

CSU Extension Food Systems Newsletter

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79TH EDITION

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Welcome to the **79th 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: EAGLE COUNTY

Eagle County, a rural community located in the central Rocky Mountains, is reviving its interest in its agricultural roots. A combination of legacy ranchers and beginning farmers is building support for diversified food production in the area. Jeff Pieper and Eagle County Extension play an important role in educating the public and helping the community produce food.



Jeff Pieper, Extension Agent

Their main outreach is done through workshops that range from training beginning farmers with no agricultural background, to constructing high tunnel growing beds, to supplementing NRCS land access programs, to adapting agriculture to a mountain environment, and to teaching students how to grow their own food. This variety partially results from traditional agricultural families parceling off land into smaller parcels for diversified agriculture.

“These established ranchers really embrace and work with those who want to start farming,” Pieper said. “Agriculture takes shape in many forms and faces, so when they feed off each other’s support it really enables everyone to be successful.” 2016 is the first year for Extension to offer courses for beginning farmers. Four to five people signed up for the Building Farmers class, which Pieper described as having a “fantastic” outcome.

Eagle County Extension has additionally supported the start of a local Colorado Young Farmers Education Association and Rocky Mountain Farmers Union chapters. Jeff Pieper serves as the Horticulture and Small Acreage Extension Agent for Eagle County. He credits his interest in food systems to growing up on his grandparents’ farm in Idaho, his relationship with former Colorado State University professor Frank Stonaker, and participating in CSU’s CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program. Pieper has also worked on small farms around the country and obtained his Master’s Degree from the University of Rhode Island. Eagle County may be known as a resort area, but the community’s cooperative spirit still encourages agriculture to flourish. For more information, please visit [http://www.eaglecounty.us/CSU/Horticulture and Small Acreage/Overview/](http://www.eaglecounty.us/CSU/Horticulture_and_Small_Acreage/Overview/).



Building Farmers Class, January 2016

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

COLORADO MARKETMAKER: SHOPPING LOCALLY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



The Colorado Department of Agriculture has compiled several lists showcasing companies selling local products, and one in particular is geared toward Christmas gift ideas. As an online resource, Colorado MarketMaker is a great resource to use when wanting to find out more about a particular business or locating businesses and producers working in your local area.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture highlights MouCo Cheese Company as a great place to shop for holiday gifts. Through Colorado MarketMaker, you can find specific descriptions on their location, business history, product types, and hours of operation. We challenge you to give more gifts from your local farms, ranches and food companies this year!

MarketMaker Business Profile

MouCo Cheese Company

Fort Collins, Colorado

Email: [Contact Us](#)

Phone: (970) 498-0107

Address: 1401 Duff Dr. #300, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524

Updated: Oct 10, 2016

About Us

Established in 1999 and nestled in the Front Range of Colorado we have been diligently providing quality crafted soft ripened cheeses for the cheese conscious consumer. With over 20+ awards to our name we continue to offer a taste of an exclusive mountain crafted cheese to the masses.



GRANTS: FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM

The USDA is now accepting applications for its 2017 Farm to School program grant funding.

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 at eligible schools. On an annual basis, USDA awards up to \$5 million in competitive grants. The 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, 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 the 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 RFP

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.

The priority areas for this year's research projects are:

- 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 broader 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: NIFA BEGINNING FARMER & RANCHER GRANTS

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 education the next generation of agricultural producers through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP).

The BFRDP helps fund organizations implementing programs throughout 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 of use for 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: ATTRA PUBLICATION ON URBAN HIGH TUNNELS

ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture recently published some helpful tips for choosing a high tunnel site in urban areas. The article covers the basics of setting up a high tunnel site, as well as how to deal with the zoning and policy challenges urban farmers face when trying to construct high tunnels. The article also features ideas on how to manage the high tunnel with respect to soil fertility, irrigation, disease, and pest control.

Other highlights in the article include:

- The importance of keeping the structure level and elevating the structure if the area is not well-drained.
- Placing the tunnel in an area that has no or almost no shade. They suggest using an area that is completely unshaded from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. year-round.

- Orienting the tunnel correctly, whether that be north-to-south or in another direction.

To read the entire article, click [here](#) for a free download.

NEWS: BE COLORADO PROUD & BUY LOCAL

The Colorado Department of Agriculture encourages you to “Be Colorado Proud and Buy Local this Holiday Season.” As farmers wrap up their summer seasons, many are continuing to extend their growing seasons and participate in winter farmers’ markets throughout the state.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture has developed a statewide Winter Farmers’ Market List in order to provide information on where people can shop locally throughout the holiday season and winter months. They also have additional resources, including the Colorado Food and Agricultural Gift Guide and the Colorado Christmas Tree List.

The [Winter Farmers’ Market List](#) includes a list of special events for the holiday season, as well as winter hours for every market. The [Colorado Food and Agricultural Gift Guide](#) is a compiled list of companies selling items such as gourmet baskets of sweets, snacks, and meats, as well as other unique and local gifts. Lastly, the [Christmas Tree List](#) identifies locations where you can buy local Christmas trees, including u-cut operations and information on how to cut down a Christmas tree in the national forests.

Links to the lists can be found by clicking the active links (blue title) of each program.

WEBINAR: CREATING A FOOD SAFETY PLAN FOR YOUR FARM

Join the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association for a Lunch and Learn Webinar, “Fundamentals of Creating a Food Safety Plan for Your Farm,” presented on Thursday, December 1, from 12:10 - 1 pm.

Putting together a written food safety plan for your farm can help in understanding and managing possible risk but knowing where to begin and what to include in the plan can be challenging.

