



ENGAGEMENT  
AND EXTENSION  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Community



Economic Development

Quarterly Newsletter

## Team Spotlight



### [Dr. Anita Alves Pena](#) Professor, Department of Economics

In addition to being a Professor in the Economics Department, Anita holds a courtesy faculty appointment with the Colorado School of Public Health. She is a research associate with REDI@CSU and the lead for this newsletter.

Anita is also a Co-PI for CSU's Economic Development Administration University Center and serves as the DEIJ Coordinator for the [High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety](#). Her research interests are in public sector economics, labor economics, and economic development and her current research relates to undocumented and documented immigration, public policy, poverty, education/skill, and agricultural labor markets including applications to public and occupational health.



### [Sal McCollum](#) Ph.D. student, Department of Economics

Sal McCollum is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Economics. She completed her B.A. in Economics while minoring in business analytics and history at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her undergraduate research was in financial education and literacy related to pyramid schemes.

She is working as an intern for CSU Extension, focusing on agritourism and economic development in Montezuma County, Colorado. This project aims to understand and provide guidance in addressing the support needs of the agritourism sector in Montezuma County by directly collaborating with people involved in this industry. Sal has additional research interests in



health and labor economics.

## Mark Your Calendar

### Office of Engagement and Extension Annual Forum September 30-October 3

Connect with Extension faculty and community partners at the annual OEE Forum. Join us to share updates, network, and help frame our community priorities and opportunities for the coming year:

- **Monday, September 30, 3 – 4:30 p.m.:** OEE Community and Economic Development Team Meeting with CSU Centers – Round table discussion scheduled and an opportunity to present on projects or your Center (Fort Collins Marriott, Horsetooth Rd.)
- **Monday, September 30, 5 – 9 p.m.:** Film and Networking Opportunity (Lyric Cinema Center, 1209 N College Ave Fort Collins) CSU Centers Collaborative will feature two films.

[RSVP and Choose your Film by September 24.](#)

- **Wednesday, October 2 4-6 p.m.:** CSU Extension Intern Poster Session (Canvas Stadium 4th floor). Come learn about our students' summer projects, including:
  - **Contribution Analysis of Pathfinder Event Center on the Local Economy.** Henry Williams
  - **Economic Contribution Analysis of Colorado Search and Rescue (CSAR).** Sarah Stoddard-Cameron
  - **Economic Contribution Analysis of the Ute Theater in Rifle, CO.** Shakya Prasiddha
  - **REDI@CSU Economic Research in the Mountain Region.** Joshua Dickhausen
  - **Strengthening Emergency Management and Fostering Community Resilience in Yuma County.** Lexi Potter
  - **Economic and Community Contribution Analysis of the Forest Product Industry in Colorado.** Nara Chung
  - **Downtown Economic Development in Montezuma County.** Sal McCollum
  - **And many more!**

Contact [Dawn Thilmany](#) for more information about the annual Forum.

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## [Downtown Colorado Webinars and Other Upcoming Events](#)

CSU continues to grow our partnership with [Downtown Colorado](#). Programming covers the same breadth of community and economic development issues we strive to support with our CSU REDI and Extension team. Register using CSU's institutional membership. [Contact us.](#)

Upcoming programming includes:

- September 11 - [Stop, Collaborate, and Listen](#)
- September 19 - [The Future of Downtown Multi-Functionality](#)
- October 2 - [Small But Mighty Development- Webinar](#)
- November 13 (in person in Pueblo) - [Annual Tax Increment Finance Summit](#)

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## [Economic Development Council of Colorado's \(EDCC\) 2024 Drive|Lead|Succeed Conference](#)

October 13-16, 2024  
The Park Hyatt, Beaver Creek

CSU is an institutional member and sponsor for [EDDC's Annual Drive|Lead|Succeed Conference](#), which is geared towards nurturing the growth of Colorado's economy. New this year, EDCC is joining forces with the

Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association to provide a platform for essential knowledge sharing and networking to support Colorado's vibrant and growing economy.

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from Colorado's Workforce Development ecosystem! Interested in attending? [Contact us to learn more.](#)

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## [EDDC Knowledge Network Series II](#)

December 11, 2024, 10-11:30 a.m.

To connect and foster a network of economic development professionals, EDCC continues to gather stakeholders to strengthen the performance of Economic Development Organizations, cultivate industry connections, and promote the industry and profession.

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## [Southern Rocky Mountain Agriculture Conference](#)

Save the dates: February 4-6, 2025  
Monte Vista, CO

Organizers of the [Southern Rocky Mountain Agricultural Conference](#) partnered with CSU REDI to assess the economic impacts of this important event on Monte Vista as well as the larger region. In the future we will share on CSU REDI's website the economic impact analysis and white paper, including feedback from community presentations to the San Luis Valley Commissioners and Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce.

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## [National Extension Tourism Network 2025 National Conference](#)

Save the Dates: Oct. 7-10, 2025  
Meredith, New Hampshire

With a growing CSU team focused on the outdoor economy, including the role of tourism in our state, save the date to join our peers across the U.S.

