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CSU Food Systems Spotlight



Sal McCollum

Ph.D Student and Summer Extension Intern,
Colorado State University

Sal McCollum is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Economics. She completed her BA 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



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.

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:

- **August 7**, 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm, online
- **August 15**, 12:00 pm - 3:30 pm, online
- **August 21**, 12:00 pm - 3:30 pm, in-person El Paso County
- **September 3**, 10:00 am - 1:30 pm, in-person El Paso County
- **September 6**, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, online
- **September 23**, 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm, online



U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef & FFAR Announce Focus Group Series to Develop Sustainable Beef Research

Roadmap

The **U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef** (USRSB) and the **Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research** (FFAR) are co-hosting a series of focus groups leading to the development of a comprehensive sustainable beef research roadmap. These sessions will address key sustainability goals and sector targets related to land resources, water resources and air and greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. beef industry.

Attendees will work to identify key knowledge and data gaps, as well as challenges and opportunities for the U.S. beef industry. Participants in each focus group will actively engage and work collaboratively to identify key avenues for future research needed to support the beef industry in achieving its ambitious goals. The focus group below is open to the public.

Air & Greenhouse Gas Emissions Focus Group **Monday, August 19, 3–5 p.m. EST | [Register here](#)**

Moderated by: Samantha Werth, PhD – Executive Director, USRSB

Presenters/Subject Matter Experts:

- Sara Place, PhD – Associate Professor, Colorado State University
- Logan Thompson – Assistant Professor, Kansas State University
- Troy Rowan, PhD – Assistant Professor, Beef Cattle Genomics, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

If you have any questions about the focus groups or the in-person event, please reach out to Samantha Werth at swerth@beef.org.



Food Finance Institute (FFI) **Offering Trainings**

FFI looks forward to offering a training for entrepreneurs on **Financial Foundations for Food Brands**.

Financial Foundations for Food Brands is designed for food brand entrepreneurs looking to get their businesses prepared for profitability. It includes:

- three 2-hour group virtual sessions
- 75 minutes of one-on-one coaching
- Unlimited Learner Pass for one year

Financial Foundations for Food Brands will take place on **August 12, 19, & 26**.

[Click here to register for Financial Foundations](#)

Western SARE Webinars about Grant Programs



Western SARE Program Managers will host two webinars for applicants interested in the **Farmer/Rancher grant program (August 7, 4:00 pm MT time)** or the **Professional + Producer grant program (August 8, 4:00 pm MT)**.

The webinars will focus on writing a Western SARE proposal and budget, completing the required supporting documents, and navigating SARE's online submission platform, followed by participants' questions. It is encouraged to read the Call for Proposals before attending these webinars.

Farmer/Rancher: register in advance
Professional + Producer: register in advance



NoCo Fruit & Vegetable Farm Hop

The Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Grower's Association NoCo Farm Hop will take place **Aug 17th from 8:30-3:30pm**, it will be a full day of touring farms across Northern Colorado! Starting at the Larimer County Extension office we will load the CSU Charter bus to tour Poudre Valley Community Farm's Flores Del Sol property, Folks Farm, Adam's Apple Orchard, Fagerberg onion farm, and end up back at the Extension office. On the bus between stops we will

have fun food/soil/Northern Colorado trivia with prizes! Meet other local food enthusiasts and learn about the diversity of fruit/vegetable agriculture we have in Northern Colorado!

Click here to register!



Colorado Restaurant Trends Webinar

Join Colorado Proud and the Colorado Restaurant Association, The Hispanic Restaurant Association, and Colorado Chefs to learn what trends they're seeing and what to expect in 2025!

The webinar is on **August 19, from 11am-12pm MT**.

Click here to register!

Western Colorado Research Center - Field Day



Field days are a chance for you to see what's happening at the research station and learn about all the impactful projects currently underway. This fun-filled afternoon will feature various workshops hosted by CSU Extension agents, farm tours, equipment demonstrations, vegetable tasting, fire-roasted chilies, live music and more!

Below is a schedule of events:

- 3:00pm Welcome, Parking, Sign-in (w/ raffle ticket)
- 4:00pm Field/Research Tour
- 5:30pm Door Prizes
- 6:00pm Adjourn

This is a free event, open to the public, and no registration is needed. Please reach out to our Research Associate, Max Kirks, if you have any questions or concerns max.kirks@colostate.edu



2nd Annual Colorado Food Collision

Join us for an exciting and delicious event as we bring together food entrepreneurs from across the beautiful state of Colorado. With \$10,000 in cash prizes, and over \$10,000 worth of business support services, competition will be fierce.

- When: **September 13th, 2024** from 4:00-7:30pm
- Location: Sky Lounge and Terrace (4th Floor), Hydro Building: CSU Spur 4777 National Western Dr., Denver, CO 80216

Register here!



CSU Ag Day

Mark your calendar for CSU's Ag Day on **September 7th** on campus. Ag Day is a long-standing tradition and celebration of Colorado agriculture and CSU's College of Agricultural Sciences. We are proud to host the Nutrien Ag Day BBQ in partnership with Colorado agricultural partners from around the state. This tradition honors both the institution's roots and Colorado's rich agricultural history in a celebration that appeals to all ages.

For more information and tickets, visit: <https://agsci.colostate.edu/agday/>



Crop Wild Relatives and Wild Utilized Plants Symposium

Please join this symposium to assess progress toward conserving North American crop wild relatives and wild utilized plants. We invite the unique perspectives of botanic gardens, Indigenous groups, land managers, researchers, breeders, and seed and gene banks as we discuss future conservation priorities for this important group of plants.

