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July 2025 || Newsletter Edition 178

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**CSU Food Systems Spotlight**



## Katherine Frazer

Colorado State University Graduate Student

Katherine Frazer is a Master's student in the Ecosystem Science and Sustainability department at CSU. Originally from Arizona, Katherine earned her undergraduate degrees in Mathematics and Environmental & Sustainability Studies from Northern Arizona University (NAU). While at NAU, she conducted interdisciplinary research on food banks in food deserts across Arizona, ultimately inspiring her to pursue further education on food systems at CSU. Currently, Katherine is conducting research on the food access landscape on behalf of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Board.

Katherine has a deep passion for using data-driven research to find solutions to environmental and social problems faced by our food systems. With know-how in data analysis, sustainability, and climate adaptation strategies, Katherine hopes to find solutions to create more equitable and resilient food systems.



## Mark Your Calendar



## Colorado Regional Food Summits Share Out

The Colorado Food Summit Regional Convening Event Series has officially wrapped up! Thank you to everyone who served on planning committees and shared your perspectives at events across the state. Over the course of fifteen gatherings, more than 1,000 Coloradans came together to discuss how food and agriculture systems shape our daily lives.

Now, we are excited to share what we have learned and outline what is ahead for the Colorado Food Summit.

Join us for this webinar to:

- Hear outcomes and highlights from the regional events
- Listen to regional leaders reflect on local conversations
- Access data and reports from across the state
- Provide feedback on a collaborative statewide report
- Learn what food and agriculture practitioners want from institutions and policymakers moving forward

Your voice matters in shaping what comes next. We hope to see you on Friday, July 11, 2025 from 10:00 AM to 11:15 AM. This webinar will offer simultaneous translation in English and Spanish.

Register here:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/14A4fXnERdmGQne92LZfMQ>



## 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 time. Click each date below to register and learn more about the program. For additional dates and to learn more, [check here](#).

The next CSU Extension Cottage Food Safety Trainings will take place on:

- July 17th, 12:00pm-3:30pm, online, [register](#)
- August 14th, 12:00pm-3:30pm, online, [register](#)
- August 22nd, 9:00am-12:30pm, online, [register](#)
- September 11, 12:00pm-3:30pm, online, [register](#)



## Agrivoltaics Farm Tours and Volunteer Days: How to Plan Your Agrivoltaics Project

The Colorado Agrivoltaics Learning Center is hosting a series of public tours of an agrivoltaic farms in CO. The tours will take place at Jack's Solar Garden in Longmont between July 4th and October 18th. Attendees will be introduced to agrivoltaics and learn about its potential benefits to farmers, biodiversity, and communities. Registration costs \$17.50.

The Learning Center is also hosting volunteer days at their Medicinal Herb Garden, where participants will seed, weed, prep beds, and harvest.

[Register for a tour or to volunteer here.](#)

## Experiential Short Courses with Pueblo Seed & Food Co.



Come join Pueblo Seed & Food Co. in the Canyon of the Ancients! Throughout the year, they are offering 4 courses and 1 field day in southwest Colorado.

Upcoming courses:

- The Whole Grain Experience - July 18-20th, 2025
- Soil, Seed, and Human Health - August 15-17th, 2025
- The Great Chile and Garlic Experience - September 26-28th, 2025
- Maize & Millets - October 31st-November 2nd, 2025

The cost without lodging for **all courses** is \$100. For questions, contact [info@puebloseed.com](mailto:info@puebloseed.com).



## Whole Grain Experience: Farm Tour and Bakehouse Experience

The Whole Grain Experience is a weekend event put on by the Pueblo Seed & Food Co which educates participants about grains in the field and their significance in farming systems. This event will focus on diverse cultural dishes, sourdough fermentation, and the scientific evidence of whole grain nutrition and its impact on health. Events take place from **July 18th to July 20th** in Cortez, Colorado.

On July 19th, there will be a farm tour where attendees will learn about grains, organic agriculture, harvesting, threshing, and bundling, followed by a lunch at the bakehouse. On July 20th, there will be a presentation about nutrition and integrating whole grains into daily eating as well as culinary and baking applications. Attendees will learn how to bake with sourdough and each participant will be able to take home a loaf of bread.

Registration is \$100 for the Farm Tour and \$150 for the Bakehouse Experience. Signing up for both events costs \$300. Contact [info@puebloseed.com](mailto:info@puebloseed.com) with any questions.

**Register here.**

## Naturally Colorado Mentor Program



The Naturally Colorado Mentor Program is a guided cohort experience designed to support early-stage startups, deepen connections, accelerate learning, and share real-world insight. Each cohort brings together two mentors and up to six mentees for honest conversations, shared challenges, and meaningful guidance. Each cohort will meet once a month for six months, covering topics such as market strategy, retail readiness, team-building, fundraising, and values-led growth.

To become a mentee, you must be a member of Naturally Colorado, have an early-stage startup that is \$5M or less in annual revenue, have a CPG product in market, and be looking to scale up your business. **Applications open July 7th and are due July 28th.** There is a \$100 per mentee fee.

