

CSU Extension Food Systems Newsletter

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91ST EDITION

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Welcome to the **91st 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 two 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!

To assist our readers in finding information, events and programs we may have presented in the past, you can find old issues at: <http://foodsystems.colostate.edu/extension-outreach/local-food-systems-newsletter/>.

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REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT: ARCHULETA COUNTY

Life consists of many pieces of a puzzle that we connect along the way. In the summer of 2017, Robin Young transitioned from Custer County Extension to Archuleta County Extension, bringing with her years of forest health experience, non-profit creation skills, and a love for connecting people with solutions. Her six years as County Director in Custer County supported projects like the Westcliffe Farmers Market, Sustainable Ways, Inc., potato cultivars for backyard growers, noxious weed management, and a native plant program. Extension identified where farms were, what farmers were growing, how that food entered the local food system, where gaps were in the food system, and how the community could better support CSAs.



Robin Young, County Director for Archuleta County Extension

Robin has continued similar efforts in Archuleta County, where a “high energy around food” exists as well. At a recent meeting, twelve stakeholders including a local grower, a registered dietician, a perma-culturist, and representatives from



“Geodomes” can be used to grow plants in the winter. Photo credit: Growing Spaces

Pagosa Springs High School, Rocky Mountain Audubon Society, Growing Spaces, San Juan Basin Public Health, Archuleta County Department of Transportation, Pagosa Springs Elementary CATCH Program, Pagosa Springs Open School, and Archuleta County Extension discussed the need for adult and youth education about growing food. The group used data from the USDA’s Census of Agriculture and other observations to determine a high level of interest, but lack of knowledge and skills to grow more food in the community. Geodomes, heated by hot springs prevalent in the area, were identified as a potential resource with which to grow food year-round.

Robin also enjoys working with area youth. The 4-H program and other events teach students about the entire food system from farm to table, business models, and how everything relates back to agriculture and natural resources. In both Custer and Archuleta counties, Robin Young and Extension are fitting the pieces together for residents to understand the bigger picture of their food system. Visit <http://archuleta.extension.colostate.edu/> for more information about country programs and projects in the community.

Written by Rachael Latta, student in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.

GRANTS: WESTERN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Farmer-Rancher Program:** These grants support research and education projects conducted by agricultural producers, with guidance from a technical advisor. The goal is to find ways to enhance farm income, protect the environment, and improve the quality of life for farm/ranch families, communities, and society as a whole. Individual farmers or ranchers may apply for up to \$20,000 and a group of three or more producers may apply for up to \$25,000. **Applications DUE: 1:00pm (MT) Wednesday December 6, 2017.** For more information [click here](#).
- Graduate Student Program:** To better meet the needs of graduate students, Western SARE has changed the yearly deadlines and award dates. The Graduate Student Grants provide a maximum of \$25,000 and may last for up to two years. **New Deadline for Proposals: 2:00pm (MT) Friday**

January 12, 2018. Awards announced in April 2018.

Eligible applicants: Master's or Ph.D. students enrolled full time (as determined by the institution's requirements) at accredited colleges or universities in the Western region. An applicant is eligible for only one grant during his or her graduate program. For more information, please [click here](#).

GRANT: NIFA COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is accepting grants for the Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program. These grants are intended to help private non-profit entities that need a one-time infusion of federal assistance to establish and carry out multipurpose community food projects. Projects are funded from \$10,000 to \$400,000, for a period of one to four years.

Applications DUE: December 4, 2017

The program is designed to:

- Meet the needs of low-income people by increasing their access to fresher, more nutritious food supplies,
- Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs,
- Promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues,
- Meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agricultural needs for infrastructure improvement and development,
- Plan for long-term solutions, and
- Create innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

Projects that develop links between two or more sectors of the food system, support the development of entrepreneurial projects, develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and non-profit food sectors, encourage long term planning activities, and build long-term capacity of communities to address food and agricultural problems are preferred.

To read more about the grant and apply, [click here](#).

GRANT: USDA FARM TO SCHOOL

The USDA anticipates awarding approximately \$5 million in grant funding to support efforts that improve access to local foods in schools. Grant funds will be made available on a competitive basis, subject to availability of federal funds. Applicants may apply for a planning grant, Implementation, or training grant. Planning and Training grant awards will range from \$20,000-\$50,000 and Implementation awards will range from \$50,000-\$100,000. Schools, non-profit organizations, state agencies, Indian Tribal Organizations, farmers and other eligible groups may apply.

Applications DUE: Friday December 8, 2017

Visit the [USDA Farm to School Grant website](#) for the RFA, FAQs and information on upcoming webinars. Contact Andrea Northup via [email](#) or by phone 303-844-4417 with any questions about the program.

