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March 1, 2021 || Newsletter Edition 130

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CSU Food Systems Webinar Series

Join us the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 2 pm

Rebecca Hill and Robin Young Using the Food Mapping System Tool in Rural Colorado

Wednesday, March 10th, 2021

2:00 pm - 2:30 pm MT, followed by time for questions

Meeting ID: **175-114-418**

Working with our community partners, the Colorado State University Food Systems team has created an interactive Colorado Food Systems Mapping and Reporting Tool that aggregates relevant food system indicators and makes them available to all stakeholders. Positive responses to this project have caused us to expand the offerings of this toolkit to include data and indicators that have been important during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as indicators that are important to community development. In this webinar we will introduce the tool and the partnerships and processes that were important in creating it. We will also discuss how this mapping system helps identify needs and answer questions in food systems in small communities.

[Register here](#)



Rebecca Hill, PhD
Department of Agriculture
and Resource Economics



Robin Young
Extension Director,
Archuleta County

View previous Food Systems webinars [here](#).



CSU Food Systems Team Spotlights

Beth Krehbiel
Ph.D. Student
Department of Animal Sciences



Beth is a PhD candidate in Animal Science – Beef Systems Management where her research has focused on mitigating financial stress for beef operators in Colorado using benchmarking tactics and Systems Dynamics methodology that investigate various drought strategies. Beth obtained an MS in Animal Science – Breeding and Genetics at Colorado State University while working at the USDA-National Animal Germplasm Program. She is very passionate

about the beef industry and the people working in it – a reflection of her upbringing on a registered Angus and commercial cattle operation in Kansas. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and toddler, and visiting the farm back home when time allows.

Mark Uchanski

Specialty Crops Program Coordinator
Associate Professor
Department of Horticulture and Landscape
Architecture

Mark Uchanski was born and raised in the far western suburbs of Chicago, Illinois - where the suburbs meet rural America, corn, and soybeans. He fell in love with vegetable farming systems and food systems in his backyard and grandfather's garden in Chicago. His graduate project involved testing and removing pathogens from horseradish propagation stock to provide pathogen-free planting materials. Shortly after graduation in 2008, Uchanski moved to New Mexico to serve the chile pepper and onion industries as Assistant Professor of Horticulture at New Mexico State University. That work soon expanded to include small farm, diversified, and organic operations. In 2015, Uchanski moved to Fort Collins to serve as the Colorado State University Specialty Crops Program Coordinator. There he continues his work with vegetable and other specialty crop producers, including conducting research on sustainable and organic practices and inputs that are applicable to Colorado. He continues to blend his background, research and teaching interests in horticulture, ecology, and sustainable cropping systems.



Mark Your Calendar

Stay up to date!

Please check the Food Systems [webpage](#) for updates, and refer to our [responses and resources](#) related to COVID-19. Note that late-breaking COVID-19 updates will be posted on the website but are not included in this newsletter for timeliness. **Information about Colorado's vaccine roll-out is included at the end of this newsletter.**



Online Produce Safety Training for Fruit and Vegetable Growers

Colorado State University Extension, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and Colorado Department of Agriculture will be hosting an **online only** Produce Safety Alliance Grower

Training Course in two parts, from 8:00 am - 12:30 pm on both **March 25 & March 26, 2021**. This course provides a foundation on the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, Good Agricultural Practices and co-management information, and details on how to develop a farm food safety plan. Registration is \$35. Click [here to register](#) and read about the course structure and requirements.

Food Safety Training for Cottage Foods Producers

2021 courses

Learn how to safely produce food from home as a cottage food business. This online course covers a variety of topics that include: 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 \$40.

Courses will be offered online on the following dates. **Click each date below** to register and learn more about the program.

- **March 3, 2021**, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- **March 19, 2021**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **March 29, 2021**, 5:30 pm - 9:30pm
- **April 5, 2021**, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
- **April 21, 2021**, 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
- **April 22, 2021**, 12:00 pm - 3:30 pm
- **May 7, 2021**, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Grain School Course 2 and Online Forum

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) and the Washington State University (WSU) Breadlab invite you to enroll in the Grain School Online Course 2.



