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July 2023 || Newsletter Edition 157

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## CSU Food Systems Team Spotlight

## Jess Diehl

NW Colorado Meat Sector Summer Extension Intern, CSU

Jess Diehl is wrapping up her undergraduate degree in Animal Science with a minor in Agricultural Business at Colorado State University. She graduated from Northeastern Junior College with associate degrees in animal science and agricultural business. This summer, Jess will be working to support a feasibility study looking at market opportunities for regional and localized meat supply chains in Northwestern Colorado in partnership with the Community Agriculture Alliance, Colorado Northwestern Community College, the Northwest Community Development Council, and CSU Extension. Jess hopes to pursue a career as a ruminant nutritionist for feedlot or dairy cattle to help feed livestock in a sustainable way while providing the growing human population with the vital nutrition they need.



## Mark Your Calendar

### Farm to Food Assistance Learning Lab Applications Open

**FOOD SYSTEMS  
LEADERSHIP NETWORK**

Applications are now OPEN for the Farm to Food Assistance Learning Lab! This 12-month lab will support eight teams with financial and technical assistance to strengthen their farm to food assistance programs.

Providing a stable market for farmers while simultaneously alleviating hunger is a powerful approach to building more equitable and resilient food systems. Nationwide, organizations are creating and implementing Farm to Food Assistance (F2FA) Programs – paying farmers a fair price for their product and channeling that product into food banks, food pantries, and other anti-hunger efforts – and seeing incredible results. To support the people making these programs work in their communities, the Food Systems Leadership Network (FSLN) is excited to launch a Learning Lab starting this summer!

The Farm to Food Assistance Learning Lab will support and learn from people working on initiatives that buy food from local farmers and make it accessible to food insecure communities, with an emphasis on racial equity and community driven solutions. Through this 12-month Lab, we will provide funding, mentorship, and peer support to folks working on these efforts, including those that are funded by USDA's Local Food Purchasing Assistance Cooperative Agreement program

(LFPA). We'll also collaborate with you to gather and measure the impact and challenges of this strategy so we can all better tell the story of this work.

**Apply here!** Applications are due **July 10th**. **Click here** for more information.



**SWAAN**  
Southwest  
Agroforestry  
Action Network

## Southwest Agroforestry Action Network Annual Conference

The Southwest Agroforestry Action Network (SWAAN) is providing an opportunity for urban, rural, and indigenous agroforestry industry participants to network. Both in-person and virtual options are available.

**WHEN: July 11-13, 2023**

**WHERE: Green Farm Barn, Chatfield Farms, DBG**, 8500 W Deer Creek Canyon Rd, Littleton, Colorado (or via Zoom on July 11)

**CEUs:** The following continuing education units have been approved:

- 8 International Society of Arboriculture CEUs
- Society of American Foresters CFEs
- 15 American Society of Agronomy CEUs

**Download the agenda / Download presenter bios**

For more information, **click here**.



## Committee Public Meeting - EPA Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee - July 12-13, 2023

Join the EPA's upcoming **Farm, Ranch and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee** (FRRCC) meeting, which will be held on July 12-13 on the Colorado State University campus in Fort Collins, CO. This is the second in-person meeting of the FRRCC since new members were appointed in November of 2022, and they are excited to host committee members and interested stakeholders.

Please click **here to register** to attend the meeting either in-person or online. If you wish to provide public comment during the meeting or would like to request reasonable accommodations, please indicate this in your registration and via email to **frrcc@epa.gov** as soon as possible but no later than noon on July 5, 2023.

## Specialty Crops and Plant Basics Farming Courses

### Growing Specialty Crops at High Elevations

This course offers an overview of the basics of crop culture in small scale diversified vegetable production, focusing on everything from seed and site selection to harvest and post-harvest handling and marketing.

