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CSU Food Systems Spotlight



Jayna Mallon

MS Student, Colorado State University
Department of Ag and Resource Economics

Jayna is a master's student in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at Colorado State University. Prior to joining CSU, she studied Economics and Public Policy at the University of Virginia. After graduating, she completed an AmeriCorps service term with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, where she worked on a USDA 2501 grant project which aimed to support beginner and underinvested farmers and ranchers. Jayna helps with the evaluation and reporting of the Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center in her role as a Graduate Research Assistant at CSU. Jayna plans to focus her master's research on regional food systems and development, with an emphasis on supporting small and mid-sized agriculture, seeking to foster equitable growth and advance sustainable practices.



Mark Your Calendar



Food Safety Training for Colorado Cottage Foods Producers

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; times are all in Mountain Standard or Daylight.

Courses will be offered online on the following dates. **Click each date below** to register and learn more about the program. For additional dates, check [here](#).

CSU Extension Cottage Food Safety Training Online:

- **October 9**, 10:00 am - 1:30 pm, in-person El Paso County
- **October 9**, 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm, online
- **October 17**, 6:00 pm - 9:30 pm, online
- **November 1**, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, online



Farm Resilience Online Course

Asynchronous, self-paced course now open for enrollment!

Learn practical strategies and tools to boost your farm's resilience amidst the challenges of climate change. This self-paced, online course is designed specifically for farmers and ranchers in the West, focusing on real-world solutions and hands-on techniques. Join a community of like-minded individuals and gain the knowledge you need to secure your farm's future.

Enroll today and deepen your journey towards climate resilience and sustainability.



Regenerative Food Systems Investment Forum October 9-10, 2024

The RFSI Forum is the gathering for learning the why, how and where to invest capital in agriculture and food for financial and impact returns. Whether you have been engaged in the regenerative space for decades, are ready to dig in to this emerging opportunity, or are just a little curious, this event offers unparalleled insight and networking opportunities.

Who should attend?

- Impact investors, family offices, pension funds, fund managers, foundations, and banks
- Financial advisors and other investment services
- Entrepreneurs
- Farmers, ranchers, and producers
- Corporate food companies, emerging brands, agricultural and food service providers
- Advocates for healthy food systems

Apply [here](#) for a Farmer Scholarship. Click [here](#) to register.



The Rye Resurgence Comes to the Great American Beer Festival October 10-12, 2024

Join the Rye Resurgence Project and the Colorado Farm Brewery at the Great American Beer Festival (GABF) and Our Mutual Friend (OMF) Brewing in Denver this October!

The Colorado Farm Brewery has crafted three special rye beers using high-alpine Resurgence Rye grown in the San Luis Valley and entered them into this year's GABF!

More information and tickets can be found [here](#).



The USDA AMS Local and Regional Foods Resources and Research Webinar Series

On **Thursday, Oct. 17 at 11 am MT**, the USDA AMS Local and Regional Foods

Division will launch the *Local and Regional Foods Resources & Research webinar series*, a monthly webinar series highlighting local and regional foods research projects, resources, partnerships, and programs.

The first webinar in this series will provide an update on the **Regional Food Business Center Program** and will include representatives from different centers sharing about their region-specific initiatives and activities. This webinar will also share information on the centers' impacts over the first year of the program and highlight how stakeholders can get involved with their local center.

Upcoming Webinars:

The webinars will be held on the third Thursday of each month from 11am to 12pm MT.

- **Oct. 17** - Regional Food Business Center Program Highlights
- **Nov. 21** - The Local and Regional Food Systems Resilience Playbook
- **Dec. 19** - Visualizing Food Systems Data: Examples from Consumer Food Insights, Food and Agriculture Mapper and Explorer (FAME) and the Local Food Economics Data Visualization Challenge
- **Jan. 16, 2025** -The Promise of Urban Agriculture: Courses for Grower and Planners

[Click here to register.](#)



Women in Ag Conference in Southern Colorado

Colorado State University Extension is hosting the annual Women In Ag

Conference, this year in Southern Colorado. Come to Pueblo for the 2nd Colorado Women in Ag conference event that will touch on topics such as self-care as a busy woman, building community resilience in agriculture and even a session on how to make and take your own chile ristras!