# Funding, Program and Educational Opportunities

## [The Institute for Entrepreneurship \(I4E\)](#)

[Venture Validator 1.0](#) is FREE, open to all. Aspiring entrepreneurs meet once a week for three weeks to test out their new business concepts. With the support of seasoned mentors and coaches, participants conduct customer discovery and market research, create a business model, analyze their competitive landscape, and prototype products with the goal of launching successful ventures.

**September 25, October 2, and October 9, 5-7 p.m.**

CSU's Rockwell Hall West, Room 220, 523 W Laurel St, Fort Collins, CO

***\*In-Person OR Virtual options available. If the times don't work, you will still receive full access to the content if you register!***

[Venture Validator 2.0](#) is a continuation of your customer discovery journey and digs into market opportunity for your business idea.

**October 23 and 30, 5 - 7 p.m.**

[Venture Jumpstart](#) is a self-paced, modified accelerator focused on providing the tools entrepreneurs need to succeed, whether that's pre-built financial templates, industry connections, or an encouraging community here to help build and grow your business.

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## Colorado Collision

Friday, September 13 · 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Confluence Theater (1st Floor), Hydro Building: CSU Spur 4777 National Western Dr., Denver, CO 80216

This pitch event is a unique opportunity for the top food businesses from across Colorado - representing the Western Slope, Front Range, Mountain, San Luis Valley, and Eastern Plains - to come together to showcase food innovations. Participants will compete for additional funding and the chance to further elevate their remarkable food ventures!

## Colorado Food Showcase

Saturday, September 14 · 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Terra Building: CSU Spur 4777 National Western Dr., Denver, CO 80216

Visit local food entrepreneurs in a farmer's market-style vendor experience, showcasing up to 35 vendors with an array of food products. Taste samples, meet company owners, network with brands, purchase products, and more!

No registration required. This event is free, and open to everyone!

**ALSO SAVE THE DATE...**

**SEP. 14** **CO FOOD SHOWCASE**  
10AM - 2PM

*The CO Food Showcase brings together food entrepreneurs from around the State to sample and sell their products. This is an amazing opportunity to see the food innovation happening in Colorado!*

CSU SPUR, 4777 National Western Dr, Denver, CO 80216

Logos: REDI@CSU, Regional Economic Development Institute, Naturally Boulder, REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTERS, COLORADO FOOD WORKS, Alpine Bank, PUEBLO FOOD PROJECT, RUN THE NUMBERS, FOOD BUSINESS Success, FOOD INNOVATION CENTER COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, CSU SPUR, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## CSU Spur Day @ Denver Startup Week

September 18, 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

CSU Spur Campus in Denver

Denver Startup Week, September 16-20, is right around the corner, and CSU Spur will be hosting some exciting panels and networking opportunities that you won't want to miss!

Built by the community for the community, Denver Startup week is a celebration of everything entrepreneurial in Denver and is the largest free event of its kind. Join us as we celebrate a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem in Denver and beyond, showcasing and building a global culture of innovation.

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## Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Funding Available

USDA Rural Development has grant funding available to help agricultural producers with renewable energy or energy efficiency improvements through our Rural Energy for America Program.

Grant funds for up to 50% of the total project costs are currently available for installation of renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements for agricultural producers and rural small businesses.

Applications for the [Rural Energy for America](#) are accepted anytime, with quarterly funding competition deadlines through September 30, 2024.

Agricultural producers with at least 50% of their gross income coming from agricultural operations can apply for REAP; they can be located in rural or nonrural areas. Small businesses that are located in an eligible rural area are also eligible to apply.

REAP Renewable Energy System (RES) funds can be used for systems such as:

- Small and large solar or wind generation
- Geothermal for electric generation or direct use
- Hydropower below 30 megawatts
- Biomass (for example: biodiesel and ethanol, anaerobic digesters, and solid fuels)

REAP Energy Efficiency Improvement (EEI) funds can be used to buy, build, and install EEI such as:

- Electric, solar, or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots
- Switching from a diesel to an electric irrigation motor
- Lighting, Insulation, Doors, Windows, Cooling or Refrigeration units
- High-efficiency heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC)

In Colorado, send applications, inquiries and other requests to [SM.CO.REAP@usda.gov](mailto:SM.CO.REAP@usda.gov)

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## Community Facilities Loan & Grant Program

The USDA Community Facilities program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

This infrastructure funding will expand access to health care, education, and public safety while spurring community development and building sound infrastructure for people living in rural communities.

More than 100 types of projects are eligible for Community Facilities funding. Eligible applicants include municipalities, public bodies, nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized Native American tribes. Projects must be in rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less.

[More information on this program in Colorado.](#)

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## Colorado Wyoming Climate Resilience Engine (CO-WY Engine)

[CO-WY Engine](#), funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation, is thrilled to announce the launch of its Engine-specific startup support program, aimed at empowering climate resilience startups across the Colorado and Wyoming region and the United States, and growing a diverse innovation ecosystem in the region. This program offers a range of tailored services designed to help startups address the challenges bringing climate technologies to market and drives commercial growth in the emerging climate resiliency marketplace. The Engine startup support program is one of many means the Engine will deploy to build and sustain a nationally leading ecosystem in climate resiliency.

