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November 2023 || Newsletter Edition 161

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CSU Food Systems Team Spotlight

Martha Calvert

Sensory Manager, CSU Spur

Martha Calvert is the new Sensory Manager at CSU Spur in the Food Innovation Center, where she will lead sensory testing services to support regional food producers as well as sensory research projects to support CSU researchers. Martha is passionate about teaching small- and medium-size agricultural producers about how sensory testing can support their business goals and be leveraged as a marketing tool. Martha recently earned her Ph.D. in Food Science at Virginia Tech, and previously earned degrees from North Carolina State University in both Food Science and Nutrition Science. After having worked in the hard cider, apple agriculture, and alcoholic beverage space throughout her Ph.D., she hopes to continue investing in value-added and artisan agricultural systems and to continue her work in understanding the consumer-producer interface from a sensory science angle.



Sarah Rhodes

Entrepreneurship Business Resident, Institute for Entrepreneurship: College of Business, Colorado State University



Sarah Rhodes serves as an Entrepreneurship Business Resident and is responsible for supporting an Economic Development Administration grant and the launch of the Beverage Business Institute. Sarah works alongside other campus partners in the Regional Economic Development Institute, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation programming, planning and technical support to diversify economic opportunities in Colorado, while also pursuing her masters degree in the inaugural cohort of the Agribusiness and Food Innovation Management Masters degree program.



Mark Your Calendar

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:

- **November 10**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, online
- **December 2**, 8:00 am - 11:00 am, online
- **December 4**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, online



Produce Safety Training for Fruit and Vegetable Growers

In-person and online trainings to help you improve your produce safety knowledge and skills. Click each link for more information.

November 7, 2023: Cleaning & Sanitation workshop, Denver, [register here](#).

November 8, 2023: Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, Denver, [register here](#).

November 9, 2023: Best Practices for Greenhouse Production, [register here](#).

December 4-5, 2023: Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, online, [register here](#).

February 5-6, 2024: Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, online, [register here](#).

Agrivoltaics Seminar

CSU's College of Agricultural Sciences

Interdisciplinary Research Seminar will take place on

Monday, November 13 from 2:00-3:30 pm MST, in the Longs Peak Room 302 of the Lory Student Center.



Although we encourage in-person attendance by those on campus, our colleagues across the state can [join us virtually on Microsoft Teams](#).

This fall's seminar will focus on groundbreaking work in agrivoltaics – combining solar photovoltaic-based renewable energy generation with agricultural production. The event will feature 5-minute “lightning talks” on different research topics related to agrivoltaics, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Mark Uchanski, Associate Professor in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.

Speakers and panelists include:

- Byron Kominek, Executive Director, Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center
- Dana Hoag, Professor, Agricultural and Resource Economics
- Alan Knapp, Professor, Biology
- Lily Edwards-Callaway, Associate Professor, Animal Sciences

Information about past and current research seminars can be found on the [CAS Research Seminar webpage](#).



Colorado Women in Ag Conference

The Colorado Women in Ag Conference will provide an engaging and empowering two-day event focused on educational opportunities and networking for women across the state involved in all types of agriculture, from small farms and non-traditional agriculture to large cow-calf ranches.

We are inviting you to join us in our mission to empower and strengthen women in agriculture by becoming a sponsor for this inaugural event, to be held **November 17 and 18**, at the Island Grove Events Center in Weld County.

Register [here](#).



Annie's Project Retreat- Empowering Women in Agriculture

CSU Extension is hosting an Annie's Project Retreat from **November 30th - December 2nd** at the CSU Western Campus in Grand Junction, CO. This class will cover financial documents, marketing, estate planning, farm leasing, insurance, and more. The program fee includes 7 meals, but does not include lodging. The course will be capped at 50 participants.

Click [here](#) for more information.

New Transdisciplinary Approaches Webinar Series by USDA NIFA: The Science of Team Science

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



Join this webinar series highlighting opportunities and challenges of transdisciplinary approaches within agricultural research. **The first webinar in the series** looked at the what and why of transdisciplinary approaches, and **the second focuses on the science of team science (including some of our CSU colleagues)**. Follow the link to sign up for the second webinar in the series, and stay tuned for more webinars on the horizon. If you have questions, you can reach out to [Jessica Shade](#).