Tickets are \$125 for adults and \$75 for youth. This will take place on **Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18th and 19th**. Doors open at 11:30am on Friday, and 7:30am on Saturday. To find out more information, call Beth at 719-583-6566.

[Click here to register.](#)



Register Today!
Nov. 6, 2024

Marketing Solutions Roundtable
Creating Regional Markets for Artisan Grains

11/6/24 • 8-11:30 PT/9-12:30 MT
Live via Zoom

Inspiring and connecting growers, buyers & processors with ready-to-implement ideas

Keynote Speaker: Dan Hobbs
Cooperative development specialist, farmer, collaborative leader & ag innovator. Montezuma County, Colorado.

Learn more & register
nrockymountainregionalfoodbusiness.com/marketingroundtable
Tayler Reinman - reinman@uidaho.edu

Artisan Grains Marketing Solutions Roundtable November 6, 2024

Growing markets for climate-resilient artisan grains requires working together — growers, processors, distributors, buyers. It can also mean building support and investment in processing, infrastructure, product development, marketing, and other things that could involve other partners—financial institutions, individual investors, economic developers, nonprofits, community groups, local governments and others.

The Marketing Solutions Roundtable is designed to help explore what is possible across Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming by exchanging ideas, learning together and cultivating new connections for creating, expanding and diversifying markets for these crops, looking at what is working across the region and elsewhere that could be implemented, adapted and innovated to expand markets locally and regionally.

The Marketing Solutions Roundtable will include:

- A keynote by Dan Hobbs, long-time cooperative development specialist, organic farmer and entrepreneur, collaborative leader and ag innovator from Montezuma County, Colorado.
- A slate of firsthand “solution stories” from our region and across the country, highlighting successful efforts involving different partners and market-building approaches.
- Breakout rooms for peer exchange and networking, deeper dives into how to implement or adapt different approaches, and opportunities to connect with others in your state.

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

8am-11:30 am PT/9am-12:30 pm MT

Live via Zoom (or register even if you cannot attend and want to know when a recording is posted).

Register [here](#).

For more information, contact Tayler Reinman at reinman@uidaho.edu.

Farm 2 Local Biz Networking Event November 12, 2024

CSU and others are looking for farmers and ranchers to sell their products in local markets. To accomplish this, they are hosting a networking event where you can connect and find opportunities to sell your products at a variety of retail channels. Applications for farmers and ranchers are due **October 4th**. This is a free event but space is limited. See the below flyer for more details.

Although this may be most relevant for those in Northern Colorado, please attend if you already serve Front Range markets and would like another opportunity.

[Click here to register.](#)

FARMERS & RANCHERS WANTED

Are you interested in selling your agricultural products to local commercial markets (restaurants, grocery stores, etc.) & schools?

Yes
Apply for a free table at our **Farm2Local Biz Networking Event** to share your agricultural products with interested buyers!

I'm not sure
Come just before the event to the **"Selling to Markets 101"** session to learn about what market would be best for you, making a contract, etc.!

Farm²Local Biz Networking Event

Connect with local large and small-scale commercial markets & schools in one space!

Agenda:
4 pm - 4:45 pm: Selling to Markets 101 **When:** Tuesday, November 12th, 2024
4:45 pm - 5 pm: Table Set-Up **Where:** CSU Durrell Center, 950 W Plum St, Fort Collins
5 pm - 7 pm: Networking Session *Local catered small plates & cash bar will be provided

Space is limited. This event is FREE.
 Farmers & Ranchers required to apply by **October 4th**
 Producers can scan the QR code to register or visit col.st/BLvq1



Funding Opportunities



Western SARE offering grants for projects that communicate local issues related to adoption of sustainable agricultural practices

Western SARE is replacing its Research to Grassroots grants program with a newly-developed Local Education and Demonstration (LED) grants program.

The LED grant program is founded on the understanding that adopting sustainable agricultural practices entails change and managing potential financial, environmental, and social risks. The implementation of demonstration and/or education events can address local issues related to adopting sustainable agricultural practices, bolstering confidence in adoption, and reducing risks.

