

From plant to plate



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Northern Colorado Regional Food System Assessment



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The food system is like any other system – it has a lot of parts. A regional food system assessment looks at the various components of the food

system and determines where it is working well and which parts need strengthening. Generally the components of the food system are:

- food/agricultural production
- food processing and distribution
- marketing, consumer choices and access
- consumption and public health

The Northern Colorado Regional Food System Assessment will study the food system as it exists. Using that baseline, recommendations can be made for enhancing the food system for our community's benefit.

Q What are the goals of the assessment project?

- Develop an understanding of the existing local food system in relationship to public health, economic development and quality of life.
- Identify economic opportunities related to agricultural production resulting from gaps in the local food system and evolving market venues.
- Document needs and possible projects to fulfill those needs in anticipation of forthcoming state and federal programs for funding designed to strengthen local/regional food systems.

Q How will the assessment benefit the community?

The food system touches many aspects of people's lives - from economic diversity and strength, to the availability of productive agricultural lands, to the social aspects of food supply and quality – the food system influences our quality of life.

A stronger food system will benefit everyone and can be achieved by reinforcing existing robust components and establishing new connections.

Q Who will do the assessment?

Larimer County is the lead agency on the project. Boulder and Weld Counties, the Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority and Colorado State University also have leading roles. Members of the public throughout the region will be directly involved.

Q How long will it take to complete the project?

The groups needed to conduct the assessment will be organized by late January 2010. The final report will be completed by the end of 2010.

Community Involvement



A Project Advisory Team (PAT), made up of citizens, will be formed in each of the three counties:

- Boulder ■ Larimer ■ Weld

The citizens' advisory groups will provide information to the technical researchers and offer advice on how the study should be conducted.

The public can get involved in many ways:

Focus groups - Several focus groups will be held to gather information directly from the public.

Telephone interviews - Researchers will interview 'key' players in the food system.

Public meetings - Multiple workshops and/or open house gatherings will be used to gather public comment.

More Information

For more information contact Linda Hoffmann at 970-498-7681 or lhoffmann@larimer.org.

Additional information and updates are available on the **Regional Food Assessment web page** at www.larimer.org/foodassessment/.

