

CSU Extension Local Food Systems

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Welcome to the 26th edition of the CSU Extension Local Food Systems newsletter. This newsletter is meant to give you up-to-date news and information from around the state and our own CSU Extension organization. If you know of any new information that would be relevant to the rest of the group, send it for us to include in the newsletter! (This includes partners outside of CSU as well).

Please forward this newsletter to anyone with an interest in local food systems and CSU's programs in this area, and tell them they are welcome to contact us so we can add them to our mailing list. To assist our readers in finding information we may have presented in the past, you can find previous issues at: www.ext.colostate.edu/cis/localfood.html.

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COLORADO MARKETMAKER

Colorado MarketMaker is CSU Extension and the Colorado Department of Agriculture's preferred online platform to connect Colorado producers, food enterprises, wineries, markets, agritourism operations, buyers and visitors who are seeking to find those products and businesses that match their desire to do more business in our great state. We hope that you continue to find ways to highlight this resource to your peers and partners.

This month we would like to draw your attention to the Resource Center:

http://co.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/main/resource_center. You can learn how to use new functions included in Colorado MarketMaker, obtain news about this national network, and get ideas from other states. We encourage you to explore these resources as you use MarketMaker in your marketing plans.

The newest business spotlight on the Colorado MarketMaker website is Start Acre Farms, a small multi-plot, neighborhood farm in Arvada, Colorado. They grow heirloom vegetables, herbs and flowers using sustainable methods. You can find their produce at the Arvada and Golden Farmer's Markets, through their CSA subscriptions, or at their new farm stand at 84th and Alkire Streets in Arvada. Note that they participated in CSU Extension's 2011 Building Urban Farmers class. Check out their [profile on Colorado MarketMaker](#), and for more information browse their website at www.staracrefarms.com.

2012 FARMERS' MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has published the 2012 Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) for the [Farmers' Market Promotion Program \(FMPP\)](#) in the Federal Register. For 2012, \$10 million dollars in competitive grant funds are available for projects that expand direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

Grant funds may be used for the establishment of new or expansion of existing farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture programs, roadside stands and agri-tourism activities, to name a few. The minimum grant award is \$5,000 and the maximum is \$100,000. Several groups in Colorado have been successful in competing in this program including:

- In 2006, Colorado Farmers Market Association of Boulder, CO, to assist farmers markets in Colorado in implementing electronic benefits transfers (EBT) that will aid in increasing food stamp redemptions at local farmers markets, thus allowing greater consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables by lower-income consumers.
- In 2011, Be Local Northern Colorado, Ft. Collins, CO, to expand food access for consumers through development of year-round farmers market to: 1) provide curriculum and technical assistance to producers to change production plans; 2) assess value-added product lines and season extension strategies; and 3) initiate micro-grants to facilitate more professional marketing and display materials.

The deadline to apply for FMPP funds is May 21, 2012. Note that for the first time all applications must be submitted via www.grants.gov. No applications will be accepted by mail, hand delivery, fax, or e-mail. For more information visit the [National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's](#) website.

USDA COMMUNITY PROGRAMS GRANTS

USDA Community Programs provides grants to assist in developing essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. These facilities include schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings and transportation. Through its Community Programs, the Department of Agriculture is striving to ensure that such facilities are readily available to all rural communities. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low

populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. For more information, please see http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/brief_cp_grant.htm. For more information about these programs, or to file an application, contact the local [Rural Development](#) office in your area.

FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is now accepting applications for a series of [grants](#) - each one to be no more than \$100,000 - to fund programs that bring locally produced foods to school cafeterias. The money was earmarked by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 championed by First Lady Michelle Obama. Grant funds will be made available on a competitive basis, subject to availability of Federal funds. Applicants are encouraged to first submit a Letter of Intent and then apply for either a Planning Grant or an Implementation Grant.

- Planning grants are expected to range from \$20,000 - \$45,000 and represent approximately 25 percent of the total awards.
- Implementation grants are expected to range from \$65,000 - \$100,000 and represent approximately 75 percent of the total awards.

For both types of grants, the applicant must provide at least 25 percent of the costs of the grant project as the Federal share of costs for this grant cannot exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the project, as required by the HHFKA.

Important Dates and Deadlines:

April 17, 2012: Request for Applications Released

May 18, 2012: (Suggested) Letter of Intent Deadline

June 15, 2012: Proposals Due

Shortly after October 1, 2012: Awards Announced and Funds Available

Learn more at:

1. [Farm to school grant Request for Applications](#) (PDF)
2. [Farm to school grant Request for Applications](#) (Word Document)
3. Two webinars will be offered so that grant applicants can learn more about this grant opportunity. To receive additional information about webinars, please be sure to register for the [Farm to School Listserv](#). Webinars will be offered on: Tuesday, May 15th, 1:00 EST for Implementation grants and Thursday, May 17th, 1:00 EST for Planning grants.

