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April 2023 || Newsletter Edition 155

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CSU Food Systems Spotlight

Abby Weber

Southeast Area FCS Extension Specialist
Colorado State University

My name is Abby Weber, and I am the Southeast Area Family and Consumer Science Specialist for 7 counties in the Southeast Region. Agriculture is the major commodity in our small rural communities here on the plains, and with that comes the need for local community sustainability in our food systems. Programs like Cottage Foods Certification, Master Food Safety Advisor, food preservation workshops, and Cooking with Commodities are just a few of the things we do to help make this possible. Participants of all ages learn about food systems from production to consumption through these programming efforts.



Mark Your Calendar

Land Access Community Listening Sessions in Montezuma and La Plata Counties



The Southwest Colorado Land Access Project Working Group includes [Montezuma Land Conservancy](#), [La Plata Open Space Conservancy](#) and the [Farmer Training Program](#). Together, the group is researching existing land access models and exploring opportunities that may best fit the area. This work involves a community engagement process to discuss barriers and opportunities to land access and how organizations such as land trusts might be able to support such efforts.

The partner organizations will be hosting five community listening sessions this month in a variety of locations to best reach as many Southwest Colorado community members as possible.

- Mancos: Tuesday, **April 11:** 6:00 – 8:00pm. Mount Lookout Grange, 680 W. Grand Ave.
- Durango: Monday, **April 17:** 5:30 – 7:30pm. Sunnyside Market, 1305 Escalante Drive, 2nd Floor.
- Ignacio: Monday, **April 24:** 11:30am – 1:30pm. Southern Ute Museum, 503 Ouray Drive.

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

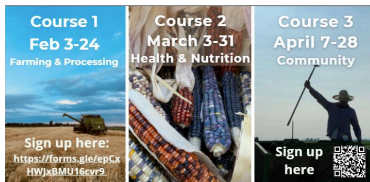
Food Safety Training for Cottage Food Producers 2023 courses

Learn how to safely produce food from home as a cottage food business. This online course covers a variety of topics, including: basic food safety, foods that are permissible under the updated Colorado Cottage Foods Act, ingredient labeling, special considerations for food preparation at high altitudes, and safe food sampling best practices. Registration is \$50.

Courses will be offered online on the following dates. **Click each date below** to register and learn more about the program.

CSU Extension Cottage Food Safety Training Online:

- **April 6**, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm in-person in Lamar
- **April 12**, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- **April 21**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **May 4**, 10:30 am-2:30 pm
- **May 20**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **June 1**, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
- **June 6**, 10:00 am-1:30 pm, in-person in Colorado Springs
- **August 28**, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Grain School Online 2023

The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS) is offering an online grain school in the Spring of 2023. Three courses will be offered for \$150 each, or all 3 courses can be taken for \$400.

April's course is focused on building the grain community and it runs from **April 6-28**. The online modules will be available for 12 months. Live online sessions will occur each Thursday from 4:30pm-6pm MST. Experiential sessions for UCCS students and local participants will occur each Friday from 10:50am-1:30pm MST at UCCS.

Scholarships for Colorado farmers and grain-focused businesses are available.

To register, click [here](#).

Produce Safety Training



**COLORADO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

CSU's Department of Horticulture will be offering two produce safety courses this month:

- **Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training on April 20** at CSU Spur, from 7:30am to 5:30pm. Cost is \$125. Register and learn more [here](#).
- **Basic Elements of Cleaning and Sanitation for Food Facilities and Packinghouse on April 26** at CSU Spur, from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Cost is \$260. Register and learn more [here](#).

For more information, contact Dr. Eduardo Gutierrez Rodriguez at egr10@colostate.edu.



Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

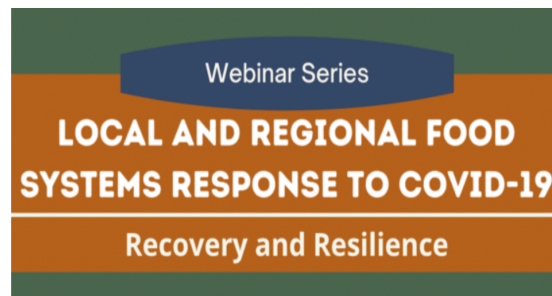
The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is funding this program, which helps beginning farmers and ranchers to be successful in their farming, ranching, and forest management endeavors. Participants receive education, mentoring, and technical assistance that allows them to make more informed management decisions. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

Applications are due **April 27, 2023**.