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

Speakers:

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



Farm to Loading Dock Support

When: **December 7, 2023** | 10am - 2pm

Where: CSU SPUR | 4777 National Western Drive, Denver, CO

Please come and share what technical assistance you have received (or provide) or

would like to receive (or provide) in order to make farm to loading dock (all activities from farm to the school, institution, childcare, etc.) successful across Colorado.

During this convening, we will share new resources for stakeholders and the results of work to identify existing technical assistance providers and remaining gaps. A plan will also be presented to support better state level coordination of "farm to loading dock" efforts (up until the product reaches the school, institution, childcare facility, etc.). Getting input on this plan is key! The hope is that this plan can leverage new funding that will be available from the state to better support lasting, profitable, and healthy "farm to..." initiatives and supply chain relationships.

Please join if you want to be involved in this exciting and quickly developing market opportunity. All those involved in getting food and agricultural products from the farm to institution are invited – producers, ranchers, distributors, food service directors, non-profits, government. Lunch will be provided. **Registration is online at:** <http://cofoodsummit.com/>

Colorado Food Summit

When: **December 7-8, 2023**

Where: Stockyards Event Center | Denver, Colorado



The 2023 Colorado Food Summit will bring together food and agriculture stakeholders from across the state to help build shared understanding of the complex opportunities and challenges facing our food and agriculture systems. The Summit aims to inspire collaborative action towards a more resilient and equitable food future in the face of uncertainty (e.g. pandemic, drought, inflation, supply chain shortages) through panel presentations, storytelling, creative presentations, and facilitated networking. We encourage anyone connected to Colorado's food system to be a part of this important discussion. **Registration is online at:** <http://cofoodsummit.com/>

Financial support is available, apply before November 3.



Applications for the 2024 Farm Business Accelerator Program are Now Open

In collaboration with Poudre Valley Community Farms, CSU and many others, the Northern Colorado

Foodshed Project is proud to offer this unique program to help aspiring farmers navigate the challenges of starting their own farm business. In a time where barriers to entry can be expensive and prohibitive, this Accelerator Program offers affordable access to land, water, and basic farm infrastructure needed to run a successful farm business. The program is focused on creating strong community relationships, marketing assistance, mentorship and technical assistance to help support new farmers to become thriving members of our local food economy. With that said, the program is expanding and looking for a new cohort of farmers ready to build their own businesses and support local food production in Larimer County, CO!

You can learn more about the Accelerator Program, and find the online application [here](#).

The deadline for this year's applications is **Dec 8th, 2023**



2023 CFVGA Produce Labor Conference

The Colorado Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) is inviting farmers and anyone else who works in agriculture to attend its 2023

Produce Labor Conference, **Dec. 14, at the Pueblo Convention Center.**

In addition to networking, the conference will open with an overview of labor research, updates and compliance. Attendees will learn about changes to the federal H-2A program, new opportunities to hire farmworkers from El Salvador and the newest employer requirements under Colorado labor laws.

Additionally, break-out educational sessions include Tips for Getting Started in H-2A, Innovations in Worker Health and Safety, Mechanization for Small and Mid-Size Farms, Employer Software for Tracking Hours and Breaks, and Tapping into the New Ag Worker Services Program. The conference will wrap up with a focus on farm owner strategies to manage costs under Colorado's new overtime and other rules.

Registration for the one-day event, including lunch, is \$50 for members and \$70 for non-members. Booth space is available for vendors with products and

services for Colorado growers. Learn more and register here: <https://coloradoproduce.org/23-labor-conference/>

2024 Colorado Building Farmers and Ranchers Program



BUILDING FARMERS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Starting **January 23, 2024 through March 12, 2024**, Colorado Building Farmers will be offering an online class that covers the principles of business management, developing a marketing plan, managing risk in your operation, obtaining financing, and more. Classes will be held on Tuesdays from 6:00-8:30 pm. This 8-week class culminates in you presenting your draft business plan to a group of your peers. The class is intended for new and intermediate level farmers and ranchers in Colorado (0 to 10 years of experience). Cost is \$225 per participant, and \$125 for each additional participant from the same farm business.