Successful proposals are required to integrate findings from previously-funded SARE research projects, translate those results into practical demonstrations of application, and bring those results into the field through demonstration and/or educational activities for agricultural professionals and producers.

Proposals are due **November 6, 2024**

Download the call for proposals.



Call for Proposals from the Western Extension Risk Management Education

Center

The **Western Extension Risk Management Education Center** (ERME) is announcing a competitive funding opportunity for educational projects designed to help agricultural producers improve their economic viability through targeted risk management strategies.

All applications are due by 5 PM PDT, Thursday,
November 14, 2024

Eligibility: The ERME seek applications from qualified public and private groups, organizations, and institutions; including land grant colleges and universities, Cooperative Extension, community colleges, Tribal organizations, Hispanic serving institutions, and public and private entities with a demonstrated capacity to develop and deliver impact-based risk management education projects for agricultural producers and their families.

ERME is soliciting applications under the following program areas:

Education Projects: designed to help agricultural producers improve their economic viability through targeted risk management strategies.

Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Projects: specifically designated for the delivery of risk management education to agricultural producers underserved by the Federal crop insurance program, with proposed educational programming that aligns with one or more of the five areas of risk: production, marketing, financial, legal or human.

Exploratory Projects: a unique opportunity to initiate new ideas and/or explore emerging risk topic areas to better address farmer/rancher risk management education needs.

Click [here](#) to start your application now.

Many on the CSU Food Systems team have managed these grants in the past, so if you need a partner or guidance, please reach out with any questions to **Dawn Thilmany**.

Questions or comments regarding the RFA may be directed to Jo Ann Warner, 509-477-2168, warnerj@wsu.edu or Shannon Neibergs, 509-335-6360, sneibergs@wsu.edu.



Ongoing Assistance for Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program

USDA's Farm Service Agency is offering the **Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC)** again this year. The FSCSC program provides financial assistance for specialty crop operations that incur eligible on-farm food safety program expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification.

For calendar year 2024 this assistance starts July 1st and goes through the end of the year. This will also be available for calendar year 2025.



Committed to the future of rural communities.

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 loans will be available 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.

Colorado contact information for Rural Development and its regional offices can be found at:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-page/colorado-contacts>.

Robert McElroy, the Rural Business & Cooperative Services Program Director with the Colorado State Office is eager to discuss this opportunity with anyone who has a potential project. His email is: robert.mcelroy@usda.gov.



News, Resources & Reading



List Your Business in USDA AMS Local Foods Directories

The USDA **Local Foods Directories** allow you to market your local food business to a wider nationwide audience. In particular, make sure your fall-season agritourism venture is featured on the USDA Local Food Directories! To create a new listing, answer quick and easy questions about the status of your business so consumers can learn more about you.

[Click here to sign up for the directory.](#)



Manager Fellowship Available for Mid-Career Agrarians

The New Agrarian Program has launched its first-ever **Manager Fellowship**, a year-long training program to develop business, finance, and leadership skills in aspiring ranch managers and entrepreneurs. While the program was initially designed with our apprenticeship alumni in mind, we are excited to now offer limited spots to additional mid-career agrarians who are interested in joining us!

The Manager Fellowship will begin with a kick-off event on **November 21-24** at Paicines Ranch in California, but will continue virtually as fellows attend Zoom workshops, chat with experienced mentor-coaches, and participate in cohort discussions. Ideal candidates have at least two years of production experience in agriculture, a serious drive for either entrepreneurship or higher-level ranch management, and a commitment to the program for the upcoming year.

Applications are currently open and are accepted on a rolling basis, so we encourage you to apply soon! Feel free to contact us with any questions at newagrarian@quviracoalition.org.

