

# Northern Colorado Regional Food System Assessment Elements

## Food Security and Access in Northern Colorado



### Changes in Food Assistance from 2007 to 2010

#### Food Bank for Larimer County

	2007	2010	% Change
Population of area served	251,494	292,825	16%
Population at poverty line or below	22,600	33,125	47%
Annual # of clients served	21,384	29,900	40%
Total # of clients served, per capita	9%	10%	20%
Total # of agencies served	68	132	94%
Pounds of food distributed	4,739,805	7,350,818	55%
Fresh produce received	889,341	527,383	-41%
Total # of local food donors	250	311	24%

#### Weld Food Bank

<http://feedingamerica.issuelab.org/research>

	2007	2010	% Change
Population of area served	180,936	249,775	38%
Population at poverty line or below	22,019	29,374	33%
Annual # of clients served	20,500	22,500	10%
Total # of clients served, per capita	11%	9%	-20%
Total # of agencies served	115	116	1%
Pounds of food distributed	5,524,639	8,059,910	46%
Fresh produce received	697,751	1,179,405	69%
Total # of local food donors	219	147	-33%

#### Community Food Share

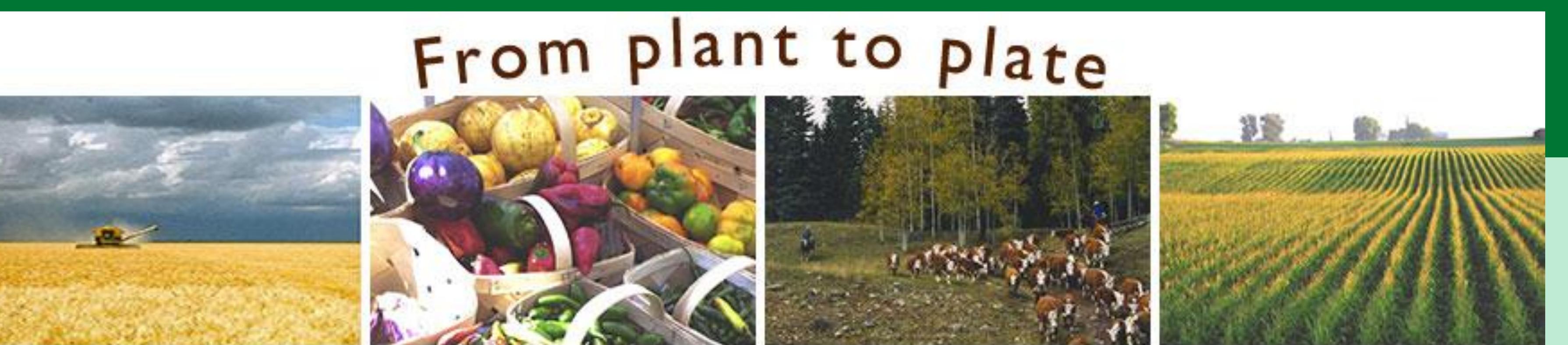
	2007	2010	% Change
Population of area served	329,465	348,019	6%
Population at poverty line or below	28,406	31,977	13%
Annual # of clients served	19,300	33,000	71%
Total # of clients served, per capita	6%	9%	62%
Total # of agencies served	86	60	-30%
Pounds of food distributed	3,704,757	6,456,642	74%
Fresh produce received	681,951	181,768	-73%
Total # of local food donors	90	89	-1%

#### Key Findings:

- Although population growth could explain some of the growth in clients served, the number of clients served has increased faster than the population, except in Weld county
- Larimer county has the greatest increase in population at or below the federal poverty level (47% increase over 4 years), compared to 33% in Weld and 13% in Boulder
- The number of agencies served by the Food Bank for Larimer County has nearly doubled, meaning it is playing an even greater role in distributing food to clients in need
- Growth in pounds of food distributed is still faster than growth in clients served, but only Weld has seen an increase in fresh produce it receives
- Community garden access may be another source for fresh produce donations