- **July 13 through August 17**, Farmer Training Yurt Classroom, Thursdays, 1pm to 3pm
- Optional field trip to Mancos farms on **July 26**, 1pm to 4pm
- \$375; scholarships available
- Taught by Mike Nolan of Mountain Roots Produce

### Seed to Seed: Plant Basics for Farmers

This course covers everything from plant propagation to seed saving and introduces the basics of botany and indigenous perspectives.

- **July 11 through August 15**, Farmer Training Yurt Classroom, Tuesdays, 1pm to 3pm
- \$375; scholarships available
- Guest Instructors

To register, [sign up online](#) with the full course payment or email [ewwhittlesey@fortlewis.edu](mailto:ewwhittlesey@fortlewis.edu) to apply for a scholarship.

## **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. For additional dates, check [here](#).

### **CSU Extension Cottage Food Safety Training Online:**

- **July 7**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, online
- **July 12**, 5:00 pm - 9 pm, online
- **July 13**, 1 pm - 4 pm, online
- **August 15**, 10:30 am - 2:30 pm, online
- **August 18**, 9 am - 1 pm, online
- **August 28**, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

# JOIN US!

## Colorado Collision Pitch Competition and Happy Hour

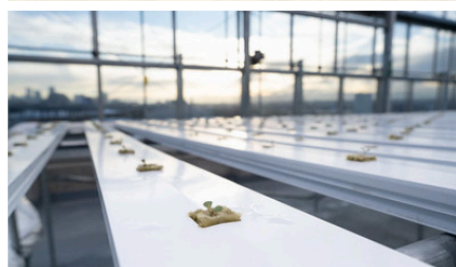


July  
21

Friday, July 21st  
3:30-7:30 P.M.



CSU Spur  
Hydro Building, 4th Floor  
Lounge



All are invited! Come see the champions of Colorado Food Entrepreneurship while enjoying free food/drinks!



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



For more information or to reserve your free ticket, click [here](#).



### Annual Grain School in the Field - Cortez, Colorado

Join UCCS Grain School and the Colorado Grain Chain **Friday, August 4th to Saturday, August 5th** for our annual Grain School in the Field in Cortez, Colorado!

This immersive event is a summer camp for farmers, artisan makers, and everyday eaters to connect and learn more about the diversity of Colorado's grain chain.

Through hands-on grain workshops and field tours with local experts, we will trace the grain value chain from farming and milling, to artisan baking, pie making, food culture, history and more! The experience will include delicious local food and a-maiz-ing opportunities to connect with rural links of the grain chain, while learning

about food culture and history, biodiversity, and farming and culinary practices of local grains from spelt to blue corn!

### Scholarships available for farmers and makers!

For program updates, scholarships, and pre-registration, visit: <https://rb.gy/zts7f>

## New Transdisciplinary Approaches Webinar Series by USDA NIFA



Join us for a webinar series highlighting opportunities and challenges of transdisciplinary approaches within agricultural research. In it, we will examine strategies for implementing transdisciplinary approaches, team-building, and overcoming challenges to encourage the adoption of and training in transdisciplinary systems. **The first webinar in the series** looks at the what and why of transdisciplinary approaches, and **the second focuses on the science of team science**. Follow the links to sign up for the first two webinars in the series, and stay tuned for more webinars on the horizon. If you have questions, you can reach out to **Jessica Shade**.

### Upcoming Webinars

**Title: Transdisciplinary Approaches: What they are and Why they're important**

**Date: Wednesday August 30, 2023 at 9am PT/12pm ET**

**Register: <https://www.nal.usda.gov/about-us/events/transdisciplinary-approaches-webinar-aug2023>**

**Speakers:**

- Alison Meadow, University of Arizona
- Dan Ferguson, University of Arizona
- Doug Steele, Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
- Amy Ganguli, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

**Title: The Science of Team Science**

**Date: Wednesday December 6, 2023 at 12pm PT/3pm ET**

**Register: <https://www.nal.usda.gov/about-us/events/transdisciplinary-approaches-webinar-dec2023>**

**Speakers:**

- Jeni Cross, Colorado State University
- Anne Mook, Colorado State University



## Funding Opportunities

## USDA's New Organic Market Development Grant (OMDG) Now Open



USDA AMS will issue up to \$75 million in competitive grants to non-profit organizations, tribal governments, and state and local government entities to fund projects designed to expand and improve markets for domestically produced organic products. OMDG is intended to increase the consumption of domestic agricultural commodities by aiding in the expansion of markets or development of new markets, marketing facilities, and uses for such commodities.

