

CSU Extension Local Food Systems

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FORTY-THIRD EDITION

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Welcome to the 43rd 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. Feel free to send in any events and news from your organization and from partners so that we may share them with our readers through this 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, events and programs we may have presented in the past, you can find old issues at: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/cis/localfood.html>.

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FOOD HUBS AND FARM TO SCHOOL

The National Good Food Network is hosting some webinars to raise awareness about activities surrounding Farm to School across the US. Farm to school programs have been very successful at getting healthy, local, whole foods to our nation's students. Food hubs hold great promise for filling a gap some programs have found. It is difficult to add aggregation logistics on top of already-taxed school food service professionals, and food hubs hold great promise for bridging that gap. Join in for some inspiring examples of successful food hub-assisted farm to school programs.

Register [here](#) to participate in these free webinars.

PARTNERING WITH COOPERATIVE EXTENSION TO SUPPORT FARM TO SCHOOL

Another opportunity to learn more about Farm to School on Wednesday, October 9, 2013 from 11 am to 12 pm MST, with presenters: Julia Govis, Program Coordinator, University of Illinois Extension and Morgan Taggart, Program Specialist, Ohio State University Extension.

Julia Govis from University of Illinois Extension will share information about how she is leading farm to school in Illinois through the development of educational resources and curriculum to support Extension work in its diverse program areas. Morgan Taggart from Ohio State University Extension will describe how OSU Extension has prioritized involvement in farm to school and how other Extension professionals in urban and suburban areas can be involved with farm to school related activities. Morgan will also share how she is currently involved with farm to school across the Cleveland area through school gardens, local food procurement, and local food and agriculture curriculum development/ instruction.

Connect by Audio

Call the toll-free number (from your telephone, audio is not available over the computer): *[1-800-988-0278](tel:1-800-988-0278)*. When prompted, provide the operator with the participant pass code: *91613#*. Please plan to connect 5-15 minutes early to ensure you are connected on time.

Live Meeting

Click on (or copy and paste) this link to join the meeting:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/usda/join?id=SJ9CSP&role=attend>. You will be prompted to type in your name, email, and organization. Once you hit "continue" you will be joined with the meeting.

2013 NATIONAL FOOD HUB SURVEY

A nationwide survey shows that, across the country, food hubs are growing to meet the need for local food distribution infrastructure. The 2013 National Food Hub Survey was conducted by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems and the [Wallace Center at Winrock International](#).

Food hubs are businesses or organizations that manage the aggregation, distribution and marketing

of source-identified food products. The recent survey results from more than 100 food hubs demonstrate that hubs throughout the United States continue to develop as financially viable businesses providing locally produced food to restaurants, schools, grocery stores and other wholesale customers. Food hubs may also provide much needed size-appropriate infrastructure and marketing opportunities for local food produced by small and mid-sized farms and ranches.

The 2013 National Food Hub Survey represents one of the most comprehensive data sets on food hub operations to date. The survey gathered information on topics such as the financial state of food hubs, the numbers and types of farmers and ranchers that they work with, and the types of customers they serve. Key findings from the survey indicate that food hubs are:

Financially viable. Sixty-six percent of food hubs operate independently from outside funding sources. **Contributing significantly to the growth of their local economies.** The average food hub's sales in 2012 exceeded \$3.7 million.

Creating jobs. The average food hub houses 19 paid positions.

Supporting regional producers. The average food hub worked with 80 producers (i.e., farms and ranches), the majority of which are small or mid-sized.

Contributing to food access. Nearly half of all food hubs have operational commitments to equity, increasing food access, and/or community development.

A full report of the survey findings can be [found here](#).

SUPPLYING LOCAL AND REGIONAL MARKETS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR VALUE CHAINS

The Center for Regional Food Systems Livestock Work Group convened Michigan meat and livestock stakeholders on February 7, 2013, to identify challenges associated with producing, processing, marketing and buying Michigan-sourced meat and livestock within the state and regionally. [This document](#) highlights the challenges identified by stakeholders at the meeting, discusses potential opportunities suggested to improve the system, and presents a vision on which the CRFS Livestock Work Group will model its research, education and outreach activities to help strengthen partnerships across the value chain.