Learn more here and register here: https://colorado_building_farmers_and_ranchers_2024.eventbrite.com

Save the Date for the 4th Annual Sun Soil Water Ag Summit 2024

The Sun Soil Water Ag Summit will take place on February 23rd and 24th at Pueblo Community College. For more information, visit

pueblofoodproject.org/sunsoilwaterag



Funding Opportunities

Applications for Quivira's New Agrarian Program are Open

Quivira Coalition's New Agrarian Program (NAP) applications for 2024 apprenticeships are open **November 1- December 15** or until all positions are filled. Apprenticeships take place on working ranches and farms practicing

regenerative agriculture across the Intermountain West. [See participating sites here.](#)

These 8-month, full-time, paid apprenticeships include housing and will allow apprentices to be fully immersed in the work of an operation. Support from the program includes an education stipend, supplemental education Zoom calls, 1:1 check-ins with a coordinator, and networking opportunities to kick-start a career in regenerative ag. Apprenticeships begin in March/April 2024 and run through November 2024. You can learn more at www.quiviracoalition.org/newagrarian.

Small Food Business Recovery and Resilience Grant Open Now



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

The first round of the Small Food Business Recovery and Resilience Grant is open now! Check out all the details and apply on the [grant website](#).

Small food retailers and small family farms should consider applying for equipment and operating expenses that will help them expand access to healthy food for Coloradans living on a low income.

Applications are due **November 7th at 5:00 pm MST**.

[Visit the grant website](#)



**WESTERN
EXTENSION
RISK
MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION**

Western Extension Risk Management Education - Competitive Grants Program

The **Western Extension Risk Management Education Center** (Western Center), in conjunction with the **Northeast, Southern, and North Central** Centers announced a competitive funding opportunity for educational projects designed to help agricultural producers improve their economic viability through targeted risk management strategies. The Centers expect to award grants in three program areas – Standard Education Projects, Exploratory Projects, and Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Projects.

Eligibility: This announcement seeks applications from qualified public and private groups, organizations, and institutions; including land grant colleges and universities, Cooperative Extension, other colleges and universities, and public and private entities with a demonstrated capacity to develop and deliver outcome/impact-based risk management education projects for agricultural producers and their families. The Western Center serves Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, Hawaii, and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. RFAs have been concurrently released for each regional ERME Center – please visit the respective websites for additional information.

Proposals are due by **5 PM, PST, Thursday, November 16, 2023.**

Click here for more information about the grant applications.



Farm Labor Stabilization and Protection Pilot Grant Program

In September 2023, USDA announced that agricultural employers can begin to apply for a new grant program focused on addressing labor shortages in agriculture, reducing irregular migration through expansion of legal pathways, and improving labor protections for farmworkers. The grant program will use up to \$65 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to provide support for agricultural employers in implementing robust labor standards to promote a safe, healthy work environment for both U.S. workers and workers hired from Northern Central American countries under the seasonal H-2A visa program.

Initial program info can be found **here**.

No grant match dollars are required. Awards are a minimum of \$25,000 and maximum of \$2M.

Allowable costs include but are not limited to (find these in the Terms document linked to the application):

- Costs related to hiring and onboarding
- Costs related to operations labor costs (wages, business admin., etc.)
- Housing maintenance plan costs

If you are interested, move quickly as proposals are due through the **grants.gov** portal on **Nov 28, 2023** and the registration process can take up to 4 weeks.

USDA Announces MPEPP Round 2 Grant Program

USDA Rural Development announced Round 2 of the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP). The MPPEP provides grants to help eligible processors expand their processing capacity, which creates new, better and more processing options for meat and poultry producers. USDA Rural Development designed the MPPEP to encourage competition and sustainable growth in the U.S. meat processing sector, and to help improve supply chain resiliency.



Who can apply for this program?

Entities that engage or plan to engage in meat and poultry processing, including private, non-profit, tribal, cooperative, state or local government, among other entities. Private entities must be independently owned and operated. All entities

must be domestically owned, and their meat and poultry processing facilities must be physically located and operated within the U.S. or its territories.

How can funds be used?