#### Acknowledgements

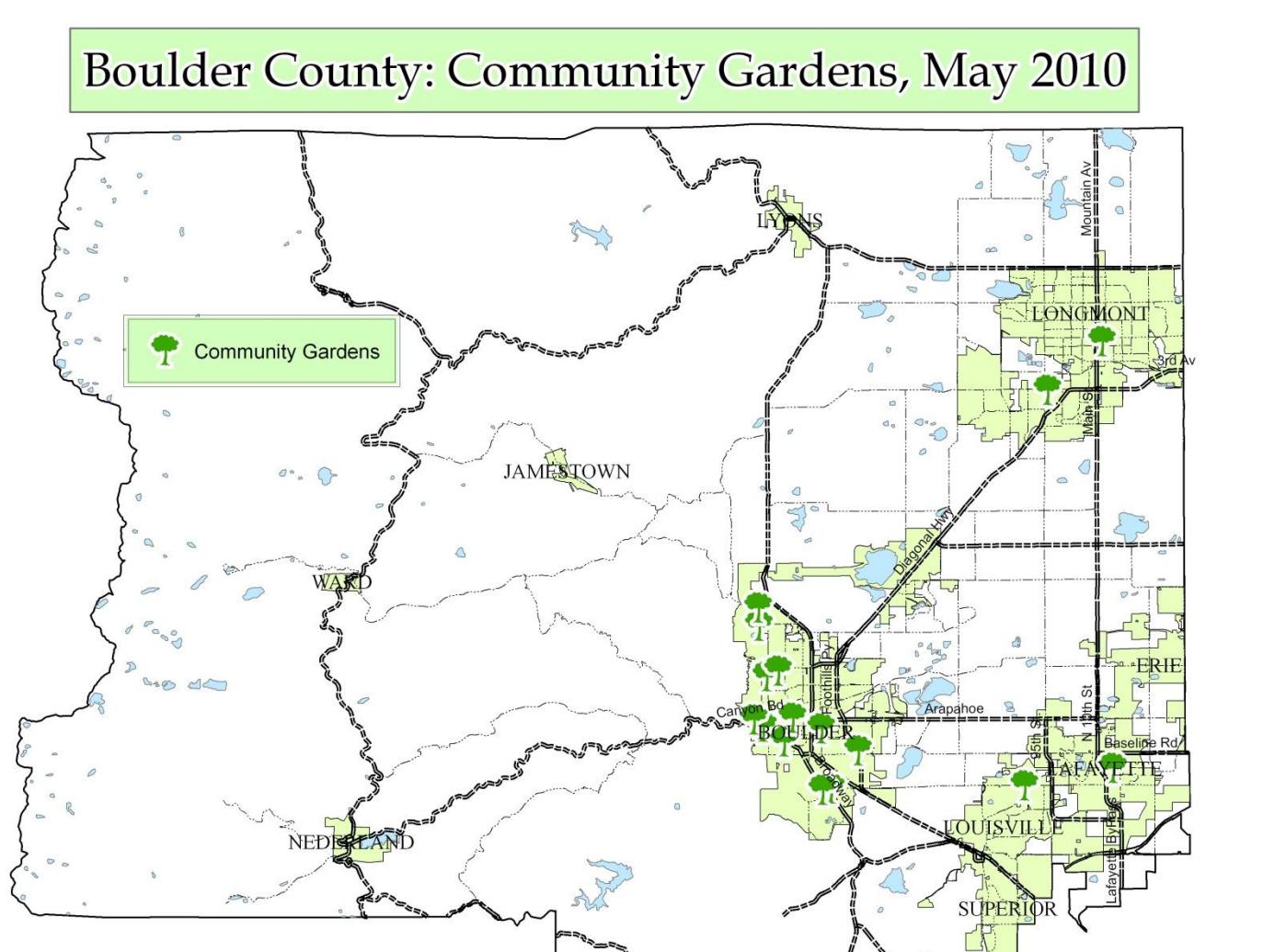
Funding of this research project by Colorado Department of Local Affairs Heritage Planning Grant #00192 is gratefully acknowledged.