This course focuses on building the basic understanding of whole and heritage grains and dietary fiber in health and disease, including cereal science, nutritional quality, impacts of fermentation and nixtamalization on the bioavailability of nutrients and gastro-intestinal health, immunity, chronic diet-related diseases and sensitivities, and the role of carbohydrates, specifically grains, in athletes and active individuals.

This online course spans **March 4 - 25, 2021** and is taught asynchronously so students can pace themselves individually. The cost to enroll is \$150. [Click here](#) for an online brochure with more information and the link to register.

UCCS and the WSU Breadlab will also be holding a free public forum dedicated to the nutritional, microbial, and culinary diversity of grains. The forum will take place on Saturday, **March 6, 2021**, from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. [Click here](#) for an online brochure with more information and the link to register.



LA PLATA COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Southwest Webinar Series

La Plata County Extension is excited to announce our Southwest Webinar Series. Each webinar will be recorded and posted to the La Plata County

Extension [website](#) and will take place from 6:30 - 7:30 pm MT. Click on each title for more information or to register.

- **March 4, 2021 - Future Garden Favorites: Native Plants** with Jennifer Boussetot
- **March 10, 2021 - Powering up with Peppers: An Intro to Hot & Sweet Peppers** with Dan Hobbs
- **March 11, 2021 - Fruit Tree Pruning** with Gus Westerman and Greg Felsen (zoom link only, passcode: Apple)
- **April 1, 2021 - Weeds: How to Identify, Control, and Out-Compete** with Ben Bain (zoom link only, passcode: Weeds)

USDA Seeks Members for Advisory Committee on Urban Agriculture



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking members for a new advisory committee on urban agriculture, part of a broader effort to focus on the needs of urban farmers. The 12-person committee will advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production practices as well as identify any barriers to urban agriculture.

Nomination packages must be submitted by **March 5, 2021**. [Click here](#) to view more details and access nomination materials.



Colorado Farmers Market Association Annual Conference

The Colorado Farmers Market Association will hold its annual conference on **March 5 - 6, 2021**, online. Check the [website](#) for registration and conference details. Topics covered will include challenges and successes from 2020, game planning for 2021, farmers markets as business incubators and more. An equity and inclusion training will also be offered.



**AGRICULTURE AND
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Monday Night Marketing

The Monday Night Marketing webinar series is designed to help farmers and ranchers improve their marketing skills. The upcoming four-week program will focus on sophisticated marketing techniques and the development of a farm/ranch level marketing plan.

The program will be held Mondays from 7:00 - 9:00 pm spanning **March 8 - March 29, 2021**.

Participants can register for \$15 for each session (or \$25 for the set). Learn more and register [here](#).

Labor Management on Small & Medium Sized Farms



This interactive seminar series will present highlights from recent research and extension projects focusing on labor management and decision-making on small and mid-sized produce and livestock farms. Each session will take place from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm each day and include ample time for questions and discussion, providing multiple opportunities to connect and share with other session attendees. [Click here](#) for more information about each session.

- **March 9, 2021** - Labor Management Decision-Making, Practices & Challenges
- **March 10, 2021** - Helping Farm Operators Build Labor Management Know-How
- **March 11, 2021** - Creative Business Models to Address Employee Hiring, Training

The series is designed for educators and researchers, with the goal of sharing knowledge and information to work with farmer clients and inform future inquiry. [Register here](#).

New Opportunities and Collaborations for Colorado's Meat Processing Sector



FOOD SYSTEMS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Come learn about resources to support small and mid-scale meat processors in Colorado!

Speakers include:

- Rebecca Thistlethwaite, Director, Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network
- PJ Howe, Loan Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- Jennifer Martin, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal Sciences, Colorado State University
- Steve Blunt, Program Administrator, Colorado Department of Agriculture

This webinar will take place on **March 11, 2021**, from 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm MT. [Click here](#) for more information.



AGRICULTURE AND
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
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Colorado Custom Rates Survey

Colorado State University Extension conducts an annual survey of custom rates charged for various crop and livestock operations and lease arrangements in Colorado. Data are collected from agricultural producers, landowners and managers, lenders, agricultural consultants, machine operators, and Extension agents. Results of the survey are used by producers, ag lenders, county assessors, the Colorado Department of Agriculture, land appraisers, and others.

