

CSU Extension Local Food Systems

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THIRTY-FIFTH EDITION

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Happy New Year! Welcome to the 35th edition of the CSU Extension Local Food Systems newsletter. This newsletter is designed to give you up-to-date news and information from around the state and our own CSU Extension organization. We know many of our partners have news and events throughout 2013, so please allow us to share with our readers and send it for us to include in the newsletter!

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. The Food Systems work team for CSU Extension is committed to building a stronger network of those who work on systems-based issues. The distribution of this newsletter is one way to build that network.

To assist our readers in finding information we may have presented in the past, you can find old issues at: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/cis/localfood.html>.

CONTENTS

[Reminder: U.S. Census of Agriculture Feb. 4th Deadline](#)

[New FDA Rules Proposed Under FSMA](#)

[USDA Announces New Microloan Program](#)

[CSU Drought Summit](#)

[Governor's Forum on Colorado Agriculture](#)

[Colorado Ag Big and Small Conference](#)

[Front Range Fruit Growing Symposium](#)

[Pueblo Food System Assessment](#)

[Be Local Northern Colorado CSA Fair](#)

[3rd Annual Lavender Festival](#)

[CSU Food Systems Team Welcomes New Member](#)

[Extension Community of Practice \(COP\) - Food Systems](#)

[Resources and Additional Information](#)

REMINDER: U.S. CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE FEB. 4TH DEADLINE

Farmers and ranchers across the U.S. should have received the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) five-year agriculture census form. According to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, the census is a complete count of all U.S. farms and ranches, as well as the people who operate them, and an important instrument in helping shape U.S. agriculture policy in the years ahead. The data are often used by legislators when shaping farm policy, and agribusinesses factor it into their planning efforts. Completed forms are due to the USDA by February 4, 2013. Producers also have the option of completing their forms online. For more information about the Census, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call 1-800-4AG-STAT (1-888-424-7828).

NEW FDA RULES PROPOSED UNDER FSMA

On Friday, January 4, 2013 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released proposed food safety legislation affecting Colorado producers:

1. Proposed Standards for Produce Safety (based on Good Agricultural Practices)
2. Proposed Rule for Preventive Controls for Human Food (based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points plan implementation)

The Produce Safety Rule is FDA's first proposed regulation of the U.S. produce industry under the 2011 Food Safety Modernization Act. In order to bring summary and interpretive information to Colorado producers, CSU Extension is collaborating with other university and industry partners to provide timely information on both of these proposed rules. We will be distributing information as it becomes available. Note that both Produce Marketing Alliance (PMA) and United Fresh are both hosting webinars and releasing information regularly.

There is a 120-day open-comment period for both rules which runs until May 16, 2013. Anyone may access the complete text of the rules, as well as the docket for comments. Some FDA resources are listed below:

1. Produce Safety
 - a. Full text of proposed rule: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm247548.htm#SEC105>
 - b. Fact sheet: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm334114.htm?source=govdelivery>
 - c. To submit comments to FDA regarding this proposed rule, go to Docket Number: [FDA-2011-N-0921](http://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/2011-N-0921)
2. Preventive Controls
 - a. Current rule as a reference: http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2013-00125_PI.pdf
 - b. Fact sheet on proposed modifications: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm334115.htm>
 - c. To submit comments to FDA regarding this proposed rule, go to Docket Number [FDA-2011-N-0920](http://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/2011-N-0920)
3. FDA's PowerPoint overview of both proposed rules: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/UCM334722.ppt>
4. Additional resources on the rule-making process are available at: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm249243.htm?source=govdelivery#rulemaking>

USDA ANNOUNCES NEW MICROLOAN PROGRAM

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a new microloan program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) designed to help small and family operations, beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers secure loans under \$35,000. The new microloan program is aimed at bolstering the progress of producers through their start-up years by providing needed resources and helping to increase equity so that farmers may eventually graduate to commercial credit and expand their operations. The microloan program will also provide a less burdensome, more simplified application process in comparison to traditional farm loans.

These microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses as authorized by the FSA Operating Loan Program, including but not limited to:

- Initial start-up expenses;
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents;
- Marketing and distribution expenses;
- Family living expenses;
- Purchase of livestock, equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations;
- Minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers;
- Hoop houses to extend the growing season;
- Essential tools;
- Irrigation;
- Delivery vehicles.

The new microloans, said Vilsack, represent how USDA continues to make year-over-year gains in expanding credit opportunities for minority, socially-disadvantaged and young and beginning farmers and ranchers across the United States. Producers interested in applying for a microloan may contact their [local Farm Service Agency](#) office.