### Northern Colorado Regional Food System Assessment

[www.larimer.org/foodassessment/](http://www.larimer.org/foodassessment/)

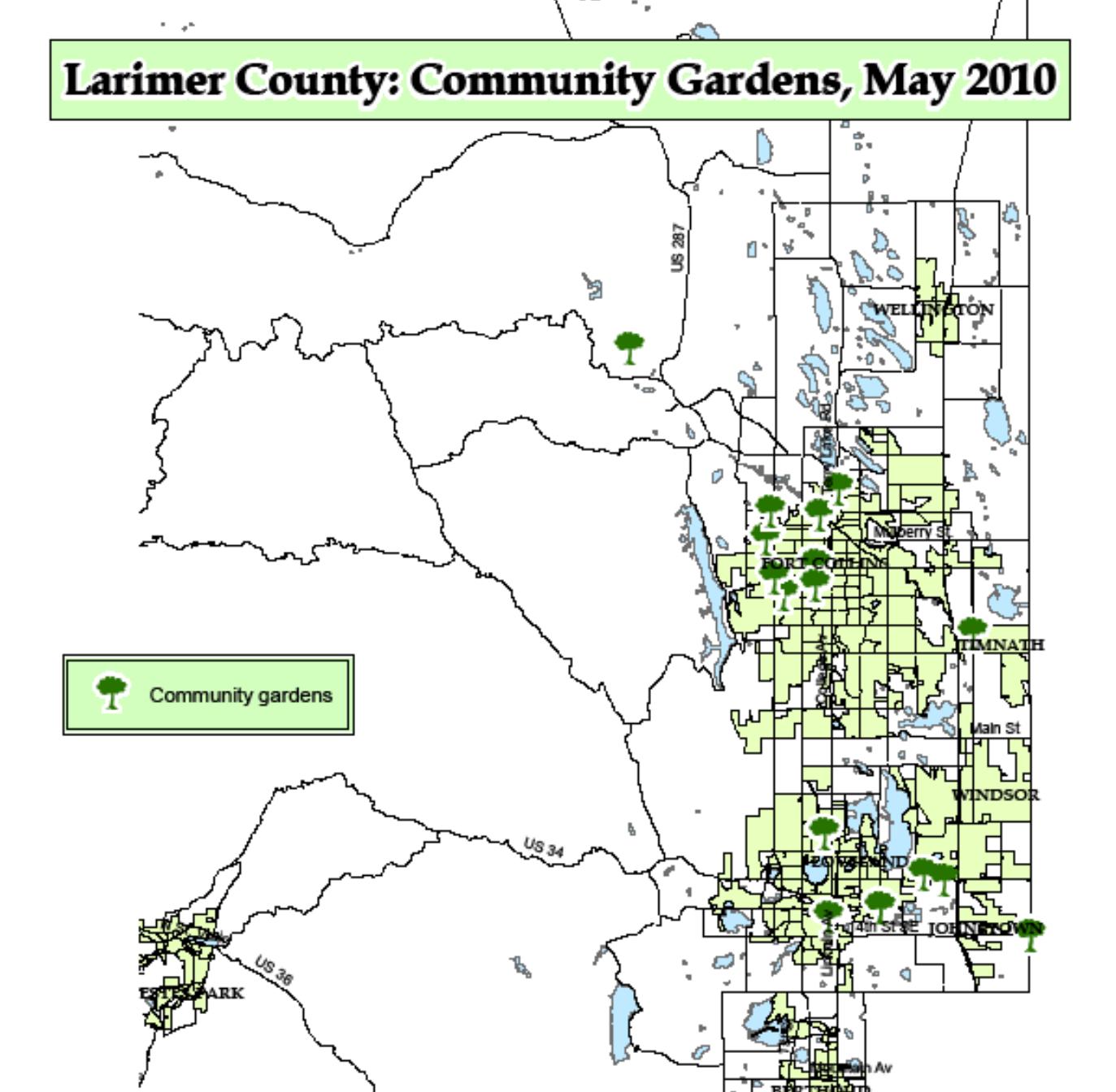
#### The Role of Community Gardens as a Source of Fresh Produce and Food Networks in our Region