AMS is accepting applications for the program through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) now through **11:59 p.m. ET July 10, 2023**. To view the press release, click [here](#).



## Zero Foodprint Grants Available

Zero Foodprint is offering grant awards of up to \$25,000 to cover costs associated with turning bad atmospheric carbon into good soil carbon on farms or ranches.

Click [here](#) for more information or to apply for this grant. Applications will be accepted through **July 20th**.

## 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.](#)

## Grants for Professionals and Producers Available

This grant program involves an agricultural technical advisor (main applicant) and producers implementing projects to address identified needs in sustainable agriculture. With the collaboration of at least three producers, projects must integrate research and education aiming to advance the three components of



sustainable agriculture- environmental, economic, and social- and use innovative educational outreach to disseminate new knowledge to producers and other agricultural stakeholders.

It is expected that outcomes of funded projects will result in quantifiable benefits for producers, increase the preservation of the natural and social resources upon which agriculture relies, and be shared with other producers. \$75,000 limit/one-three years in scope.

Proposals are due **October 31, 2023**

Click [here](#) for examples of Colorado projects.

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

## USDA FSA's Organic Cost Share Now Open for 2023



**Farm Service Agency**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

This year the Farm Service Agency increased the cost share amount under the **Organic Certification Cost Share Program** (OCCSP). FSA will cover up to 75% of costs associated with organic certification, up to \$750 for crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling and state organic program fees (California only). OCCSP will cover costs incurred from Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2023.

Applications are now open, and due **Oct. 31, 2023**. To apply, producers and handlers should contact the FSA at their local **USDA Service Center**. FSA is also accepting applications from state departments of agriculture to administer OCCSP.



## Professional Development Program Accepting Grant Proposals

Professional Development Program grants focus on educating and training agricultural professionals to increase their understanding of and proficiency in sustainable agriculture so they, in turn, can educate and train other agricultural professionals. In a “train the trainer” fashion, this program focuses on increasing knowledge and capacity for agricultural stakeholders to provide further training and information to other agricultural professionals and producers.

Projects can be up to 3 years and may be funded up to \$100,000. Proposals are due **November 1, 2023**. For more information, see the call for proposals [here](#).

## Research to Grassroots Program Accepting Grant Proposals



The Western SARE Research to Grassroots grant program is intended to address the barrier(s) to application/adoption of sustainable agriculture practices as identified in previous SARE research by clearly demonstrating to agriculture professionals and/or producers the environmental, social, and economic viability of the previous research and the benefits and challenges that selected previous work may present. Successful proposals must incorporate the research results from SARE-funded research projects and bring those results into the field through education for ag professionals and producers, emphasizing the strengths and barriers to adoption of the selected previous work, ultimately helping to increase producer confidence in adopting sustainable agriculture practices.

Projects can be up to 3 years and may be funded up to \$100,000. Proposals are due **November 1, 2023**. For more information, see the call for proposals [here](#).