CSU DROUGHT SUMMIT

As calendar year 2012 came to a close, most of the State of Colorado was categorized in D2 – D4 drought stage. The outlook for 2013 is toward above average temperatures and average to below average precipitation. Management decisions will be critical for agricultural producers and families to maintain the resource base of their operations. Colorado State University Extension in the Golden Plains Area is planning to host a series of Drought Summits to provide critical drought management information to producers and their families.

The first in the series of seminars will feature presentations by Nolan Doesken, State Climatologist and Senior Research Associate in the Department of Atmospheric Science at CSU and John Deering, Regional Extension Specialist in Agricultural and Business Management, CSU Extension.

Ongoing Drought Summit dates, web cast origination locations, and topics are as follows:

Feb. 12 – Burlington Community Center, Burlington – Weather updates and Crop Insurance issues.

Feb. 19 – Washington County Events Center, Akron – Crop production issues, forage production with

limited irrigation, entomology and insect concerns during drought.

Feb. 26 - Yuma Community Center, Yuma– Livestock production issues including herd liquidation and tax consequences and livestock disease during drought.

March 5 – Phillips County Events Center, Holyoke – Managing wind breaks, perennials and ornamentals during drought.

March 12 – Phillips County Events Center, Holyoke - Range management issues, pasture management, invasive weeds, insects.

March 19 - Sedgwick County Courthouse Annex, Julesburg – Human resources issues, family financial management and communications.

All summit presentations are scheduled to begin at 11:00am and conclude at 1:00pm. Please RSVP by the Monday prior to each meeting to Dennis Kaan in the Washington County Extension office at 970-345-2287 if you are planning to attend the web cast origination location in person so we can get an accurate count for lunch.

To join electronically, go to the following web address: <http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/colodrought>. When you go to that URL you will find yourself at a login page. Simply click on bullet "Enter as a guest." You will then be prompted for your name. Enter your name and click "Enter Room" to enter the meeting space. You can hear the presentation but you will have to type questions in the chat box and the presenters will address them.

Each webinar session will be recorded and available for viewing at later times. Program and viewing details will be posted on the Golden Plains Area web site at <http://goldenplains.colostate.edu>.

GOVERNOR'S FORUM ON COLORADO AGRICULTURE

The critical role of innovation to the future of U.S. agriculture will be the focus of the 2013 Governor's Forum on Colorado Agriculture on February 14, 2013. The public forum, called "Cultivating Innovation: Creating Ideas for our Future," will run 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 14 at the Denver Renaissance Hotel and will include a number of timely talks and breakout sessions.

This year's theme, a renewed national commitment to innovation in agriculture, comes as farmers and ranchers are challenged to double food production by 2050 in order to feed a world population expected to top 9 billion people – while also conserving environmental resources and improving food safety. The annual forum is co-hosted by the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Colorado State University.

The forum will be preceded by a reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Feb. 13 at the Governor's Residence at Boettcher Mansion. The cost is \$100 per person, including continental breakfast and lunch; registration deadline is Feb. 4 and is available online at www.colorado.gov/ag/forum.

COLORADO AG BIG AND SMALL CONFERENCE

The mission of the Colorado Agriculture Big and Small conference is to provide ag producers, land

managers, ag professionals, input suppliers and other stakeholders with an opportunity for education, networking and community development to meet their goals of sustainability (environmental, economic and social).

When: Wednesday, February 13 – Thursday, February 14, 2013

Where: Adams County Fairgrounds (Brighton, CO), Waymire Dome Complex

The conference features sessions from farmers, agriculture professionals, and scientists for commercial crops and livestock producers engaged in direct market and/or wholesale and organic, biological, or low input production systems.

Registration costs \$45 for one day; \$70 for two days. This includes a catered lunch and refreshments. For more information see www.coloradoagriculturebigandsmall.com. Contact Adrian Card with any questions about the conference. Commercial and non-profit vendors are welcome to participate. Contact Jennifer Cook (303-659-7004 Ext. 3) for information on booths and sponsorships.

FRONT RANGE FRUIT GROWING SYMPOSIUM

This 2-day event will be held February 23-24 in Longmont, and has been designed for anyone with an interest in growing fruits along the Front Range. Beginners and experts alike will find new information delivered by engaging speakers. You will hear from local growers making a living by growing fruits, university experts conducting original research and trials, a successful, local breeder of raspberries, and more. And don't forget about the networking opportunities. The speakers and attendees at the Symposium will include many of the most talented, inspiring and successful fruit growers in our region.

The registration fee is \$45. For more information contact Joel Reich at jreich@bouldercounty.org.