For questions, contact [info@naturallycolorado.org](mailto:info@naturallycolorado.org).

**Apply here.**

## 2025 Colorado Food & Agriculture Collision Pitch Competition

Join us for the **3rd Annual Colorado Food & Agriculture Collision Pitch Competition**—a dynamic, in-person event celebrating the creativity and innovation of Colorado's food and agriculture entrepreneurs. This statewide event brings together top businesses from six Colorado regions—from the western mountains to the eastern plains—to pitch their ideas on one stage. It's a great opportunity to connect, get inspired, and support the future of Colorado's food and agriculture industries.

Registration is \$25, which includes appetizers and one drink ticket. To secure your spot at this event, **get tickets here.**

## Idaho Food Business Foundations Workshop Series



Are you ready to launch your food business, grow your cottage food operation, or break into retail & wholesale? The Idaho Food Business Foundations workshop is an 8-part series covering everything from food safety to packaging, sourcing, and marketing—giving you the foundation to confidently produce, sell, and scale your product.

### Workshop Schedule:

- July 7th – Food Safety 1: Foundations of Safe Food Handling
- July 21st – Food Safety 2: Advanced Practices & Compliance

- August 4th – Processing Methods: Small-Scale Food Manufacturing
- August 18th – Sanitation 1: Cleaning & Sanitizing Basics
- September 8th – Sanitation 2: Deep Cleaning & Microbial Control
- September 22nd – Sourcing Local: Regional Ingredients for Value-Added Foods
- October 6th – Packaging & Labeling: Getting Retail Ready
- October 20th – Marketing & Distribution: Reaching Your Customer

Cost: **\$50 per class** (Virtual and in-person options)

Special Offer: Sign up for the full series and get 50% off

Bonus: Attend 5 or more classes and receive 4 hours of consulting FREE to help grow your business.

**Register here.**

## National Annie's Project Facilitator Trainings



**ANNIE'S PROJECT**  
EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

National Annie's Project is offering virtual facilitator trainings on the following dates:

- **September 23-24:** 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm (both days), **Register here**
- **November 18-19:** 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm (both days), **Register here**

Registration is free but limited to the first 20 participants. All 8 hours must be completed to be certified as an Annie's Project facilitator. If you are interested in hosting Annie's Project in your county, the first step is to take this course. Contact [karisha@anniesproject.org](mailto:karisha@anniesproject.org) with questions or for more information.



## Native Grown & Gathered Food Expo

Join Tahoma Peak Solutions in Seattle, Washington for a vibrant gathering celebrating Native food systems and Tribal Food Sovereignty. This event unites Tribal nations, food producers, chefs, and advocates across the Northwest, Rocky Mountains, and beyond. Native entrepreneurs and businesses, buyers, conscious consumers, the Tribal community, Native nonprofits, and grassroots advocates are invited to attend.

**Visit the webpage to learn more.**

The Food Expo will take place from **October 1st through October 3rd**. Key events include breakout sessions, panels, and marketplace exploration featuring Native producers, artisans, and vendors. Registration is \$550 before July 15th and \$600 before October 1st. Purchasing a pass to access only the food marketplace costs \$10. Limited scholarships are available.

**Register here.**

## Center for Sorghum Improvement Seminar Series

The **Center for Sorghum Improvement (CSI)** at Kansas State University is hosting a monthly seminar series to engage researchers, industry leaders, and agricultural professional in meaningful discussions about sorghum research, from genetics to production practices to marketing opportunities.



View the seminar schedule and subscribe to the mailing list [here](#).

For more information or to directly receive seminar notifications, contact Sarah Sexton-Bowser, managing director, at [sarahann@ksu.edu](mailto:sarahann@ksu.edu).

## Cottage Foods Business Training: Passion Into Profits



Join CSU Extension for a training to successfully build a cottage foods business and turn your culinary passion into profit! CSU Extension is offering a short course with tools to ensure success for cottage food producers. The training provides easy-to-use resources for ensuring producers account for their costs of production and product-market-fit.

### Upcoming Training Sessions:

- July 7th, 10:00am-12:00pm, online, [register](#).
- September 18th, 2:00pm-4:00pm, online, [register](#).



## Farm Resilience Online Course

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. CSU was fortunate to partner with this program to develop some of the content and decision tools.

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



## Funding Opportunities

### Better Food Policy Fund Rapid Response Grant Program

The Better Food Policy Fund (BFPF) Rapid Response Grant program aims to support food policy councils facing unexpected funding challenges or revenue loss that impacts their work. The grant provides up to **\$15,000** of unrestricted funding, intended to be spent by councils within 12-months. **To apply, submit this application by July 7th.**



Councils, networks, coalitions, or other groups working across boundaries at the tribal, municipal, county, state, regional, or intertribal level are eligible for the grant. Applicants will be notified of their award on August 1st. **Visit the website here to learn more.**



### AMS Seeks Peer Reviewers for Grant Applications

The USDA Ag Marketing Service is seeking subject matter experts to serve as peer reviewers to evaluate applications for the LAMP and other AMS programs for the FY2025 grant cycle. The current programs seeking reviewers are:

- 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)

AMS grant peer reviewers should have knowledge or experience in agricultural systems. Producers and those with first-hand experience in food and farm businesses are encouraged to participate. Reviewing applications takes approximately 6 weeks. For more information, view the **How to Become an Application Reviewer** webpage.