Show your love for Colorado Agriculture by completing **Colorado State University's annual Custom Rates Survey**. Take just 10 minutes to complete the survey before **March 15, 2021**.



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Venture Validator

The Venture Validator is a free program, open to all, where aspiring entrepreneurs meet twice a week for two weeks to test out their new business concepts. With the support of seasoned mentors and coaches, students conduct customer discovery and market research, create a business model, analyze their competitive landscape, prototype products and ultimately pitch their ideas with the goal of launching successful ventures.

The program is hosted by the College of Business **Institute for Entrepreneurship**.

This four-session program will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 - 1:30 pm, spanning **March 16 - 25, 2021**. [Click here](#) to learn more and to register for

this upcoming cohort.

Pivot Larimer County

Larimer County and Colorado State University are partnering to support the long-term stability of local businesses and organizations, due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 outbreak. With changing customer habits and new health requirements, many businesses are needing to 'pivot' their business models to adapt to the changing times.



In response, CSU's College of Business will provide free resources to Larimer County business owners to learn how to 'pivot' their businesses and develop a long-term resiliency plans.

Cohort 4 (**Mar. 26 - Apr. 16**) is open for registration. [Click here](#) for more information or to register for an upcoming cohort.



Funding Opportunities



Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Available in Colorado

Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, provides families with children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals and who attend a school participating in the National School Lunch Program with funds to help purchase food. This benefit is being distributed because

students missed essential meals while schools were closed due to the pandemic this spring. Families can receive up to \$279 per eligible child to supplement their food budget, regardless of immigration status.

Households receiving SNAP during the months of March, April, and May may not need to take any action; their P-EBT benefits may have automatically been loaded onto the EBT card they already have. Families with eligible children who did not receive SNAP during those months or who did not receive the automatic payment need to apply online to receive this benefit.

[Click here](#) to learn more and apply (or refer others to apply) for P-EBT today!

NIFA Funding Opportunities

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has announced the following available funding opportunities. Click each link to learn more.

- **Alfalfa Seed and Alfalfa Forage System Program** - closes **March 15, 2021**
- **Equipment Grant Program** - closes **March 16, 2021**
- **Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program** - closes **March 23, 2021**
- **Food Safety Outreach Program** - closes **April 1, 2021**
- **Veterinary Services Grant Program** - closes **April 16, 2021**
- **Food and Agriculture Service Learning Program** - closes **May 3, 2021**
- **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Education and Workforce Development** - closes **July 1, 2021**
- **1890 Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants (CBG) Program** - closes **September 10, 2021**



Value Added Producer Grant

The Value Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. Goals of this program include generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income.

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for this program.

CSU has some history supporting the market research and feasibility studies required for these grants, so please reach out to our team if you want to explore CSU as a partner in your project.

Applications are due **March 22, 2021**. [Click here for more information.](#)

Questions may be directed to the contacts identified in [this document](#).

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

Beginning farmer education for adult and young audiences in the United States can generally be traced back to the advent of the 1862 and 1890 Morrill Land-Grant Acts. For the first time, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 appropriated \$75 million for FY 2009 - FY 2012 to develop and offer education, training, outreach and mentoring programs to enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers.



The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (aka the 2018 Farm Bill) reauthorized the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) and provides mandatory funds to support education, mentoring, and technical assistance

initiatives for beginning farmers and ranchers. The funding is \$17.5 million for FY 2021, \$20 million for FY 2022, and \$25 million for FY 2023.

Applications are due **March 25, 2021**. For more information, read the **BFRDP funding opportunity**.



Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

The Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program (CFPCGP) has existed since 1996 as a program to fight food insecurity through developing community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs.

Applications are due **May 4, 2021**. [Click here for more information](#).

[View the full grant opportunity posting here](#).

Colorado Farm & Food Systems Resiliency Team Training & Capacity Building Fund

The CO Farm & Food Systems Response Team has launched a Training & Capacity Building fund for growers and intermediaries such as food hubs, farmers markets, and processors. The purpose of this Fund is to remove financial barriers to learning and provide growth opportunities for individuals and organizations committed to improving equity throughout Colorado's food system.