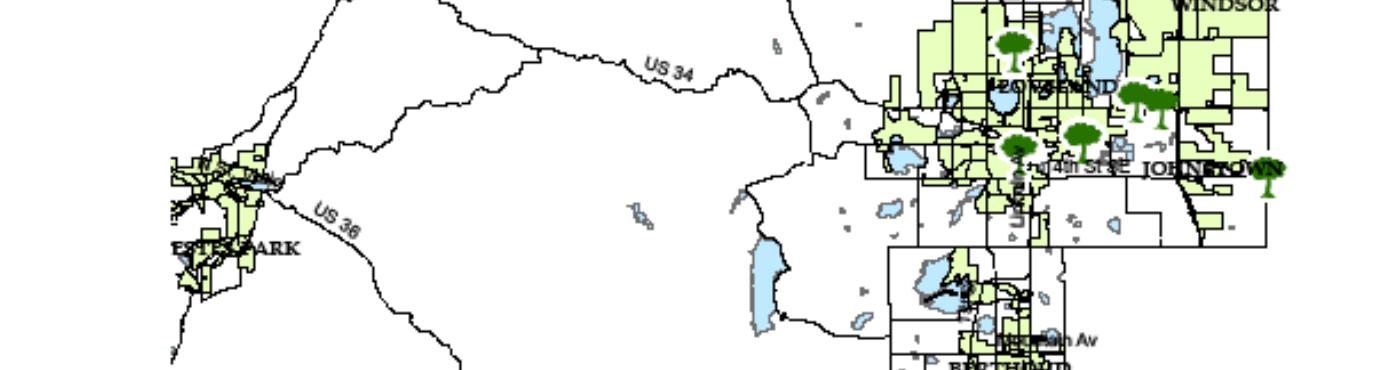
Boulder County: Community Gardens, May 2010

