

— C O L O R A D O —  
**FOOD SUMMIT**  
— DENVER, COLORADO —

Session title: State Level Levers

Note Taker: Rita Stevens

Main points of each panelist:

Facilitator: **James Pritchett**

1. Speaker 1: **Hollis Glenn** (CO Dept of Ag, Commissioner of operations)
  - a. Policy and decision making is made at all levels of legislature
    - i. Legislature determines budget, very influential. Can provide financial resources for programs
  - b. Important to develop relationships with lawmakers that can influence the policy that you want to change. You can educate them on issues and what the public needs.
  - c. Public and nonprofits can engage in legislative meetings by participating in public comment. This is essential for letting legislators know about what the community needs.
  - d. Supported the Community Food Access Program
    - i. Provide fresh food in areas in Colorado using produce from small companies
  - e. How do you form a coalition?
    - i. Good representation in state agencies, nonprofits, advocacy associations, and private sector will help in policy making
2. Speaker 2: **Jim Ehrlich** (Colorado Potato Admin Committee, executive director)
  - a. State and federal marketing order
    - i. Helps growers get better pricing for their products and sets quality regulations for product
    - ii. Created through Ag Marketing Agreement Act 1937
    - iii. During the depression, farmers were having a hard time. Congress created this to allow producers to create marketing orders
      1. When selling and transporting goods, there was no standards or regulations and that caused quality and safety issues
        - a. Marketing orders were requested by the farmers to require inspections, set size and grade and packaging standards, sets standards for the whole market for this item
        - b. Growers pay for the inspection service, not the state
  - b. How do you form a coalition?

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- i. This is a continuous task - gather support from outreach and education, networking, and forming relationships with people and organizations help form coalitions
3. Speaker 3: **Roberto Meza** (East denver food hub, CEO and cofounder)
- a. First generation farmer
  - b. Acquired land in 2013, started a microgreens farm in 2017, sold product to restaurants, pandemic created lots of setbacks - brought farmers together and brought out many leaders in agriculture
    - i. Became a leader in the Agriculture Commission
  - c. Build trust and connection with people and communities
4. Speaker 4: **Ashley Wheeland** (Hunger Free Colorado, Director of Public Policy)
- a. Hunger Free Colorado
    - i. Make sure everyone has access to healthy food
      - 1. SNAP, WIC, Healthy School Meals for All Program
    - ii. Trying to emphasize community voices
  - b. Most nutrition programs are funded with federal dollars but are enacted at the state level
  - c. Join coalitions, become a community advocate, getting involved can have a big impact
  - d. How do you form a coalition?
    - i. Funder need to fund organizations to create coalitions
    - ii. Build trust with communities. Be persistent and prove to them you are there to make a difference

#### Question and Answer Summary:

- 1. State programs are fairly easy to apply for. Federal programs aren't so easy. How can federal programs be more accessible?
  - a. Advocate to change the Farm Bill to change the process of applying
  - b. Get grants and TA to assist institutions and companies in applying for federal grants as a short term strategy
- 2. In regards to making movement/change in the Farm Bill in making, are there ways to do it that wouldn't use legislation? Is there an easier way to modernize programs/ application processes for grants?
  - a. Depends on the program
  - b. There is a difference between the rule-making processes of a bill or a program and the governance/implementation of it