Activities must build the capacity of the applicant to actively uplift community leaders working to build an equitable and resilient food system by directing resources to underserved farmers.

The application will be open until funds are expended. [Click here for more information and to apply](#).

Rapid Outcomes from Agricultural Research

The Rapid Outcomes from Agricultural Research (ROAR) program provides nimble deployment of funds to support research and outreach in response to emerging or unanticipated threats to the nation's food supply or agricultural systems. ROAR participants, including university researchers, farmers or producers, commodity groups and government officials, may apply for funds in response to an outbreak for development of diagnostics, monitoring and mitigation strategies. The ROAR program fills the gap until traditional, longer-term funding sources can be secured.



Up to \$150,000 per one-year grant is available from the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR), with the requirement that recipients provide equal or greater matching funds from non-U.S. federal sources. Industry participation and/or funding is strongly encouraged. **This is an ongoing opportunity.**

Click here for more information.

U.S. Department of Commerce Announces Availability of \$1.5 Billion in CARES Act Funds to Aid Communities Impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic

The Economic Development Administration is now **accepting applications** from eligible grantees for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) supplemental funds (EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance) intended to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to the novel coronavirus.

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Click here for more information.

Eligible applicants include a(n):

- District Organization;
- Indian Tribe or consortium of Indian Tribes;
- State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State;
- Institution of higher education or consortium of institutions of higher education; and
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.

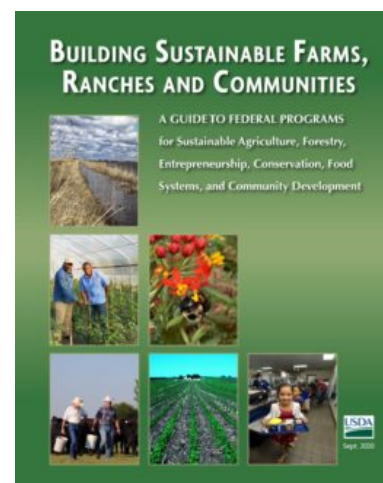


News, Resources & Reading

Updated Guide to USDA Programs Opens the Door to Available Funding

It can be difficult for farmers and ranchers to navigate the wide range of USDA resources and stay up to date with program changes after each Farm Bill.

Thanks to the newly updated Building Sustainable Farms, Ranches and Communities, producers, researchers, nonprofits and landowners can easily find USDA programs that can help them achieve



their goals. [Click here](#) to download your free copy of Building Sustainable Farms, Ranches and Communities.



Visit the **USDA Resource Hub** and Webinar Series for Local Food Systems Response to **COVID-19**

Resource Hub

For the past several months, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been hosting a hub designed to assist local and regional food producers as USDA and its partners develop, share, and assess resources on local and regional food system responses to COVID-19.

[Visit the project site](#) to explore shared resources compiled from our supply chain partners and sign up for updates. This month, there were impact assessments and innovation reports shared from key organizations (Farmers Market Coalition, the CSA network, and Farm to School), so check them out.

Webinar Series

A monthly webinar series will continue on **March 15** at 11:00 am MT focused on "Online Platforms: Pivots and Planning for the Future."

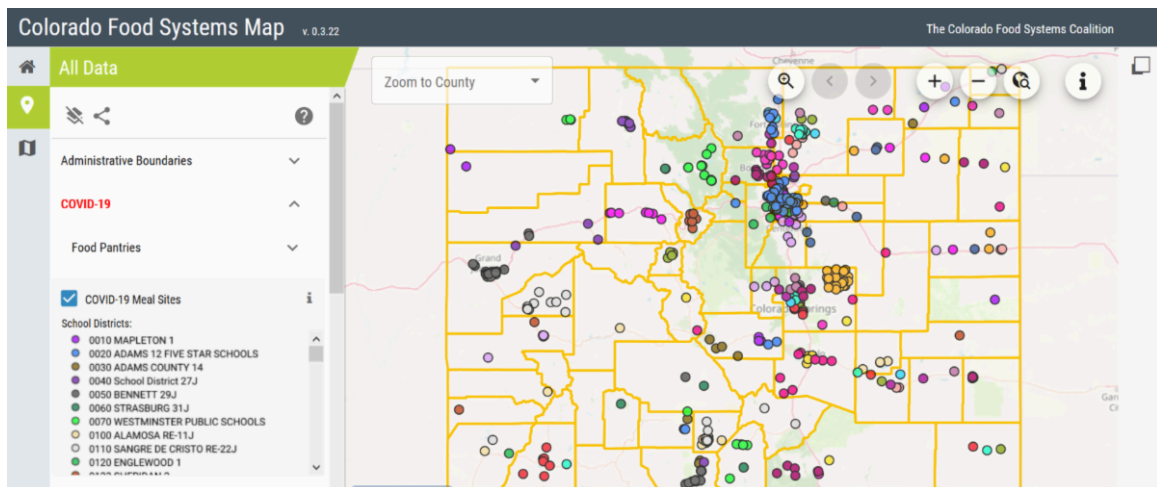
[Register and view additional upcoming webinars here.](#)