## 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 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>.



## News, Resources & Reading

### Value Chain Coordination (VCC) Evaluation Framework Available

**FOOD SYSTEMS  
LEADERSHIP NETWORK**

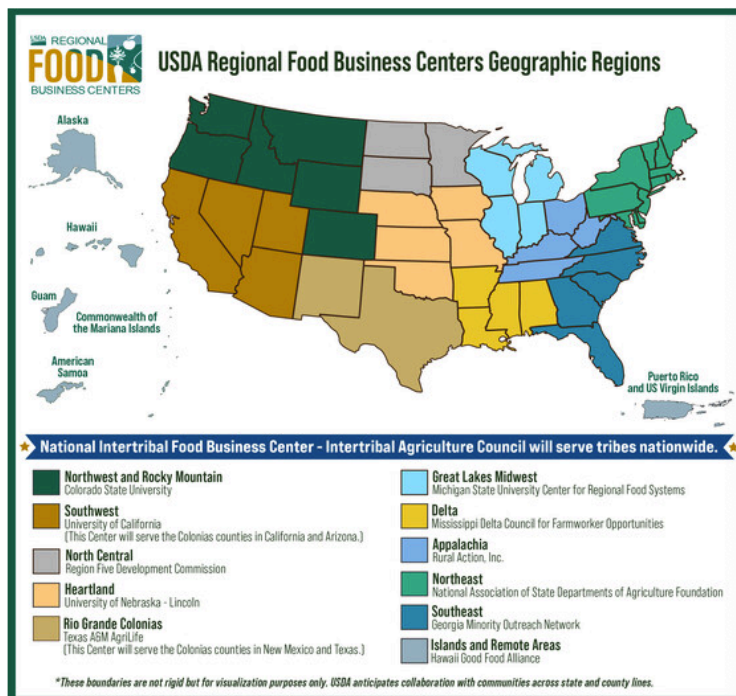
Do you struggle to capture and share the full impact of your value chain coordination (VCC) work? Is evaluation continually on your list of things to set time aside for, get help on, or avoid altogether? Help is here!

The Wallace Center's Food Systems Leadership Network backbone team has developed an evaluation framework to help you focus and clarify how to evaluate value chain coordination and effectively document the impact of this work. These resources will help you align your evaluation systems with your values and capture the full story of your VCC work.

Explore the Evaluation Framework [here!](#)

### Twelve New USDA Food Business Centers Announced!

On May 3, USDA announced the creation of 12 new USDA Regional Food Business Centers that will provide national coverage, coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building to help farmers, ranchers, and other food businesses access new markets and navigate federal, state, and local resources, thereby closing the gaps to success.



One of these business centers includes the Northwest and Rocky Mountain USDA Regional Food Business Center, co-led by Colorado State University and

Oregon State University! The CSU Food Systems team will be an integral part of this team and the new Center will let us expand our work.

For more information, view the press release [here](#).

If you want to keep informed, sign up for updates [here](#)



## From Our Communities

### 1st Annual Food Systems Institute Student Symposium was a Success



At the 1st annual Food Systems Institute Student Symposium, CSU students presented the research that they are doing to facilitate new understandings and innovations in a many facets of our food system. Thanks to all who made the event a success, including stakeholder and faculty judges: **Julie Kallenberger** (Camp5 owner), **Abbey Stapleton** (Americorps Fellow with Larimer County), **Luis Alvarez** (Venture

Capitalist in agtech industry), and, **Aryn Baxter** (Agricultural and Resource Economics); faculty panelists: **Meagan Schipanski** (Soil & Crop Sciences), **José Chávez** (Civil & Environmental Engineering, & CSU Extension), **Elizabeth Ryan** (Environmental & Radiological Health Sciences), **Kat Caswell** (Extension & Engagement), & **Michael Carolan** (Sociology & FSI Co-Director); and outstanding student competitors. Thank you especially to **Beth Plombon**, who was the main organizer of this wonderful event.

Congratulations to the three winners of the research communication competition:

1. **Rebecca Wasserman-Olin**, DARE: *Finding community among diversified vegetable farmers and stakeholder-led research*, \$500.
2. **Pratyosh Kashyap**, DARE: *Diffusion of universal free school meals in the United States: Examining factors influencing adoption of community eligibility provision*, \$250.
3. **Jenna Bensko**, FSHN: *Associations between sustainability scores and the likelihood of offering menu items with various protein sources in the top selling US restaurant chains*, \$100.



# 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.



## Stay Connected

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