Register **here**.



## News, Resources & Reading



## USDA Survey: Farmer's 2025 Planting Intentions

As the 2025 crop production season begins, the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) contacted producers nationwide to determine their plans for the upcoming season.

The USDA compiles the survey results into a report which provides the first estimates of U.S. farmers' growing plans for 2025. The survey results are published in the annual *Prospective Plantings* and quarterly *Grain Stocks* reports. Learn more about farmer responses in the posted reports.

[Find the reports here.](#)

## Values-Based, Equity Centered Farm to Food Assistance Report



Wallace Center  
AT WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

The Wallace Center's Food Leadership Network has announced 4 years of research, peer learning, and field building in the report "**Farm to Food Assistance: A Model for Values-Based, Equity-Centered Approaches to Transforming the Food System**". This report makes the case for how farms can transform food systems through food assistance programs. The Food Leadership Network highlights the most pressing challenges and offers recommendations for people looking to advance Farm to Food Assistance efforts across the country.



## Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC) is seeking New Council Members

COFSAC is seeking nominations for our seats with terms expiring in October, 2025. These seats include:

- Member with expertise in federal food and nutrition service programs (General Assembly Appointed). [APPLY HERE](#)
- Representative of food wholesalers or food retailers (Appointed by the Governor's Office). [APPLY HERE](#)
- Representative of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Appointed by the Governor's Office). [APPLY HERE](#)
- Representative of a food distributor or a food hub (General Assembly Appointed). [APPLY HERE](#)

The council will request to review all applications submitted by October 18th, 2025, and provide recommendations to the appropriate office. The General Assembly or the Governor will then make the final decision (over which they have

full discretionary power) and inform those appointed as Council members. The Council will follow up with those not appointed to explore other opportunities for participation such as committee and working group initiatives.

More information is available on [our website](#).



## 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 spring-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.](#)



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

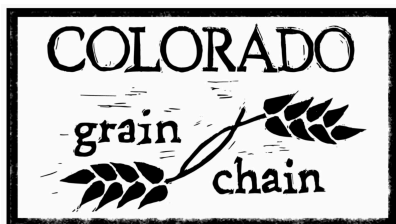


From Our Communities

## Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center Survey



If you have received a grant or Technical Assistance from the Center, attended a Center-supported event, or read the Center's newsletter, please complete **this 3-minute survey**. Your feedback helps demonstrate the Center's impact and advocate for continued investment in regional food systems.



### Join the Colorado Grain Chain

Consumers and businesses are encouraged to join the Colorado Grain Chain (CGC). Heritage and heirloom grains are a great way to diversify, build soil, and add value to Colorado's agricultural abundance. Through the Colorado Grown Grains

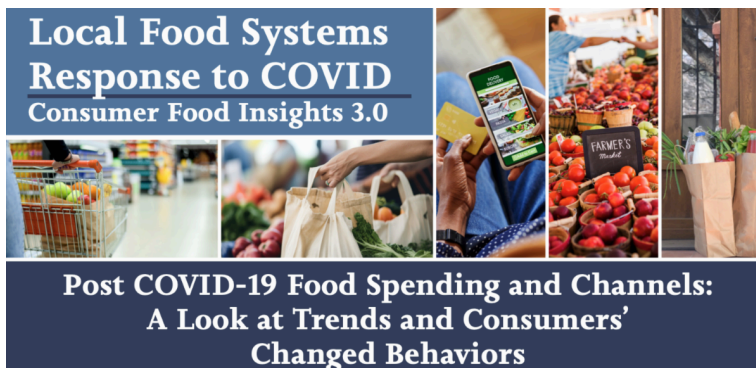
Co-Brand strategy, the Colorado Grain Chain supports producers and makers with co-branded marketing materials, grain chain business access, and networking opportunities.

For more information, contact **Audrey Paugh** at [connect@coloradograinchain.com](mailto:connect@coloradograinchain.com) or apply to become a member [here](#).

### New Consumer Food Insights Series Available

A series of **Consumer Food Insights** was published in late 2024. 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.

Click [here](#) to access the series providing regional data on market usage, including the Rocky Mountain Northwest region.



## 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 our region's farm and food businesses. The Northwest and Rocky Mountain RFBC serves Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

- Learn about Center Impacts from our first 2 years of programming [here](#).
- Read our latest newsletter [here](#).
- Learn about open funding opportunities through our [Biz Builder grant programs](#).
- Find an event to launch or expand your business on our [calendar](#).

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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