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## CSU Food Systems Spotlight



## Ravinderjit Panag

Agriculture Extension Specialist,  
Boulder County and CSU Extension

Ravinder is a researcher with a diverse experience in the field of agriculture and food sciences. He is an active farmer, experienced in growing wheat, rice, sugarcane, fodder, and vegetable crops. Ravinder was raised on a rural family farm and became a first-generation graduate for higher studies in Canada. He has adapted to different cultural and professional environments and worked with diverse research teams, implementing new technologies for food and agriculture issues. In his current Extension role, he has organized extension events, workshops, and field trips to inform farmers about new technologies and their adaptation, as well

as connected diverse teams to provide professional research training.



## 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:

- **June 5**, 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm, online (includes a 30-minute business basics section)
- **June 7**, 5:00 pm - 8:30 pm, online

- **June 10**, 10:00 am - 1:30 pm, in-person El Paso County
- **June 14**, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, online
- **June 20**, 12:00 pm - 3:30 pm, online
- **June 25**, 5:00 pm - 8:30 pm, online
- **July 12**, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, online



## Organic Dry Beans Virtual Webinar and In-person Field Walk

Interested in roller crimper research and market opportunities related to organic dry beans? Join the Dale Institute for a virtual webinar and/or field walk to hear about ongoing funded projects. All are welcome, and prospective, transitioning, or certified organic grain farmers in Western Colorado are especially encouraged to attend.

- Virtual webinar: **Monday, June 3, 1-2 pm MT**
- In-person field walk at Tuxedo Corn Farms in Olathe, CO: **Wednesday, June 5, 9-12 MT**

Register for the webinar [here](#), and the field walk [here](#).



## The Offal Party: Pet Edition

The CSU Ag Innovation Center at SPUR invites you to the Offal Party: Pet Edition.

The Offal Party: Pet Edition is an opportunity to:

### Learn

- How to build and supply your pet food brand with sustainability in mind
- Regulatory requirements
- New marketing messages that will allow you to differentiate your offal products from others in the marketplace

### Discover

- Resources to support your offal pet journey

### Connect

- With offal suppliers, offal entrepreneurs, and pet food & treat experts

### Snack

- On fabulous offal products such as heart birria tacos, while you contemplate your offal next steps

The Offal Party: Pet Edition will be held: **Monday, June 10, 2024 | 2- 4pm**  
At CSU Spur on 4777 National Western Dr. Denver, CO 80216. In person and virtual options available.

### **Who Should Attend:**

The Offal Party welcomes all people who want to be a part of a regenerative, circular food system that supports human, animal, and environmental health,

including ranchers, processors, pet food and treat entrepreneurs, pet industry advisors, and pet owners who care about feeding their furry friends regeneratively.

**Register here!**



## Soil Health Demonstration Day

See current soil health practices such as no-till, cover crops, mulching, pollinator habitat, etc. be applied to a vegetable farm in Loveland, CO. Also interact with fun soil health activities provided by the NRCS, CSU IN-RICHES, and Colorado Soil Health Program to learn how you can interpret your soil at home! Your \$35 registration fee includes breakfast and lunch, free Field Assessment Guides, notebooks, and swag.

**June 22, 2024** from 8:30am to 1:30pm at River Ranch Farm in Loveland, CO.

Space is very limited and registration is required. Click [here](#) to register.



## San Luis Valley Entrepreneurship Summit

The San Luis Valley Entrepreneurship Summit connects entrepreneurs to one another and resources to strengthen regional networks and opportunities to collaborate. The Summit will include an analysis of local entrepreneurial resources and networks, an intensive small workshop to dive in and build solutions, and an option for entrepreneurs to interface with lenders, training providers, and each other. The San Luis Valley Entrepreneurship Summit is free for participants and will be partially funded by Colorado Housing and Finance Authority and Alamosa Economic Development.

**Wednesday, June 26** 8am - 3pm at Adams State University

**Register here.**



## 2nd Annual Colorado Food Collision

Join us for an exciting and delicious event as we bring together food entrepreneurs from across the beautiful state of Colorado. Each team has showcased and won in their respective regions, now they are invited to compete for the title of Food Champion of Colorado!

- When: **September 13th, 2024** from 4:00-7:30pm
- Location: Sky Lounge and Terrace (4th Floor), Hydro Building: CSU Spur 4777 National Western Dr., Denver, CO 80216

**Register here!**



## Crop Wild Relatives and Wild Utilized Plants Symposium

Please join this symposium to assess progress toward conserving North American crop wild relatives and wild utilized plants. We invite the unique perspectives of botanic gardens, Indigenous groups, land managers, researchers, breeders, and seed and

gene banks as we discuss future conservation priorities for this important group of plants.

When: **September 17-19, 2024** at the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver, Colorado.

Interested in attending? Sign up to receive symposium notifications [here](#).