GRANT: NIFA SCRI PRE-APPLICATION OPPORTUNITY

Pre-Applications DUE: Friday December 8, 2017

The purpose of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) program is to address the critical needs of

the specialty crop industry by awarding grants to support research and extension that address key challenges of national, regional and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of food and agriculture, including conventional and organic food production systems. Projects must address at least one of five focus areas:

1. Research in plant breeding, genetics, genomics, and other methods to improve crop characteristics;
2. Efforts to identify and address threats from pests and diseases, including threats to specialty crop pollinators;
3. Efforts to improve production efficiency, handling and processing, productivity, and profitability over the long term (including specialty crop policy and marketing);
4. New innovations and technology, including improved mechanization and technologies that delay or inhibit ripening; and
5. Methods to prevent, detect, monitor, control and respond to potential food safety hazards in the production efficiency, handling and processing of specialty crops.

Eligible applicants: 1862 Land-Grant Institutions, 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, 1994 Land-Grant Institutions, for-profit organizations (other than small businesses), Hispanic-serving institutions, nonprofits with and without 501(c)(3) IRS status (other than institutions of higher education), private institutions of higher education, small businesses, state Agricultural Experiment Stations, state controlled institutions of higher education.

To read more about the grant further specifics on eligibility qualifications [click here](#).

For more information please contact: [Thomas \(Tom\) Bewick](#).

GRANT: ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Organic Farming Research Foundation is accepting proposals for 2018 research projects on organic farming and food systems. This year's priority areas are soil health, innovative weed control, management of emerging insect and disease issues, and livestock health.

Proposals DUE: Friday December 15, 2017

Eligible applicants: farmers, ranchers, graduate students, early career researchers, veterans and Extension personnel. For more information, please [click here](#).

GRANT: VALUE ADDED PRODUCER GRANTS

The USDA Value-Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of new products. Planning grants can be up to \$75,000 and working capital grants can be up to \$250,000. Examples of planning exercises include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing the proposed value-added product. Example of working capital expenses include processing costs, marketing and advertising expenses, and some inventory and salary expenses.

The goals of this program are to:

- generate new products,
- create and expand marketing opportunities, and
- increase producer income.

Applications DUE: Wednesday January 31, 2018

Eligible applicants: independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-

cooperatives, and majority controlled producer-based business ventures, as defined in the program regulation are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants may receive priority if they are a beginning farmer or rancher, a socially-disadvantaged farmer or rancher, a small or medium-sized farm or ranch structured as a family farm, a farmer or rancher cooperative, or are proposing a mid-tier value chain.

For more information on the program, [click here](#).

FARM LOAN FUNDING: USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY

FSA offers specially targeted farm ownership and farm operation loans to underserved applicants as well as beginning farmers and ranchers. During the fiscal year 2017 (Oct. 1, 2016-Sept. 30, 2017) Colorado FSA obligated \$48,554,504 million loans to underserved borrowers and beginning farmers and ranchers.

Please click the following links for further details about how to qualify for farm ownership and farm operating loans as an [underserved](#) or [beginning](#) farmer or rancher, or [contact your local FSA office](#).

NEWS: NEW USDA FOOD HUB REPORT

The fourth volume of the USDA Food Hub Technical Report Series, *Running a Food Hub: Learning from Food Hub Closures*, has been released. The report draws on national data and case studies to understand why some food hubs have failed in an effort to learn from their mistakes and identify general lessons so new and existing hubs can overcome barriers to success.

You can download each volume of the report for FREE here:

- [Running a Food Hub: Lessons learned from the field – Vol. 1](#)
- [Running a Food Hub: A business operations guide – Vol. 2](#)
- [Running a Food Hub: Assessing financial viability – Vol. 3](#)
- [Running a Food Hub: Learning from food hub closures – Vol. 4](#)

Hard copies of Volume 4 and other reports in the series are also available for FREE.

Email USDA Agricultural Economist, [Jim Barham](#), with your mailing address and number of copies desired (up to 5 of each volume) to obtain hard copies. Larger orders can be requested if used for a specific convening/training workshop.

NEWS: COLORADO JOINS FARM-TO-PRESCHOOL MOVEMENT

Colorado has joined the USDA funded pre-school program called Cooking up Healthy Options with Plants (CHOP) as an effort by the Colorado Health Department to combat childhood obesity. The three-year program will take place in child care centers and homes supported by the Colorado Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which provides nutrition assistance and education to child and adult care programs serving low-income Coloradans.

Please click on the following links to learn more about the [USDA CACFP](#) and the [CHOP program in Colorado](#).

WEBINAR: BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Tufts University will host a webinar led by New Entry staff on **Tuesday, December 12th 11:00 AM (MST), 1:00 PM (EST)** to walk through the components of the application submission for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) grant. The webinar will cover aspects of the application

package as well as information about navigating grants.gov.

The webinar will last for one hour. Please [click here](#) for a list of Tufts WebEx courses to find the BFRDP Application Process course as well as to join the event (once registered) the day of.

COURSE SERIES: PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

CSU Extension is hosting a series of evening classes about Principles of Business Planning and Management. Classes are designed to help new farmers and ranchers explore farming as a business and provide intermediate and experienced farmers and ranchers with tools and ideas to refine and enhance their business management, production and marketing skills. Details are as follows:

Eight (8) sessions held on Wednesday evenings (*catered dinner each session*)

January 17th-March 6th, March 17th, March 24th

CSU Extension Office, Golden, CO

Class objectives:

- Understand what is required to create and maintain a financially stable farm business
- Identify the potential pitfalls and use best practices to plan for them
- Build farmer capacity and community in the Denver Metro Area

Course series is an experiential program, and an opportunity to build professional capacity and network.