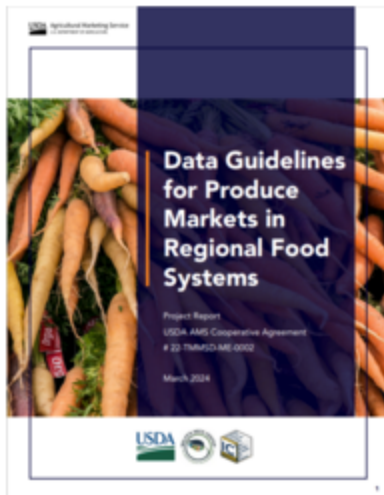


Promise of Urban Agriculture Courses Now Available

USDA AMS, in partnership with the Cornell Small Farms Program and Rooted, is offering the Promise of Urban Agriculture courses. The courses represent an innovative and holistic approach to support urban farming businesses and communities. This project is informed by **The Promise of Urban Agriculture**, a 2019 national study of commercial farming in urban areas conducted by AMS and the **Cornell Small Farms Program**. With information from this study, the project team created The Promise of Urban Agriculture courses designed to educate both growers and planners on urban agriculture and the impact of city plans and policies.

The Promise of Urban Agriculture courses are available online and are free to those who register for the courses **by January 31, 2025**.

Click [here](#) to access the courses.



New Data Guidelines for Produce Markets in Regional Food Systems

The USDA AMS and the International Center for Food Ontology Operability Data and Semantics (**IC-FOODS**) developed a template for utilizing data guidelines that will increase the consistency of fresh produce product data across the local foods sector.

Through this project a collaborative group of growers, aggregators, and buyers identified a "voluntary consensus data standard" for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



From Our Communities



Check Out a Podcast by the North American Food Systems Network!

Check out the "Finding Your Future in Food Systems" Podcast Hosted by Vivian Le of the North American Food Systems Network! Episodes feature guest speakers who have carved out their own unique niche in the local food systems space. You can [click here](#) to listen to episodes.

New Consumer Food Insights Series Available

A new series of **Consumer Food Insights is now available**. A research team, led by Dawn Thilmany at Colorado State University, has been collaborating with the USDA AMS on a project that aims to support resiliency of local food systems in the post-pandemic food environment. As part of that project, the Consumer Food Insights series details results from the third iteration of a US Consumer Survey. The survey, conducted in Winter 2023, captured current food shopping trends as well as changes in U.S. consumer food behaviors since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

The new insights explore consumer dynamics including who is exploring new markets, online shopping behavior, food security, and changes in consumer food spending and market channels across different sized communities.

Click [here](#) to access the new series, and stay tuned in Fall 2024 for regional data on market usage. Note the December 2024 AMS webinar mentioned above will present more from this series.



CSU Spur Requesting Western Fashion Pieces for the 2025 Offal Fashion Show

In January 2025, the Offal Party will be a fashion show showcasing how offal can be used to make leather in a less wasteful way. The Ag Innovation

Center is partnering with CSU's world-renowned Design and Merchandising

Department to design Western wear looks to walk our runway that incorporate leather accent pieces.

We're looking for beautiful pieces of leather that showcase Western tradition. This can include saddles, chaps, boots, belts, bags, jackets, and more. Hair on and hair off, tooled or untooled; all are welcome. Our focus is incorporating character-filled pieces that will inspire our fashion designers.

If you have a piece you would like to loan to the Offal Party, send an email to Rachel and Latifah at:

rachel.sears@colostate.edu

latifah.hirchi-vogl@colostate.edu

*Include a description of the item, your full contact information and pictures of the piece. Pieces are needed from Oct 15 2024 - Feb 1 2025.



Connect with the Northwest and Rocky Mountain USDA Regional Food Business Center

The Northwest and Rocky Mountain USDA Regional Food Business Center (RFBC) is one of 12 Regional Food Business Centers funded by USDA, with the goal of improving local and regional food systems and better serving underinvested farm and food businesses. The Northwest and Rocky Mountain RFBC serves Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

In Fall 2024, the Business Builder grant program will be offered in Colorado, and you can learn more about how these grants will be made available at the [website](#).

Learn more about the Center's educational and technical support programs for small- and mid-sized food and farm businesses, and sign up for updates here: <https://nwrockymountainregionalfoodbusiness.com/>.



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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Find us on social media, get farm or food systems related questions answered via email, forward to a friend, or submit your contributions to our newsletter!



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