## Funding Opportunities



### Food Loss and Food Waste Reduction Grants Available

The **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)** is offering a training and technical assistance grant program related to reducing food waste. The program will support projects whose goal is to reduce food loss and waste, get excess supply of food to households in need, and develop networks between food producers, providers, and food recovery organizations

Projects will span three (3) years, beginning on Sept. 1, 2024. Roughly two (2) to four (4) projects, capped at \$1 million per proposal with an expected grant size of \$500,000, are anticipated to be funded per SARE region: Southern SARE, North Central SARE, Northeast SARE, and Western SARE. A total of \$8 million is available nationally for the CFP Food Loss and Waste Training and Technical Assistance Grant program.

**Apply by June 28, 2024 at 5 p.m. EST.**



## Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation Offering Several Grant Opportunities

The Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundations is offering several grant opportunities that support children and adults' healthy eating. These include:

- [Sprouting School Gardens Grant](#): supports school gardens and non-profit organizations that run school programs.
- [Growing Healthy Kids Grant](#): supports nonprofits that offer healthy lifestyle and nutrition education programs outside of the school day, and community programs for children and their families.
- [Wellness across the Lifespan Grant](#): supports nonprofits that offer health and nutrition education via cooking, community gardening programs, and healthy lifestyle programs.

Nonprofits and schools must be in a community where Sprouts Farmers Markets has stores.

Applications due **June 30, 2024**. Click [here](#) to learn more and apply.



## USDA's 2501 Program Offering Grants to Entities that Help Underserved and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers

The USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagements (OPPE) is accepting applications from community-based and non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, and tribal entities who provide assistance to socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers. In partnership with the OPPE, eligible entities may compete for funding on projects that provide education and training in agriculture, agribusiness, forestry, agricultural-related services, and USDA programs, and to conduct outreach initiatives designed to accomplish those goals.

The overall goal of the 2501 Program is to encourage and assist underserved farmers and ranchers, military veteran farmers and ranchers, and beginning farmers and ranchers with owning and operating farms and ranches and in participating equitably in the full range of agricultural, forestry, and related programs offered by USDA. It also includes projects that develop underserved youths' interest in agriculture.

Applications are accepted from **May 7 to July 5, 2024**. Click [here](#) to apply.

You can also learn more about this program through an informational webinar to be held on June 26 at 12pm MDT. [Connect here](#).

# Restore YOUR LAND

## Regenerative Practices Grant Funding Available

Restore Grants has announced another round of funding for farmers and ranchers in California and Colorado who are using regenerative practices that sequester carbon. This may include cover cropping, prescribed grazing, hedgerow establishment, and more.

The deadline to apply is **July 20th, 2024**. For more information, [click here](#).



**COLORADO**  
Department of Agriculture

## Colorado Department of Agriculture's Agrivoltaics Research and Demonstration Grant

Grants are available for projects that study the potential, benefits, and tradeoffs of agrivoltaics in Colorado. The Agrivoltaics grant program is part of CDA's [Agricultural Drought and Climate Resilience Office \(ADCRO\)](#), which helps Colorado producers mitigate and respond to drought and a changing climate.

Applicants can find the [Grant Guidelines](#) as well as [instructions for submitting an application](#) on the ADCRO website, at [ag.colorado.gov/adcro](http://ag.colorado.gov/adcro). The maximum grant award is \$249,000 for a single project application. Eligible project types include construction or expansion of agrivoltaics systems and demonstration projects, outreach and communication efforts focused on agrivoltaics benefits or obstacles, and research projects that focus on understanding the benefits, incremental costs, and tradeoffs of agrivoltaics systems.

Applications should be submitted via email to [Rosalie.Skovron@state.co.us](mailto:Rosalie.Skovron@state.co.us) by **July 21, 2024**.

To register for an informational webinar to be held on **June 18 from 1pm-2pm MDT**, on this grant, click [here](#).



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

Western SARE is replacing their 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 the adoption of 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 Proposal**



## 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](mailto:robert.mcelroy@usda.gov).



## News, Resources & Reading

### Colorado is 9th state to recently detect bird flu in cattle

Dr. Jason Lombard, an associate professor and veterinarian with CSU's AgNext program, recently reported on the current status of bird flu in Colorado cattle.



## COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

HPAI, or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, was recently detected on a dairy farm in northeast Colorado. While bird flu is not new to Colorado, this case represents the first time the disease has affected cattle in Colorado. Early stages of the virus have been found in nasal secretions, so frequently

cleaning water troughs is recommended as a best practice. Infected cows can recover when treated with anti-inflammatory drugs and oral fluids. For more information on virus detection and mitigation, read Dr. Lombard's article [here](#).



## From Our Communities



### USDA Calling for Grant Program Peer Reviewers

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is looking for subject matter experts to serve as peer reviewers to evaluate grant applications for the Fiscal Year 2024 grant cycle. If you have received a grant from USDA and work frequently with food projects, your expertise is needed!

Reviewing applications will take approximately 6 weeks and non-federal reviewers will be compensated for their reviews.

Current Programs Seeking Peer Reviewers:

- **Acer Access and Development Program (Acer)**
- **Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)**
- **Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)**
- **Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)**
- **Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP)**

Follow this [link](#) to become a reviewer.



### 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.

Recent updates include:

- **news and events** from across the region. and
- new **grant** programs, including the innovative Business Builder program.

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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