When: **September 17-19, 2024** at the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver, Colorado.

Interested in attending? Sign up to receive symposium notifications [here](#).



Farm Resilience Online Course (Free Before October 1st!)

Asynchronous, self-paced course now open for enrollment!

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.

Free enrollment for a limited time only - **sign up before Oct 1st!** We have grant funds to subsidize the costs of farmers and ranchers to take this asynchronous course for free if you **enroll** before October 1st (with more time to complete the course after enrollment). After that, we will offer the course on a sliding scale.

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



Regenerative Food Systems Investment Forum October 9-10, 2024

The RFSI Forum is the gathering for learning the why, how and where to invest capital in agriculture and food for financial and impact returns. Whether you have been engaged in the regenerative space for decades, are ready to dig in to this emerging opportunity, or are just a little curious, this event offers unparalleled insight and networking opportunities.

Who should attend?

- Impact investors, family offices, pension funds, fund managers, foundations, and banks
- Financial advisors and other investment services
- Entrepreneurs
- Farmers, ranchers, and producers
- Corporate food companies, emerging brands, agricultural and food service providers
- Advocates for healthy food systems

To better enable farmers to join the conversation, we are offering a limited number of Farmer Scholarships to cover registration fees to the RFSI Forum and the RFSI Bootcamp. The winners of the Farmer Scholarships will be announced August 14, 2024. Apply [here](#) for a **Farmer Scholarship**.

Click [here](#) to register.



Save the Date!
Artisan Grains Marketing Solutions
Roundtable
November 6, 2024

Growing markets for climate-resilient artisan grains requires working together — growers, processors, distributors, buyers. It can also mean building support and investment in processing, infrastructure, product development, marketing, and other things that could involve other partners—financial institutions, individual investors, economic developers, nonprofits, community groups, local governments and others.

The Marketing Solutions Roundtable is designed to help explore what is possible across Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming by exchanging ideas, learning together and cultivating new connections for creating, expanding and diversifying markets for these crops, looking at what is working across the region and elsewhere that could be implemented, adapted and innovated to expand markets locally and regionally.

The Marketing Solutions Roundtable will include:

- A keynote by Dan Hobbs, long-time cooperative development specialist, organic farmer and entrepreneur, collaborative leader and ag innovator from Montezuma County, Colorado.
- A slate of firsthand “solution stories” from our region and across the country, highlighting successful efforts involving different partners and market-building approaches.
- Breakout rooms for peer exchange and networking, deeper dives into how to implement or adapt different approaches, and opportunities to connect with others in your state.

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

8-11:30 PT/9-12:30 MT

Live via Zoom. Registration is coming soon! For more information contact Tayler Reinman at treinman@uidaho.edu.



Funding Opportunities



Composting and Food Waste Reduction Cooperative Agreements

Composting and Food Waste Reduction (CFWR) cooperative agreements assist local and municipal governments with projects that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans. Implementation activities will increase access to compost for agricultural producers, improve soil quality and encourages innovative, scalable waste management plans that reduce and divert food waste from landfills.

There are a lot of resources for potential applicants, including a [fact sheet](#), an [FAQ](#) about the program, and a [webinar](#). A list of previously funded projects can be found [here](#).

Deadline for proposals is **September 4, 2024**. Apply [here](#).



Western SARE offering grants for projects that communicate local issues related to adoption of sustainable agricultural practices

Western SARE is replacing its Research to Grassroots grants program with a newly-developed Local Education and Demonstration (LED) grants program.

The LED grant program is founded on the understanding that adopting sustainable agricultural practices entails change and managing potential financial, environmental, and social risks. The implementation of demonstration and/or education events can address local issues related to adopting sustainable agricultural practices, bolstering confidence in adoption, and reducing risks.

Successful proposals are required to integrate findings from previously-funded SARE research projects, translate those results into practical demonstrations of application, and bring those results into the field through demonstration and/or educational activities for agricultural professionals and producers.

Proposals are due **November 6, 2024**

Download the Call for Proposals



Committed to the future of rural communities.

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>.

Robert McElroy, the Rural Business & Cooperative Services Program Director with the Colorado State Office is eager to discuss this opportunity with anyone who has a potential project. His email is: robert.mcelroy@usda.gov.



News, Resources & Reading



Resources on HPAI in Colorado

HPAI, or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, has been detected in multiple dairy premises in Colorado.

The Colorado Dept of Agriculture has updated its **HPAI in Dairy Cattle website**, with the newest links to biosecurity and biocontainment information.

For more information about infections in livestock and for additional resources, please [visit the USDA website](#).

For information about HPAI in birds, check [here](#).



From Our Communities



AGRICULTURE AND
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

The 2023 Land Rental + Custom Rates Survey Results are Now Available

Colorado State University Extension annually conducts a survey of custom rates charged for various crop and livestock operations and lease arrangements in Colorado. Electronic data were collected from agricultural producers, landowners and managers, lenders, agricultural consultants, machine operators, and Extension agents. The results from more than 290 respondents were combined with anecdotal data collected throughout the year. [View the completed report, available on the ABM website.](#)

Questions about the data?

Contact the [CSU Extension Agriculture and Business Management Team](#).



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:

- sponsoring the [Mountain Meat Summit](#) in Bozeman MT and the Carolina Meat Summit in Boone, NC to help improve meat value chain connections and profitability;
- sending emerging food businesses to the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York to grow markets for their products--see our Food Corridor team postings on LinkedIn and Facebook
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-food-corridor/posts/>

- <https://www.facebook.com/thefoodcorridor>;
- **news and events** from across the region; and
- updates on the Business Builder **grant** programs (coming in Fall 2024).

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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