Colorado Food System Mapping Tool

Find your COVID Community-Based Food Assistance Programs

[The Colorado Food Systems Map](#) aggregates relevant food systems indicators and makes them available to all stakeholders. Most recently, there has been a rapid compilation of information on feeding sites around the state. Make sure this information is available to your community members.

The map below shows an example of COVID-related data integrated into this mapping tool. On the map you can see all the meal sites set up in response to school closures at the onset of COVID, as many became community meal sites for students (and their families).



From Our Communities

Survey Reveals How Pandemic Has Changed Consumers' Food Habits

Anne Manning, CSU Source



Old habits die hard, but a pandemic will create new ones – whether it's more frequent handwashing or more nights cooking at home.

Nearly a year of social distancing and economic disruptions have triggered both subtle and seismic shifts in how Americans are buying or getting food, and Colorado State University researchers from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics have spent the last several months documenting those shifts. Their efforts are part of a **\$1 million cooperative study** funded by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, in partnership with University of Kentucky and Penn State University, looking at the **pandemic's effects on local and regional food markets**.

The team, co-led by CSU food systems researchers Dawn Thilmany and Becca Jablonski, conducted a national survey of 5,000 U.S. households in fall 2020. Their goal was to uncover how the pandemic is changing Americans' food choices and understand if some of those changes might remain post-pandemic. This information will help producers, farmers, ranchers, retailers and restaurants adapt accordingly and focus on long-term resilience.

[Click here to keep reading.](#)

Colorado Vaccine Roll-Out Information

On February 27, 2021 Kate Greenberg, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture, announced that Friday March 5 will mark the beginning of Phase 1B.3 of vaccine distribution which includes Colorado's frontline essential workers in food and agriculture--approximately 220,000 individuals statewide. The phase will continue over many weeks and will be dependent on variables including vaccine supply and local county health procedures.

The Governor's Office, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Agriculture, and the Colorado Vaccine Equity Outreach Team are working in close partnership to ensure the successful vaccination of Colorado's food and ag workers.

Several webinar events with state vaccine experts are being planned to help answer questions. Watch for information coming soon with dates, times and how to join.

Here are some important takeaways from yesterday's Governor's Office **press conference**:

- Eligible businesses/entities representing frontline essential workers who need assistance connecting with a COVID-19 vaccine provider or making a COVID-19 vaccination plan for their employees or members can get help by completing **this form**.
- This **presentation** was included, with information on vaccine supply estimations, vaccination sites, procedures and more.

While vaccination is voluntary, COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to be safe, highly effective and the key to helping our industry and the world to recover from the pandemic. In addition:

- The vaccine is **free**. If an individual is asked to provide financial information it is a scam.
- Insurance status will not be used to deny or deprioritize any patient from getting the vaccine.
- Providers may ask, but they cannot require an individual to provide state-issued or other government-issued ID as a condition to receiving the vaccine.
- This CDC **Employer Vaccination Toolkit** for essential workers can help communicate with your employees about the vaccine.
- A large number of vaccine-related FAQs are answered **here**.
- For the most up-to-date and comprehensive vaccine information, visit the **Colorado COVID-19 Vaccine website**, or call 1-877-CO VAX CO (1-877-268-2926).



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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