#### Northern Colorado's Community Gardens

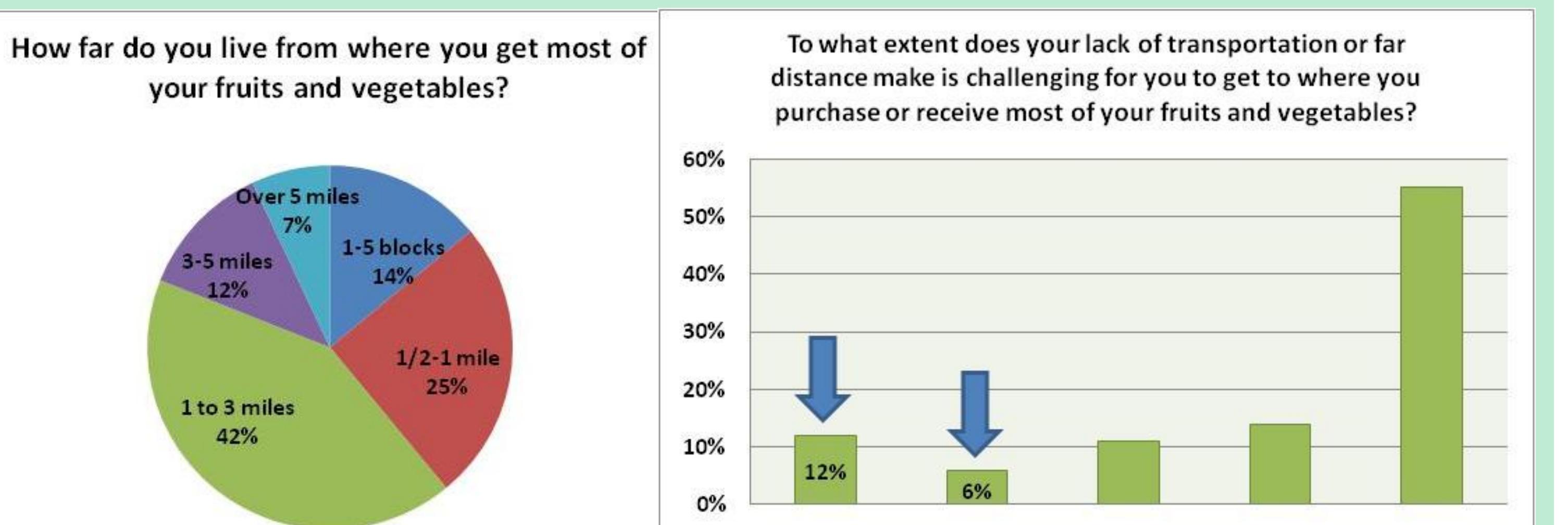
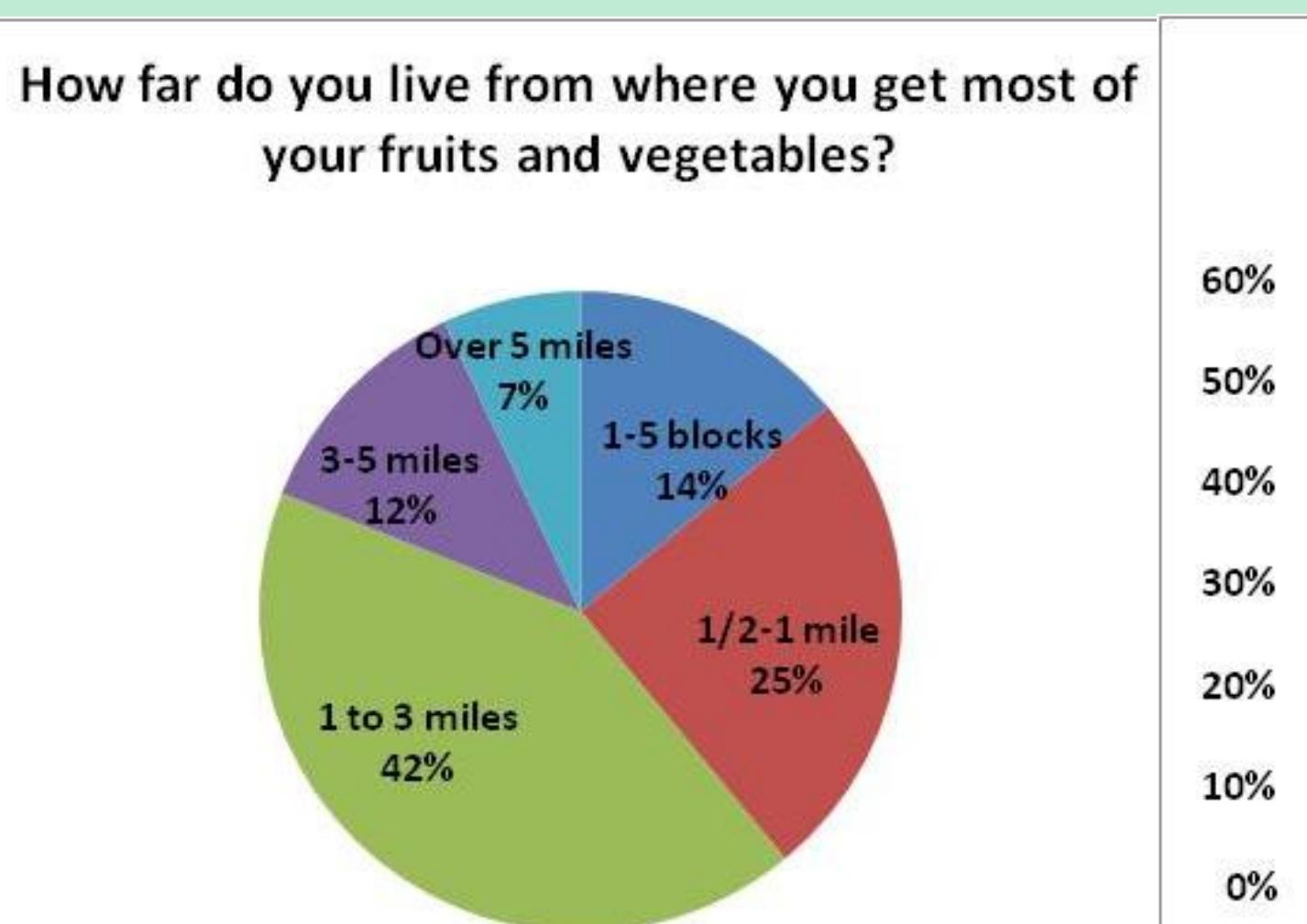
- Gardens are developed and operated by a variety of organizations in Northern Colorado, including LiveWell Colorado, the Boys and Girls Club, City of Greeley, churches, City of Fort Collins, housing developments, CSU Extension
- Many of these gardens serve two purposes: providing food for the growers and donating a portion to the local food bank
- Note that nearly all community gardens are clustered along urban corridors, such that people with limited financial access to food may also be limited by geography