COLORADO FARM TO MARKET

Marketing and selling food products can be one of the most challenging aspects to a farm enterprise or food entrepreneur, especially when direct sales are involved. These new market opportunities which include roadside stands, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), and cooperatives with restaurants and institutions, require expertise not only in marketing and management, but also in safe food production and handling. Selling clean, wholesome food is a primary part of creating and

keeping customer confidence. As new legislation is passed to help direct markets grow, like Colorado's Cottage Foods Bill, there may be new regulatory compliance, risk management and liability issues that food producers need to understand and address in their marketing plans.

The Colorado Farm to Market website will help you understand how to ensure the safety and quality of fresh produce and food products, while gaining satisfaction from your work and building relationships with community members.

Continue to check this site as it will soon be updated with information on the Cottage Foods Bill and other issues that may arise in processing and marketing foods <http://cofarmtomarket.com/>.

HISTORIC PARTNERSHIP HELPS COLORADO ORGANICS GO GLOBAL

The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, the office of Governor John Hickenlooper, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture issued a press release detailing a historic equivalency agreement between the US and the European Union. Beginning June 1, 2012, organic products certified in Europe or in the US may be sold as organic in either region.

Previously, growers and companies wanting to trade products on both sides of the Atlantic had to obtain separate certifications beyond the USDA National Organic Standards, which could mean a double set of fees, inspections, and paperwork. This partnership eliminates significant barriers, especially for small and medium-sized organic producers. All products meeting the terms of the equivalency agreement can be traded and labeled as certified organic produce, meat, cereal or wine.

According to the press release, "This new partnership was announced on February 15 at BioFach 2012, the world's largest trade show for organic foods held annually in Germany. CDA, in partnership with the OEDIT, led a delegation of eight Colorado companies to BioFach last month. Those companies exhibited their organic products through a shared booth space free of charge, thanks to an export-promotion grant that CDA and OEDIT received last year from the US Small Business Administration. The Colorado exhibitors reported acquiring 62 qualified international buyer leads, made \$115,000 in sales at the show, and anticipate making at least another \$750,000 in sales within the next 12 months."

For more information on Colorado's organic industry, including a list of companies that exhibited at BioFach 2012, visit www.coloradoagriculture.com/organic.

NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL CONFERENCE

The National Farm to Cafeteria Conference will take place in Vermont from August 2-5, 2012. Held every two years, this conference is an excellent way to learn from Farm to School programs across the country as well as share what is happening here in Colorado. It would be great to have a good number of Coloradans participate. See the conference website at <http://farmtocafeteriaconference.org/6/>. Registration is expected to open on May 7, and scholarship applications are being accepted with a deadline of 31 May. Also, you or your organization can be a conference sponsor. Click on the [download our information packet](#) link for sponsorship opportunities.

Your Colorado state lead to the National Farm to School Network is Jim Dyer. You may contact him at jadyer@frontier.net or 970-588-2292 with questions or ideas.

TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY OF FOOD SYSTEMS PROFESSIONALS

AND VOLUNTEERS

The Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development focuses on practice and applied research interests in programs ranging from beginning farmers, farmland protection, food hubs, and food value chains to urban agriculture and community food security.

American Farmland Trust, the Wallace Center at Winrock International, and Michigan State University's Center for Regional Food Systems (formerly the C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems) have teamed up with the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development (JAFSCD) to conduct a survey of food system development practitioners in North America.

The survey's objective is to identify the specific challenges and training needs of current and prospective food system development practitioners. This anonymous questionnaire is mostly simple checkboxes and should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

For the purposes of the survey, a "food system development practitioner" is anyone who, as a significant portion of their work, uses community development strategies in working with farmers, business people, government agency staff, local residents, or other persons or entities to create or strengthen the viability, equity, and sustainability of food systems. [Follow this link to complete the survey.](#)

RESOURCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Don't forget! Colorado State University Extension Food Systems and Agricultural Policy Resources:

- [Consumer Resources](#)
- [Producer Resources](#)
- [Linking Producers to Restaurants, Workplaces and Other Institutions](#)
- [Linking Producers to Schools - Networks, Directories and Guides](#)
- [Community Assessments and Toolkits](#)
- [Calculators and Databases](#)
- [Policy Articles, Resources and Case Studies](#)
- [Research and Other Resources](#)

To add your ideas and news, or to subscribe and unsubscribe to this newsletter, contact [Martha Sullins](#).

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Research market regulations at www.cofarmtomarket.com