to diverse rotational system and soil health;
- Social science research, including understanding challenges and providing solutions for new organic farmers and ranchers and producers transitions to organic systems; and
- Animal production, especially breeding for organic systems, disease management, and pasture management.

The OFRF specifically offers funding for research on organic farming and food systems. The research results are then shared with organic farmers and the greater agricultural and research communities. In order to qualify, proposals must involve farmers or ranchers in project design and implementation and must take place on certified organic land, ideally on working farms or ranches. Project proposals are reviewed and awarded by the OFRF Board of Directors, mainly comprising certified organic producers.

The deadline for proposals is December 10, 2016. Applicants will be notified about funding decisions in early spring 2017. For more information on how to apply, click [here](#).

GRANTS: BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

On October 3rd, the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced the availability of \$17.7 million in grant funding to help train and educate the next generation of agricultural producers through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP).

The BFRDP helps fund organizations implementing programs through the U.S. that train beginning farmers and ranchers, through workshops, educational teams, training, and technical assistance. Applicants eligible to apply include state, tribal, local or regional networks or partnerships of public or private entities such as state cooperative extension services, community-based organizations, colleges, universities, and other organizations supporting beginning farmers and ranchers.

Priority subject matter includes:

- Basic livestock, forest management, and crop farming practices
- Innovative farm, ranch, and private, nonindustrial forest land transfer strategies
- Entrepreneurship and business training
- Financial and risk management training (including acquisition and management of agricultural credit)
- Natural resource management and planning
- Diversification and marketing strategies
- Curriculum development
- Mentoring, apprenticeships, and internships
- Resources and referrals
- Farm financial benchmarking
- Assisting beginning farmers and ranchers in acquiring land from retiring farmers and ranchers
- Agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training for veterans
- Farm safety and awareness
- Other similar subject areas pertinent to beginning farmers and ranchers

Applications for 2017 are due December 8th, 2016. For more information on the BFRDP and on the application process, click [here](#).

NEWS: USDA ANNOUNCES LFPP AND FMPP GRANT AWARDS

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service recently announced grant awards for the Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) and the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP), which includes projects in Colorado.

For the LFPP, Colorado grants were awarded to:

- **Boulder Valley School District**, Boulder, CO: \$592,643 for a project focusing on local food promotion and farm to school education in the Boulder Valley School District.
- **Jennifer M. Seiwald**, Fort Collins, CO: \$200,000 for a project entitled “Apples by the Community, For the Community: Turning Fruit Waste in Northern Colorado into a Viable Income Stream, Food Source, Educational Tool, and Locally Sustained Product.”
- **Mancos Valley Resources**, Mancos, CO: \$56,250 for the project entitled “Specialty Processing for Local Heirloom Apples in Southwestern Colorado: Feasibility Study and Business Plan.”

For the FMPP, Colorado grants were awarded to:

- **The National Bison Association**, Westminster, CO: \$218,373 for the project entitled “Marketing the Bison Advantage – A Proposal by the National Bison Association for Education, Training, and Outreach to Expand Bison Marketing Opportunities.”
- **The Northern Colorado Food Cluster**, Loveland, CO: \$238,953 award for a project focusing on improving direct-to-consumer markets and farm viability

through their assessment, coordination, and development in Northern Colorado.

For a further description of Colorado grant award winners as well as a complete list of award winners in other states for LFPP click [here](#) and for FMPP click [here](#).

NEWS: LOANS FOR SMALL SCALE FARMS AND URBAN PRODUCERS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced new streamlined versions of the USDA guaranteed loans called EZ Guarantee Loans, tailored specifically to smaller-scale farms and urban producers. The application process has been simplified to help beginning, small, underserved and family farmers and ranchers apply for loans of up to \$100,000 from USDA-approved lenders to purchase farmland or finance agricultural operations.

USDA also started partnering with new lenders which will join their traditional lenders, such as banks and credit unions, to help offer these EZ Guarantee Loans. Micro-lenders include Community Development Financial Institutions and Rural Rehabilitation Corporations and will be offering their customers up to \$50,000 in loans. Their main focus is toward urban and underserved areas as well. The EZ Guarantee Loan is also an additional tool to support strong local and regional food systems, as well as organic agriculture.

EZ Guarantee Loans offer low interest rates for up to seven years for financing operating expenses, and 40 years for financing the purchase of farm real estate. USDA-approved lenders can issue these loans with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteeing the loan up to 95%. Right now, the USDA is offering a 90-day period for the public to review this proposal and comment on the program's improvement. This can be found by clicking the link [here](#), and using reference number 0560-AI34 in the search box.

Beyond the EZ Guaranteed Loans, the USDA and FSA also offer loans to young farmers and ranchers through the Youth Loan Program. These loans are available to youth who need to finance agricultural projects. For more information about this loan and other loan programs through the FSA, click [here](#). You can also contact your local FSA office. To find a location near you, click [here](#).