Larimer County: Community Gardens, May 2010



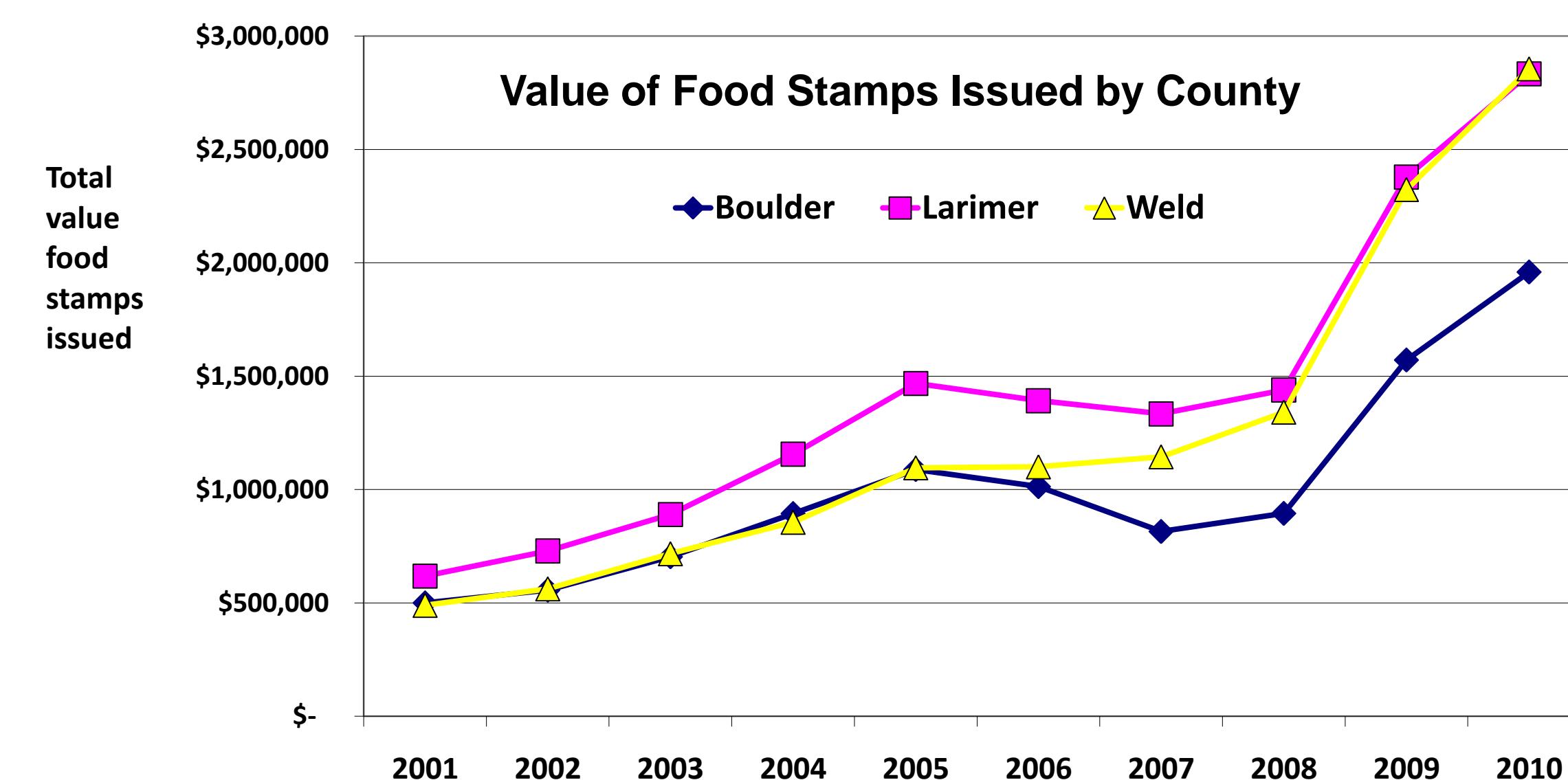
Weld County: Community Gardens, June 2010