Webinar: Data to support your local/regional/state food systems work

Does your city, region, or state have its own food systems map, or are you considering creating one? When developing a food system map, having a clear idea of what data to include, and the processes for maintaining it is a vital first step. In this webinar, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service and Colorado State University's Food Systems Institute will explore and showcase a new data resource available to you to help make some of these essential early decisions.

The new resource, located at <https://localfoodeconomics.com/data> includes more than 300 indicators developed by representatives of dozens of local and regional food systems organizations through an equity lens. These indicators cover topics including labor, community resources, nutrition security and food access, business development and infrastructure, and local food sales. Hear from members of the team that created and maintain this resource, and join in a discussion around how we can collectively support local, regional, and state food systems data and mapping efforts.



Webinar will be held **May 2nd, 2023 10:00am MST**; join here:
<https://zoom.us/j/2254233117>



Funding Opportunities



Conservation Assistance for Underserved Producers

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) is offering cooperative agreements for two-year projects that are associated with NRCS programs. In particular, underserved communities and urban/small-scale producers will be given the most attention. \$70 million in funding is available. For more information, click [here](#).

Applications are due by **April 27, 2023**.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service is requesting applications for its FY 2023 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. This program awards grants to state departments of agriculture for projects that enhance competitiveness of specialty crops. For eligibility information and more information, click [here](#).



Applications are due by **May 1, 2023**.



Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) Grant Applications Available

USDA's LAMP is made up of the [Farmers Market Promotion Program \(FMPP\)](#) and [Local Food Promotion Program \(LFPP\)](#) and the [Regional Food System Partnerships \(RFSP\)](#) grant program, all administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).

FMLFPP

Two of LAMP's funding opportunities – **FMPP** and **LFPP** – together referred to as FMLFPP seek to develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food systems. FMPP supports producer-to-consumer markets such as farmers markets, roadside stands, agritourism activities, community-supported agriculture programs (CSA), and online sales. LFPP grants support local and regional food business enterprises that engage as marketing intermediaries.

RFSP

The **RFSP** grant program supports public-private partnerships that build and strengthen viability and resilience of local or regional food economies. Funded projects focus on increasing the availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products and alleviating unnecessary administrative and technical barriers. Projects can cover the planning and design of a local and regional food economy as well as implementing or expanding an existing one.

A Request for Applications (RFA) for each program is available on the program pages linked through the [LAMP](#) webpage. Applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 2, 2023**.

AMS is hosting webinars to help applicants navigate the application process. Additionally, Frequently Asked Questions are posted on the [AMS Grants website](#).

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program



This program funds projects to explore new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system. Eligible applicants include state departments of agriculture, state agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate state agencies (i.e., state universities, state colleges, or state governmental entities). For more information and to apply, visit the [FSMIP website](#).

Applications are due **May 2, 2023**.



Grants for Farmers and Ranchers Available

The Western SARE Farmer/Rancher Research & Education Grant Program focuses on advancing on-farm sustainability solutions by funding innovative producer-driven research and outreach. This grant program involves agricultural producers (main applicants) and technical advisor(s) implementing projects to address identified needs in sustainable agriculture.

This program aims to honor producer innovation by funding on-farm research that benefits and is led by producers themselves.

Proposals are due October 25, 2023.

[Learn more and download the Call for Proposals.](#)

Colorado Clean Diesel Program



This is an opportunity that can help farms and other Colorado business owners purchase electric or hybrid equipment and transportation vehicles. Businesses interested in replacing one or more of their older diesel machines with eligible lower- or zero-emissions equivalents can apply for a grant. Grants may be up to 25-45% of the project cost, depending on type of equipment. Anecdotally, this program is not very competitive and applicants who meet program eligibility criteria are likely to receive funding.

Learn more by [visiting their website](#).



Rural Development Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loans Available

As part of the American Rescue Plan, the USDA **Rural Development Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program** is offering loans of up to \$40 million for qualified lenders to finance food systems projects.

These grants will be offered to projects that are starting or expanding activities in the middle of the food supply chain. For example, the program will support new investments in infrastructure for food aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, and distribution. Applications will be accepted until funds are exhausted.