Tuition is \$350 and includes meals. Applicants should complete the 2017 Building Farmers [Application](#) and return it to Patti O'Neal, Metro Building Farmers Coordinator, 15200 W. 6th Ave. Pkwy, Golden, CO 80401 or email to: poneal@jeffco.us.

Deadline for applications: Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Notification of acceptance to class: December 30, 2017

Please [click here](#) for more detailed information about the program.

WORKSHOPS: BEGINNING FARMERS CORE CURRICULUM & HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS

Are you interested in growing and selling vegetables, but do not know where to start? Denver Botanic Gardens and CSU Extension have partnered to develop a certificate program that will introduce you to the ins and outs of becoming a successful market farmer on five acres or less.

Full participation and certification from the program includes:

- 7 Core Curriculum lectures
- 5 Hands-on workshops
- 2 (minimum) elective courses
- All completed within 2018 calendar year

All coursework will take place at various locations in Denver, CO. Core curriculum courses are offered from February-September 2018, and elective courses are offered August-October 2018.

For more information, [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to register by **February 8th, 2018 at 6:00 PM**. Students will register separately for the Core Curriculum and for each of their own Elective courses.

For registration questions please email [Sami Lester](#) and for program inquiries (including specific dates

and program content) please email [Brien Darby](#).

EVENT: NATIONAL FARMERS UNION FREE ONLINE CONFERENCE

Join the National Farmers Union for their FREE online, interactive conference, “Growing for the Future” about beginning farmer and rancher issues. This conference has a mission of developing agricultural leaders from all backgrounds and providing plentiful information and resources focused on beginning farmer and rancher topics. Their annual nationally-focused online conference provides an opportunity for beginning farmers and ranchers to acquire the skills they need to run a successful operation. The conference will highlight leaders in the field of agriculture and focus on building a network for beginning farmers and ranchers throughout the country. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

December 4th-7th, 2:00 PM-5:00 PM (MST)

Conference topics include:

- Access to land as a beginning farmer
- Farm Bill breakdown
- Access to capital
- Beginning farmers and healthcare
- FSMA Produce Safety Rule: Are you in or are you out?
- An in-depth look into vegetable production
- FSMA Produce Safety basics
- Mentorship and networking
- Organic certification
- Farm aid
- Life Q & A session

EVENT: COLORADO AG WATER SUMMIT

Join the Colorado Ag Water Alliance to listen to farmers and ranchers tell the story of “Water and Agriculture” in Colorado. The Ag Water Summit brings together agricultural leaders from across the state, water professionals, elected officials and decision makers to discuss agricultural water issues. The goal is to continue the discussion of pertinent water issues, but also to make the event an opportunity to tell the story of “Water and Agriculture” for people unfamiliar with the role of agriculture in Colorado. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

December 5th, 8:15AM-4:30PM at the Ranch, Larimer County Fairgrounds, Loveland, CO

EVENTS: DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS SYMPOSIA

LiveWell Colorado invites anyone who has participated in, supported or promoted the Double Up Food Bucks (DUFBS) program to various symposia throughout Colorado to:

- Listen to LiveWell’s DUFBS lessons and successes from the past year;
- Listen to feedback from participants and partners;
- Network; and
- Plan/strategize for year three of DUFBS.

All symposia are FREE. See upcoming dates and locations below:

Western Colorado Symposium

Monday, January 8, 2018

10am - 2pm

Grand Junction Location TBA

Register [here](#) for Grand Junction

Southwest Colorado Symposium

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

10am - 2pm

Durango Location TBA

Register [here](#) for Durango

Meetings will include Spanish language interpretation (and other languages if requested), lunch, child care, and door prizes. Funds are available for those requiring reimbursement for mileage.

Please [click here](#) for the flyer (with locations and dates of symposia) or contact [Amy Nelms](#) via email with any further questions.

EVENT: WESTERN COLORADO FOOD & FARM FORUM

The Western Colorado Food & Farm Forum works to improve the sustainable production, marketing and consumption of local food. This year's forum theme is "Strategies for Success in Demanding Times". There will be a wide array of breakout sessions which convey vital, regionally specific agricultural information in areas including maximizing crop and livestock production, innovative agricultural management strategies, and specialty crops.

January 26th-27th, 2018 in Montrose, CO

Conference highlights include:

- Produce Safety Training Certification Course
- Half-day workshops
- Farmer to Farmer Invention Convention
- Farm Worker to Ag Entrepreneur breakout sessions in English and Spanish
- 18+ breakout sessions
- An evening with Dr. Temple Grandin with reception and book signing to follow

The conference is for anyone with an interest in the future of agriculture, including: ranchers, farmers, gardeners, students, and ag professionals. Whether you're looking to improve or innovate your existing practices, the forum has myriad resources and networking opportunities.

For more information about the forum, please [click here](#).
Early bird Registration is OPEN, please [click here](#) to register.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To add your ideas and news, contact [Nicole Didero](#).

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