NEWS: FOUR CORNERS HEALTHY LOCAL FOOD SHEDS PROJECT

Healthy Community Food Systems (HCFS) invites you to join them in a new project in the greater Four Corners area—a fresh approach to making local food sheds as healthy and sustainable as possible. HCFS has been busy over the last several months developing strategies and resources to share across the region.

One HCFS project is the Farm to School and Preschool approach of “Digging Deeper.” This project focuses on children, their future, and their communities by “Digging Deeper.” This means to source food locally, use sustainably produced foods, make sure food is wholesome and nutritious, develop school gardens, teach children about ecology using the school gardens, and make this happen now. By focusing on children, they are better able to impact their future and the future generations to come. This project is relevant to producers, parents, community members, and anyone interested in the “Digging Deeper” approach. To read more about this project, as well as others, click [here](#).

HCFS has also been collaborating through the Southwest Marketing Network (SWMN), focusing on bringing strength to local food sheds for the past 14 years. This includes mapping where the local food sheds exist, monitoring how the food system is changing, and adapting through systems-changing approaches. To read more about strengthening local food sheds and their importance in the Four Corners area, click [here](#).

NEWS: VALUE-ADDED PRODUCER GRANT AWARDS

The USDA announced on October 27th that it will be investing in 325 different projects through the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program, totaling \$45 million in investment to help farmers, ranchers, small businesses and entrepreneurs develop new product lines.

VAPG grants can be used to develop new product lines from raw agricultural products to additional uses for established products. Grants to veterans, socially-disadvantaged groups, beginning farmers and ranchers, operators of small- and medium-sized family farms and ranches, and farmer and rancher cooperatives are given special priority.

Three projects in Colorado were awarded a Value-Added Producer Grant this year:

- **Sweet Grass Cooperative**, Westcliffe, CO: \$49,000 to process up to 100 more grass fed/organic cattle for Sweet Grass's members as well as assist with entering markets in New Mexico and Colorado.
- **Three Guys Farms, Inc.**, Monte Vista, CO: \$49,650 to market and process farm-grown vegetables, pork, and eggs into sorbet, waffles, and ground meat.
- **American Grass-fed Association**, Denver, CO: \$75,000 to develop a marketing plan and branding recognition for the 400+ members that provide grass fed meats to market.
- **KW Farms**, Alamosa, CO: \$49,500 to cover processing, marketing, and delivery expenses related to their grass-fed meat operation.

To read more about the VAPG award announcement, and view the other grant awards, click [here](#).

NEWS: GRANTS AWARDED FOR COLORADO SPECIALTY CROPS

Eleven grants totaling \$549,000 were awarded through the Colorado Department of Agriculture's 2016 Specialty Crops Program. Funds are received by the Colorado Department of Agriculture from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Programs, which is aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Grants were awarded to:

- **Rocky Mountain Sod Growers**, Mead, CO: \$20,000 to educate public about the benefits of sod to the environment and how to conserve water.
- **Colorado Potato Administrative Committee**, Monte Vista, CO: \$85,799 to improve soil health in potato production systems.
- **Fort Lewis College**, Hesperus, CO: \$59,986 to address land access for beginning farmers, create a Farmer in Training program, assist in regional development of farmer incubator programs, and expand markets for specialty crops produced at the Old Fort Market Garden.

- **Colorado Department of Agriculture**, Broomfield, CO: \$94,409 for development of a Colorado Pavilion at the Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit Expo in 2017.
- **Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association**, Lakewood, CO: \$31,000 to educate consumers about the benefits of gardening and planting and to encourage consumers to “Get Out and Plant Something!”
- **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO: \$57,637 to support small acreage, socially-disadvantaged, and beginning specialty crop producers and to fund a specialty crop coordinator.
- **Plant Select**, Fort Collins, CO: \$40,000 to improve production techniques of certain Plant Select® plants to meet market demand.
- **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO: \$31,000 to evaluate technology efforts to optimize large-scale hydroponic hop production on the Colorado Front Range
- **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO: \$46,349 to determine the pungency and nutrient composition of Colorado pepper varieties to increase marketability.
- **Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association**, Strasburg, CO: \$72,900 to develop marketing opportunities, labor recruitment, and food safety training resources for Colorado’s fruit and vegetable growers.
- **Colorado Wine Industry Development Board**, Broomfield, CO: \$10,000 to host a series of educational and networking seminars for the Colorado wine industry focusing on specific wine styles.

Congratulations to all grant awardees! For more information on awards and to learn more about the program, click [here](#).

EVENT: COLORADO FOOD POLICY NETWORK MEETING

The Colorado Food Policy Network will be holding a meeting on Wednesday, November 2nd through Friday, November 4th hosted by the El Paso County Food Advisory Board in Colorado Springs. At this two and half day event, there will be networking, strategizing together on specific efforts, building policy skills, and developing technical storytelling skills with the Colorado Food Policy Network.