Are you interested in applying to the CO-WY Engine startup services? [Learn more about startup services included and to submit an application.](#)

**Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI@CSU)**

# REDI@CSU

## Regional Economic Development Institute

Visit our website for reports, updates and highlights on [Community Based Projects](#).

### August 2024 REDI report Unemployment and Food Insecurity Amongst Immigrants in the United States

[Joshua Berning](#), [Siwen Zhou](#), [Jude Bayham](#), [Alessandro Bonanno](#), [Ray Miller](#)

#### Key Findings

- Immigrant-led households contribute to the U.S. economy in many ways.
- Changes in unemployment more greatly effects immigrants than natives with respect to food insecurity.
- The effect of unemployment is especially large for immigrant non-citizens, a group that receives little or no public assistance.
- Extending unemployment benefits to undocumented immigrant workers could provide support with food insecurity.

[Download report to read more.](#)

### July 2024 REDI report Piloting a Fee-for-Service Dehydration Program for Hunger Relief and Local Fruit Growers

[Nicole Didero](#), [Ann Duncan](#), [Amanda McQuade](#), [Martha Calvert](#), [Mike Gabel](#), [Robbie LeValley](#), [Dawn Thilmany](#)

#### Key Findings

- Western Slope fruit and vegetable producers currently lack access to infrastructure needed to pursue value-added processing opportunities due to capital, labor and scale concerns.
- An innovative model for a revenue-generating dehydration service at the West Slope Branch of Food Bank of the Rockies in collaboration with regional fruit producers may complement efforts to match producers, new value-added facilities and hunger relief efforts.
- Preliminary costs of production estimates show this collaboration could offer growers opportunities to dehydrate their seconds within a feasible range of fees for growers, but more attention to overall costs and refined logistics for the fee-for-service program is warranted.

[Download report to read more.](#)

### June 2024 REDI report Wage Disparities Among Mexican Indigenous Farmworkers in the U.S. Agricultural Sector

[Jorge Coronel Bautista](#), [Alexandra E. Hill](#), [Anita Alves Pena](#), [Dawn Thilmany](#)

#### Key Findings

- There is a wage gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Mexican-born farmworkers with indigenous

- workers taking home 5.25% less in pay.
- Lower education levels, fewer years of farmwork experience, higher proportions of undocumented status, and lower English proficiency are among the factors contributing to the wage gap.
  - Indigenous identity itself, accounts for 1.39% of the observed wage gap, indicative of potential wage discrimination.

[Download report to read more.](#)

## **May 2024 REDI report**

### **The Proposed Denver Ordinance Banning Animal Slaughter: Implications for the Animal Sector and Economy**

[Dawn Thilmany](#), [Jennifer Martin](#), [Rebecca Hill](#), [Robert Delmore](#)

#### Key Findings

- There is a proposed ordinance to ban the operation of existing and future livestock harvest operations in Denver, a hub of lamb processing for the state and nation, representing 15- 20% of US lamb harvest capacity.
- The most pessimistic potential economic impact to the Colorado economy is a reduction of \$861 million in current economic activity and 2,787 jobs after accounting for multiplier effects.
- The estimated losses extend to other sectors such as animal production, animal food manufacturing, agriculture and forestry, grain farming, truck transportation, and wholesale sectors such as grocery.

[Download report to read more.](#)

## **April 2024 REDI report**

### **Short-Term Rental Provisions and Colorado Mountain Housing Prices**

[Joshua Dickhausen](#), [Stephan Weiler](#)

#### Key Findings

- With the Rocky Mountains as such a popular vacation destination, short-term rentals have been a part of Colorado for a long time.
- Stress on the housing supply may be making it difficult for lower-income individuals and families to find housing in mountain communities.
- Short-term rentals being so readily available increases the demand for housing with an already limited supply.

[Download report to read more.](#)

## **Colorado Futures Center Reports**



# **COLORADO FUTURES CENTER**

## **ColoradoCast: Economic Forecast Q3 2024**

Our Partners at the Colorado Futures Center have released their Statewide Economic Forecast.

The third quarter 2024 ColoradoCast continues to forecast modest growth for the Colorado economy, in the range

of 2 percent for most months.

[Download the report to read more](#)

## About Us - Community and Economic Development

### 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:

- [Summer newsletter](#)
- [News and events](#) from across the region
- New [grant programs](#)

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](#).



### ABOUT The Family Leadership Training Institute

#### Promoting Leadership Development, Increased Civic Capacity and Equity in All Policies

The Family Leadership Training Institute of Colorado (FLTI) is a nonpartisan, multi-sector, and community-driven collaborative that seeks to bridge the gap between local residents and decision-makers in order to foster the co-creation of programs and policies that reflect diverse community voices.

[Learn more about FLTI's impact in the Vibrant Communities 2022-23 report.](#)



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#### Community & Economic Development

Mission: To empower people to build resilient, vibrant, and healthy communities and economies by enhancing their well-being, leadership, civic engagement, and economic development.

We do this by:

1. Creating resilient communities and economies
2. Developing leadership and civic engagement
3. Promoting community health and wellbeing

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