Grant funds can be used for expenses during the period of performance of the grant award to expand processing capacity by supporting activities such as:

- Building, modernizing, or expanding existing – processing facilities, including mobile slaughter units
- Purchasing an inoperable facility
- Developing, installing, or modernizing equipment and technology
- Modifying facilities or equipment to protect food safety
- Offsetting cost associated with becoming an inspected facility
- Staffing or operational costs specifically tied to the proposed project
- Supporting workforce recruitment, training, and retention

For more information, [visit the Grants.gov page here](#).

Rural Development Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loans Available



Committed to the future of rural communities.

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



The 2023 Veg Out Pilot Program by the Northern Colorado Foodshed Project Yielded Exciting Outcomes

After receiving a Regional Food Systems Partnership grant in 2021, the Northern Colorado Foodshed Project collaborated with the Food Bank for Larimer County and the Poudre Food Partnership's working groups

in order to start the Veg Out Pilot Program, which purchases any produce that is not sold at the Larimer County Farmers Market and brings it to food pantries for quick distribution to clients in need. This partnership streamlines the logistics for obtaining local fresh foods and ensures farmers can go home with empty trucks and minimal food waste.

After 24 days of operating in the 2023 market season, the Veg Out initiative distributed 14,514 lbs of vegetables to food pantries via the Food Bank for Larimer County, a wholesale value of \$84,061.

A statement from Josh Green, Operations Director of Food Bank for Larimer County, describes the invaluable contributions of this program:

"...Perhaps the greatest outcome of this program, however, is the real-life impact it has on our clients – the 30,000 neighbors in need who receive free food at the Food Bank's Fresh Food Share pantries more than 13,000 times each month. For these individuals, many of whom are accessing our services for the first time in their lives, most of whom are working individuals, householders, parents, students, and caretakers, having access to fresh, locally-grown produce gives them the chance to eat well, to eat local, and to feel like they are a part of their community."

Click [here](#) for more information!

USDA Offers Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program Office Hours

USDA Rural Development's Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS) is pleased to provide office hours for the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP 2). RBCS staff will be on hand to address questions that you have.

The last office hour session will take place on Thursday, November 9 from from 3 to 4 pm EST (1-2pm MST). Register using the link below!

- [**November 9 Registration**](#)

Learn more about the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP 2) by clicking [here](#).



From Our Communities

Submit Applications for CSU Extension's Summer Internship Program



CSU's Office of the Provost is now accepting applications for the Extension Summer Internship Program.

Submissions are open to all faculty and staff across all CSU colleges and in the field. Internship proposals will be accepted through **December 15**.

For information about how to submit a proposal and to learn more about internships and outcomes from previous years, visit intern.colostate.edu. For general questions about the program, connect with our Extension Internship Program Coordinator Kyla Davis at kylam.davis@colostate.edu.

CSU Food Science & Human Nutrition Department Distributing Survey to Coloradans:

Support this project by following the guidance below!

Tell Us Your Interests and Needs

Researchers from Colorado State University in the Food Science & Human Nutrition Department are conducting a needs assessment to determine nutrition education interests and needs of Coloradans.

You can participate if you are 18 years or older and live in Colorado.

We would like you to take an anonymous online survey. Participation will take 5 -10 minutes. Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty. We will not collect your name or personal identifiers. When we report and share the data to others, we will combine the data from all participants. There are no known risks.

So We Can Provide Nutrition and Health Programs to Serve You

To indicate consent and complete the survey, scan the QR code or go to the link below.

<https://col.st/zhF6j>



If you have any questions about the research, please contact Jessica at Jessica.clifford@colostate.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at:

CSU_IRB@colostate.edu; 970-491-1553.



FOOD SCIENCE AND
HUMAN NUTRITION
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Colorado State University Extension is an equal opportunity provider. | Colorado State University does not discriminate on the basis of disability and is committed to providing reasonable accommodations. | CSU's Office of Engagement and Extension ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English. Col.6/TO3

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. This Center is led by Colorado State University and Oregon State University, and this team is laying the groundwork for the first technical assistance



and grant programs. Libby Christensen, CSU Extension, and Brian Coppom, Colorado Department of Agriculture, are heading up technical assistance and capacity building team for the state of Colorado.

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.



Stay Connected

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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Food Systems CSU | <https://foodsystems.colostate.edu>



Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"