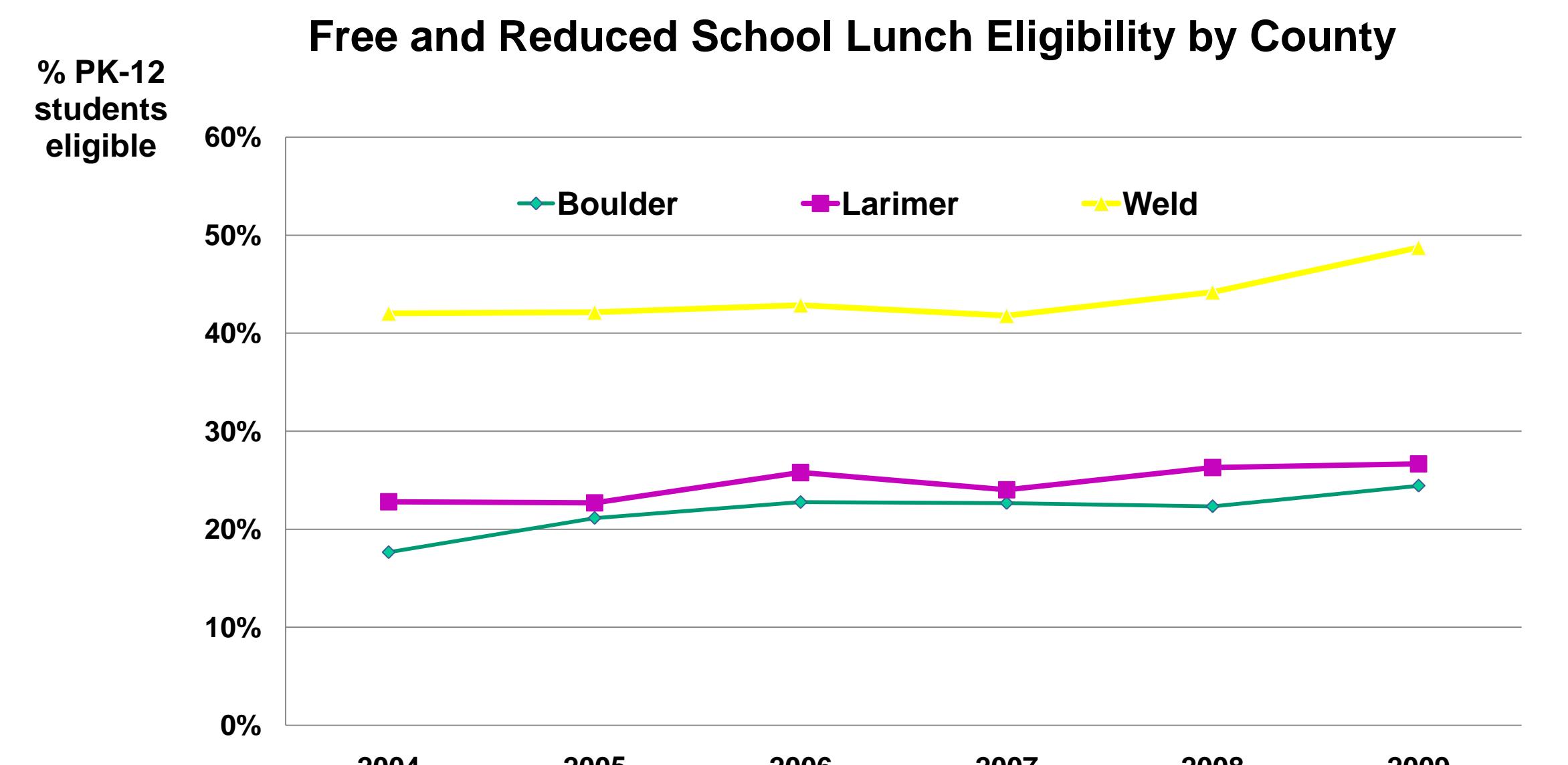
A recent Longmont LiveWell project found that distance might be a barrier to some households having access to produce and food