This webinar will provide a basic overview, walk participants through a set of 3 online modules, and provide information about what should be included in a plan and how to use their plan as a tool to reduce potential risks and protect their operation. Participants will gain awareness that creating a plan is a long-term, dynamic process that needs to be revisited and updated as production and operating methods change and also learn about available resources to facilitate the process.

Register at: <https://zoom.us/webinar/register/b955697cc1e9ccdbc5b9141539e44ee6>.

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
- 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

December 7th

- 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.

WEBINAR: FRAMING THE ROLE OF THE PRODUCE INDUSTRY IN THE BLUEPRINT FOR CO FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Join the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association for a Lunch and Learn Webinar, “Framing the Role of the Produce Industry in the new Blueprint for Colorado Food and Agriculture,” on Wednesday December 7 from 12:10 - 1:00 pm.

This webinar will explore the August 2016 state survey results that indicate how the fruit and vegetable sector resonates with Colorado residents, including its importance to the economy, key products buyers are aware of, and how their purchases of produce are influenced by a variety of factors. CSU conducted this research with support from the Colorado Department of Agriculture and CFVGA, and this information will provide some context for the upcoming Blueprint for Colorado Food and Agriculture.

The webinar will include time for feedback on survey findings, where more can be explored and how the industry can engage in future Blueprint activities. Register [here](#).

COURSE: AGRITOURISM IN THE WEST

If you are a Building Farmers graduate, join Colorado State University Extension and the Building Farmers team on December 8th for an advanced course entitled “New insights and opportunities for agritourism in the West, with a Boulder County focus.” This class will focus on how to start or hone your agritourism expertise for your enterprise.

There will be a panel of agritourism business owners and professionals, including Jason Condon of Isabelle Farm, Mark Guttridge of Ollin Farms, Boulder County Planning Department, and Kathie Riley, attorney. There will be an additional panel featuring professionals from the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, University of Northern Colorado, Colorado Department of Agriculture, and Colorado Agritourism Association.

This event is **Thursday, December 8th from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.** with dinner being served at 5 p.m. The cost to register is \$25. The class will be held at:

Boulder County Fairgrounds
Natural Resources Building
9595 Nelson Road
Longmont, CO 80501

To register for the event, click [here](#).

EVENT: VISION COURSE FOR ASPIRING FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Join Guidestone Colorado and CSU Extension – El Paso County for a Vision Course for Aspiring Farmers and Ranchers in Colorado Springs on December 10th.

This event will focus on helping people who are interested in starting agricultural businesses to get an overview of the opportunities and challenges facing new producers. It will also help new producers to begin developing their ideas and visions for their agricultural operation. The event will feature a producer panel where local farmers and ranchers will share both their successes and challenges in the industry.

In order to attend, register for the event by **December 5th at 5:00 p.m.** The cost to attend is \$25, and includes a light meal. The event will be on **December 10th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**, at:

Colorado State University Extension – El Paso County
17 North Spruce Street
2nd Floor, Room #226
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Click [here to register](#).

EVENT: COLORADO PRODUCE DAY AT COLORADO FARM SHOW

The Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) will once again host Colorado Produce Day at the Colorado Farm Show in Greeley. The schedule will be posted soon but, for now, mark your calendars for January 24-26, 2017, with January 26th focused on Colorado Produce.

Watch for more information at: <http://www.coloradofarmshow.com/colorado-produce>.

EVENT: ROCKY MOUNTAIN FARMERS UNION WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Women's Conference entitled *Resilience. Innovation. Results.* will be held on December 2nd and 3rd at the Glen Eyrie Castle in Colorado Springs. This event is designed to help strengthen women's roles in the modern agricultural world and will feature experts on topics such as:

- Family farm finances
- Business planning
- Marketing
- Succession planning
- Market & financial risks
- Leadership & communication skills

Leaders of this conference also hope to help agricultural women find new ways to balance the demands of family, community, and professional positions within the agricultural community. This event will feature workshops, presentations, and networking.

The conference will begin at **3:00 p.m. on Friday, December 2nd and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 3rd**. The registration deadline for this event is November 17th, however registration after this event is still available, but will cost a fee of \$25. Partial scholarships may be available.

To learn more about the conference and scholarship availability, email [Jennifer Bahr](mailto:Jennifer.Bahr@coloradofarmshow.com) or call (303) 283-3550. To register for the event, click [here](#).

EVENT: COLORADO AGRABILITY WORKSHOPS

Join the upcoming workshops with the CSU Extension AgrAbility Project. At these workshops, we will focus on the topics of AgrAbility, mental wellness in rural Colorado, and how to work well with agricultural lenders and bankers. These 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](mailto:Candiss.Leathers@coloradofarmshow.com) or [Norm Dalsted](mailto:Norm.Dalsted@coloradofarmshow.com).

Upcoming workshops include:

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: 5TH ANNUAL WESTERN COLORADO FOOD & FARM FORUM

The 5th Annual Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum: Healthy Land, Food, People will be held on **January 20th and 21st, 2017** in Montrose, CO. This event will feature an array of breakout sessions which convey vital, regionally specific agricultural information in areas including maximizing crop and livestock production, innovative agricultural marketing and management strategies, and specialty crops.

This conference is for anyone interested in the future of agriculture, including ranchers, farmers, gardeners, students, and ag professionals. There will also be plenty of opportunities for networking throughout the conference.

Conference highlights will also include presenters Ray Archuleta, Brendon Rockey, Greg Judy, a water boot camp, and a Rodale Institute workshop.

The Food and Farm Forum is hosted by Colorado State University Extension, Shavano Conservation District, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, and the National Young Farmers Coalition.

Registration for this event will open in late November. To read more about the event and register for it online, click [here](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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