News, Resources & Reading

Stakeholder Toolkit for GAP Resources Available

The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Foundation (NASDA) has added a Stakeholder Toolkit to be used in conjunction with the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Grower Toolkit announced last month.



The Stakeholder Toolkit was created as a guide for helping individuals implement their GAP education and outreach programs. It contains templates for marketing and promotion, grower meeting materials, sample presentations, and contact lists

to help develop partnerships between state departments of agriculture, cooperative extension, and non-government organizations.

The Stakeholder Toolkit is now **available online** and in **PDF form** for printing and sharing in future trainings. NASDA's website also lists a **section devoted to stakeholder resources** including a video recording of the stakeholder training at NASDA's Annual Meeting.

COLORADO FOOD SYSTEMS ADVISORY COUNCIL



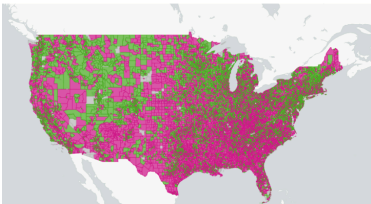
Annual Report Now Available

In 2022, the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC) annual report captures the unique contributions COFSAC has made to Colorado's food systems landscape.

This report is now available to the food community, and COFSAC has shared its priorities, which include:

- Strengthening key stakeholder relationships;
- Supporting universal school meal implementation; and
- Harmonizing food systems planning across regions, organizations and issues throughout Colorado.

Read the report [here](#).



New Tool Shows Food Access and Health Disparities in the US

The Partnership for a Healthier America, with the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, has released the **Food Equity Opportunity Map**.

The map provides a visual tool to convey food access and health issues in US counties, and highlights areas where improving access to nutritious food would make the greatest impact.

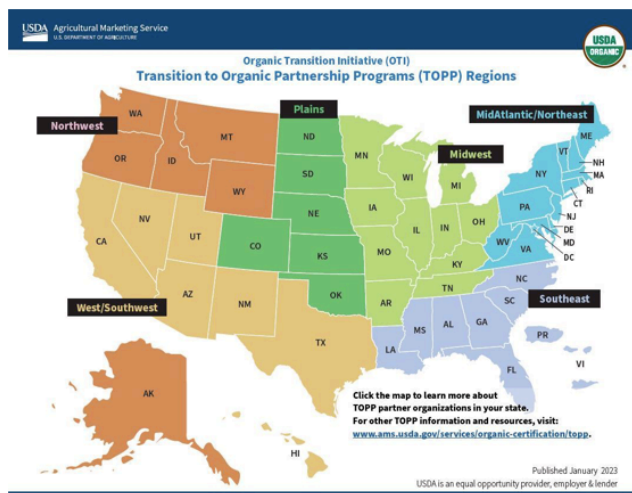
The map looks at regions around the country on a community level, conveying residents' access to food, percentages below the poverty line, and rates of Type 2 diabetes, a disease that is sometimes connected to nutrition.

Transition to Organic Program Connecting with Regional Networks

The USDA has announced partner organizations that farmers can contact to learn more about transitioning to organic. These organizations are also entry points for existing organic farmers wanting to serve as paid mentors to help establish the

next generation of organic farmers. This work is part of the Organic Transition Initiative (OTI), which supports transitioning and recently transitioned producers who face technical, cultural, and market shifts during the first few years of organic certification.

Click [here](#) to explore the PDF-based map.



From Our Communities



Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting of Fuel and Iron Food Hall in Pueblo, CO

Fuel & Iron Food Hall has a NEW date for its grand opening and ribbon cutting. Fuel and Iron Food Hall is a new restaurant, urban farm, and affordable housing enterprise in Pueblo, CO. For more information, see

[this article](#) in The Gazette.

Join on **Friday, April 28th** for the ribbon cutting ceremony at 11:00 AM. All are invited!



ABOUT FOOD SYSTEMS

at Colorado State University

Food systems are the connections between natural resources, the agricultural and food industries, and the buyers, consumers, and communities to which they contribute. Research, extension and education identify and inform opportunities to bridge how production, supply chains, and eaters respond to changing markets, policy, and the environment. At CSU, we focus on these key areas to train, influence, and communicate ways to connect food-related



roles and foster healthy communities, economies, and individuals.



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