#### Resources for Food Access: Food Stamps

- 2010 food stamp outlays in the region have almost doubled since their previous high in 2005, and almost tripled from their lows in 2007
- Average food stamp benefits have doubled from \$77 per person in 2001 to \$143 per person in 2010, and have increased by 39% since 2007
- Weld county had the lowest average number of clients in the region until 2009, when the number reached nearly 20,000 in December 2009 (at this time Boulder had 13,000 and Larimer had 19,000)
- Growth in food stamp clients from 2007-2010: Larimer – 63%; Boulder – 78%; Weld – 89%



#### Resources for Food Access: School Meal Programs



- The total percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price (F&R) school lunches has grown much more rapidly than growth in the total student population. For example, across Boulder county school districts, the number of students increased by 11% while those eligible for F&R lunches grew by 54% (from 2004 to 2009).

- Although Weld county has the smallest 2009 student population at 36,754, it has the largest number eligible for F&R lunches at 17,909 (nearly 49% of the pre-K through high school student population).

- Although Boulder and Weld both saw increases of 12% in the number of F&R eligible students from 2008-2009; Larimer county saw an increase of only 3%.

### Local Organizations

#### For Emergency Food Assistance and Donations

**Food Bank for Larimer County-** FBLC's mission is to provide food to all in need through community partnerships and hunger relief programs. With three programs- Kids Café, Food Link, and Food Share- FBLC distributed 7.5 million pounds of food in 2009 to over 11,000 individuals. With the help of backyard gardeners over 36,000 pounds of fresh produce to be distributed through these food assistance programs. FBLC partners with many corporations and organizations to deliver food assistance across Larimer County. [www.foodbanklarimer.org](http://www.foodbanklarimer.org)  
Local Offices: Fort Collins and Loveland

**Weld Food Bank-** WFB's mission is to lead and engage our community in the fight against hunger. WFB is currently working on establishing a commercial kitchen to be used for a Kids Café programs and for emergency situations. WFB partners with the American Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, the Boys and Girls Club of Weld County, Disabled American Veterans, and Habitat for Humanity to deliver food assistance. [www.weldfoodbank.org](http://www.weldfoodbank.org)  
Local Office: Greeley

**A Little Giving goes a long way** **Community Food Share-** CFS's missions is To ensure that no one in Boulder & Broomfield Counties goes hungry. CFS's innovative program, Feeding Families, won the 2005 NOVA Health & Human Services Award from the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County. Community Food Share offers food assistance services in Boulder, Longmont, Lafayette, Louisville, Broomfield, Lyons, Ward, and Nederland. [www.communityfoodshare.org](http://www.communityfoodshare.org)  
Local Office: Longmont

#### Government Agencies and Programs For Continued Food Support

**USDA** United States Department of Agriculture **Food and Nutrition Service-** Food and Nutrition Service provides children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education through several programs. These included WIC, SNAP, National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, Special Milk Program, Nutrition Service Incentives Program, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, among others. [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)  
Local Office: Denver

**cdhs** Colorado Department of Human Services **people who help people** **Colorado Food Assistance Program-** Provides monthly benefits to low-income households to buy the food needed for a nutritionally adequate diet. [www.cdhs.state.co.us](http://www.cdhs.state.co.us)  
Local Offices: Boulder, Fort Collins, and Greeley

**Colorado State University Extension** offers research based information and programming, usually based on food issues and agricultural production. CSU Extension offers programs in nutrition, food safety, and food-buying education, which enables households with limited resources to establish healthy food-related behaviors. [www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)  
Local Offices: Longmont, Fort Collins, Greeley

#### Questions for Discussion

- Which data were most surprising to you?
- It appears that each county's residents in need are accessing food and financial resources differently. Why do you suppose this is the case?
- What element of the food system do you believe most effectively addresses food security and access?