PUEBLO FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

Colorado State University's Department of Ag and Resource Economics, CSU Extension and WPM Consulting will collaborate with the Pueblo City-County Health Department to conduct a food system assessment for their Health Disparities Program. The project runs from January through September, 2013, and will involve:

- Developing an understanding of the existing status of the local food system in relationship to disparate populations in Pueblo County, public health, economic development, and quality of life.
- Identifying economic development opportunities related to agricultural production resulting from gaps in the local food system and evolving market venues.
- Documenting needs and possible projects to fulfill those needs in anticipation of forthcoming state and federal programs for funding designed to strengthen local/regional food systems.
- Determining strengths and weaknesses of the various food systems in Pueblo County, including determining the feasibility of developing a food hub in Pueblo County.

For more information, contact Wendy Peters Moschetti at wendy@wpmconsulting.net.

BE LOCAL NORTHERN COLORADO CSA FAIR

Be Local Northern Colorado is holding a CSA Fair on Saturday, March 2, 2013 at the Opera Galleria, 123 North College in downtown Fort Collins, 10 AM - 2 PM.

The CSA Fair is an opportunity to explore different CSAs, to meet the producers, and to learn about how different CSAs operate. Be Local expects the Fair to be attended by approximately 20 CSAs who are offering shares to the community for 2013.

"CSA" stands for Community Supporting Agriculture. The basic CSA model -- and there are now many variations -- involves buying a share of a farm's production. The fee is paid at the beginning of the season, and the farms then delivers a box of produce weekly for 20-25 weeks. Shares may also be offered which include fruit, eggs and other products, depending on what the customer selects.

"There is a wide variety of products available through CSA shares, and you can find a program that is just right for you." said Michael Baute, Food & Farm Program Coordinator for Be Local. "

See www.BeLocalFirst.org for more information.

3RD ANNUAL LAVENDER FESTIVAL

The Lavender Association of Western Colorado (LAWC) invites you to submit original artwork for the third annual Colorado Lavender Festival which will be held in July 2013. The winning artwork will represent the Colorado lavender festival in poster, advertising and promotional pieces. The 2013 contest is open to both fine art and graphic design artists.

All entries must be received by The Blue Pig Gallery by February 23, 2013. Winning artwork will be chosen on February 28, 2013. All eligible entries will be displayed at The Blue Pig Gallery in Palisade February 23 through March 3, 2013. For more information and complete details and instructions, please visit their website at www.coloradolavender.org or contact Susan Metzger at scjmetzger@yahoo.com.

CSU FOOD SYSTEMS TEAM WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

Becky Goldbach was recently hired by the Department of Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics (DARE) at CSU as the Colorado Community and Economic Development Assistance Coordinator. In this position she will serve as a liaison with state agriculture, natural resource and community development groups. She will also coordinate economic impact and assessment programming and help the DARE faculty distill their research projects into fact sheets and other outreach-oriented materials for our Extension colleagues to share. She is willing to assist with grant writing and project management, particularly for interdisciplinary, outreach oriented projects. We are glad to have her joining the CSU Food Systems team as well!

Becky received her doctorate in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics and her Bachelors in Agricultural Business at Colorado State University. She has taught Microeconomics at CSU, and is currently teaching Agricultural Marketing. Becky has research experience working in both agriculture and natural resource subject areas with stakeholders as varied as City utilities, 4-H, the Colorado Department of Agriculture, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and the USDA

Economic Research Service.

EXTENSION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP) - FOOD SYSTEMS

Partners and stakeholders from across the US have established a new USDA online community. Here's a quick update on opportunities for involvement:

- 114 colleagues have now joined this new Community of Practice: collaboration potential abounds.
- 28 members of the CoP's National Leadership Team met in Pittsburgh in October to formulate a strategy for roll-out.
- 8 "working groups" have formed to address opportunities to plan, structure, communicate, and collaborate.

The national leadership plans to host a series of webinars beginning in February to highlight the work of CoP members. These webinars will begin with presentations from representatives of the AFRI-NIFA food security projects. An announcement will be sent about these webinars once dates are set. If you would like to get involved, join a working group. Please contact one of the co-coordinators to indicate your interest: (content boundaries, editorial review board, webinar development, Extension white paper, marketing/social media, evaluation, sustainability, defining terms). Leaders are identified in the meeting notes posted online.

HOW TO CONNECT: Log in at eXtension's "Create" platform. Use this landing page to obtain news on upcoming meetings, view administrative documents, and begin seeing how to connect (and contribute!) to this project. Here's the link: <http://create.extension.org/node/91605>.

You may also view/join their Facebook Fan or Group Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ExtensionsCommunityLocalRegionalFoodSystems>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/188628827945517/>

It would be great for more Colorado partners to share local foods work, projects, collaboration opportunities, etc. so that we might be better networked with our peers who also try to engage and positively impact communities.

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, contact [Ashley Colpaart](#).

To subscribe and unsubscribe to this newsletter, contact [Martha Sullins](#).