Topics will include:

- In-depth working group sessions on topics such as Double Up Food Bucks and Healthy Food Pantries
- Farm Bill listening session
- Upcoming state and federal food systems policy actions and how we can all be involved locally and beyond
- Training on how to listen deeply and share your story digitally
- Hands-on workshop led by Valley Food Partnership/LiveWell Montrose Olathe

This is an event geared toward two to four members of your local food system coalition, with the availability for reimbursement if needed. Times for this event are:

- Wednesday, November 2nd from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- Thursday, November 3rd from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 4th from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register for this event, click [here](#). In the registration, please mark which working group you would like to participate in most so that working groups can be created.

EVENT: COLORADO AGRABILITY WORKSHOPS

Join the upcoming workshops with the CSU Extension AgrAbility Project. These workshops will focus on the topics of AgrAbility, mental wellness in rural Colorado, and how to work well with agricultural lenders and bankers. The workshops are particularly geared toward Colorado farm families and individuals who are dealing with barriers created by illness or other limitations.

The presenters include Dr. Norm Dalsted, Candiss Leathers and Dr. James Craig. The dates and locations for each workshop are listed below. All workshops are from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with a free box lunch provided for those who pre-register at least a week in advance. To register, email: [Candiss Leathers](#) or [Norm Dalsted](#).

Date: November 15, 2016

Location: Trinidad State Junior College
Pioneer Room at Sullivan Student Center
600 Prospect Street
Trinidad, CO 81082

Date: November 16, 2016

Location: County Extension Office
701 Court Street
Pueblo, CO 81003

Date: November 29, 2016

Location: Wattenberg Center 686
County Road 42
Walden, CO 80480

Date: January 18, 2017

Location: County Courthouse
501 Palmer Street
Delta, CO 81416

Date: February 8, 2017

Location: Arapahoe County Fairgrounds, Room 1
25690 E. Quincy Avenue
Aurora, CO 80016

EVENT: 2016 FARM TO MARKET CONFERENCE

The 2016 Farm to Market Conference will be held at the Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, WY on November 11th and November 12th. This conference is geared toward producers, backyard gardeners, food processors, students, and ag professionals. A variety of topics will be covered throughout the two-day event, as well as specialized workshops and seminars which are included in the conference.

November 11th is split into different workshops you can attend, including:

- Acidified Food Processors Certification
 - Important for any acidified food processor or potential process who has not met the requirements of the Federal Code of Regulations 21 CFR Part 114.10 that states operators shall have personnel to supervise processes that have completed an approved course.
 - This course is limited to 50 people.
- Learn to Build a High Tunnel
- Plant Breeding and Seed Production
- Farmer Market Manager Training

These workshops will run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with registration for the day opening at 7:30 a.m.

November 12th features seminars on the topics of marketing, production, and processing. The seminars will run from 8:10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with registration opening at 7:45 a.m. Registration is \$75.

You can register online by clicking the link [here](#). For more information, contact Ted Craig at (307) 777-6651 or email [here](#) or Catherine Wissner at (307) 633-4383 or email [here](#).

WEBINAR: NFU PRESENTS “GROWING FOR THE FUTURE”

The National Farmers Union presents Growing for the Future. This is a unique online, interactive virtual conference focused on beginning farmer and rancher issues, including: mentorship, business planning, USDA programs, student loans, land tenure, food safety, women and veterans in farming, conservation and as well as a variety of other topics.

The conference is completely online, and features farmer-to-farmer webinars, live Q&A, a discussion board, a resource center and free giveaways! Register now for free to join us in December for this unique opportunity!

The tentative schedule includes:

December 5th

- Tom Driscoll – Grant Writing 101
- Paul Goeringer – Managing Legal Risk on the Farm
- Harrison Topp – Less Than or Equal To: Turning Mentor Relationships into Healthy Business Partnerships
- Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program – Farm Labor Live Discussion

December 6th

- Barbara Patterson – Farm Bill Breakdown

December 7th

- Sarah Campbell – NAP: How it Benefits Beginning Farmers
- Michael Kovach – Sticking With It: Surviving the ‘Seven Year Itch’
- Brian Massey (interview) – Urban Farming as a Beginning Farmer

- Bridget Holcomb – Managing Your Farm/Businesses/Nonprofit: It All Comes Down to Communication
- Michael O’Gorman – Beginning Farmer Needs for Veterans
- FarmHer – Live Q&A, 7:00 p.m. EST
- Lisa Kivirist – How She Does It: Women Farmers Generating Income through Diversification

December 8th

- Bill Stevenson – Co-Ops 101
- Ben Dye – Technology and Farming, FarmLink
- JoAnn Baumgartner – Biodiversity on the Farm
- Tom Giessel – Farmers Union Progressive

This event will take place on December 5-8, 5:00 p.m. to 8 p.m. EST. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To add your ideas and news, contact [Ellie Naasz](#).

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