FIELD GUIDE TO THE NEW AMERICAN FOODSHED

The [Field Guide to the New American Foodshed](#) website is designed to help entrepreneurs and their advisors find and use relevant business development information and strategies for local and regional food markets. In addition to a [decision tree](#) framework to understand the key pieces of creating a solid business plan, the site contains several [case studies](#) of farms, ranches, and related businesses that have been successful in foodshed markets.

The USDA Risk Management Agency provided funding for the Wallace Center to create new case studies for the site, including two food hubs: [Intervale Food Hub](#), [Idaho's Bounty Co-op](#), and [Purple Sage Farms](#), a supplier of Idaho's Bounty Co-op.

USDA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

USDA issued a Notice of Funding Availability for the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI). RCDI awards grants up to \$300,000 to develop the capacity and ability of nonprofit organizations, low-income rural communities, or federally recognized tribes to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development in rural areas. Applications are due November 12, 2013. Click [here](#) for more information about program requirements.

COLORADO FRESH FOOD FINANCING FUND

Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F) finances grocery stores and other forms of healthy food retail in underserved communities throughout Colorado. This [statewide fund](#) is anticipated to leverage \$20 million in investments and to improve food access for Coloradans. [Click here](#) for a program overview, detailed program guidelines with eligibility criteria, or the [pre-application form](#).

The initiative has four goals: To improve retail access to healthy food, to provide grocery stores with financing that will promote better food access, to partner with local governments when possible, and to encourage economic development in low and moderate income neighborhoods.

The Colorado Housing and Finance Authority will administer the fund and manage the grants and loans. CO4F will be overseen by a volunteer advisory board. More information is [available here](#).

SURVEY POINTS TO POSITIVE TRENDS FOR PRODUCE INDUSTRY

Consumers want to eat more fruits and vegetables and expect restaurants and other foodservice entities to place these foods front and center on menus.

Surveys of about 4,000 consumers nationwide and 600 foodservice operators conducted by Datassential in May and June conclude that 'produce' is now a hot food item. Foodservice operators are getting the message and plan to roll out more produce on menus soon. Foodservice operators, or 'operators' for short, include away-from-home food establishments, including restaurants, universities, hospitals, lodging, catering, and others. The survey results are good news for produce growers and others in the fruit and vegetable supply chain. While produce is marketed as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle, sales of fruits and vegetables have remained flat overall until the last several years.

Read more at <http://westernfarmpress.com/vegetables/revival-underway-produce-industry>.

WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR EXCESS HARVEST? HARVESTSHARE!

Wondering what to do with your extra harvest? Visit HarvestShareDenver.org and Map Your Garden. There is a new app link on their website that allows you to Google Map your garden and what you are growing. Once you and your neighbors map your gardens, you can plan mini-HarvestShares for your block. Pick a date and bring your harvest to a neighbor's front yard. Sort the produce into bags with recipes, and guerilla drop the bags at neighbor's front doors. Please check out this wonderful app; you could be the first one in your zip code to map your garden.

LOCO FOODS FALLS TRADE SHOW: OCT 22ND (NOTE THE DATE CHANGE)

Inviting all chefs, grocers, restaurant managers, institutional buyers and other wholesale purchasers from around the Front Range:

Tuesday October 22nd
8:30am – 12noon
Mile High Station
I-25 & Colfax in Denver

Past trade shows have provided a great opportunity for buyers to get to know local food companies and their products....and for local food companies to showcase their products to a wide variety of buyers (restaurants, retailers, and other institutional buyers).

Register now at www.LoCoFoodDistribution.com/tradeshow or contact the Fort Collins office at 970-493-FOOD (3663).

IS ORGANIC AN OPTION FOR ME? WORKSHOP FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Boulder County invites both experienced and new farmers to attend this workshop which will provide an overview of the opportunities, realities and challenges of running a certified organic operation:

- Agency representatives will provide information and resources that can assist in transitioning to organic
- Industry representatives will discuss what products they seek from local producers
- Area producers who run certified organic farms will provide operational insights surrounding the transition and certification process.

Workshop details:

Saturday, November 9, 2013 from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

[Boulder County Parks and Open Space](#)

Longmont, CO, Plaza Conference Center

Cost \$45 (\$30 before October 15)

Register here: <http://organicoption.eventbrite.com/>.

COLORADO MARKETMAKER

Colorado MarketMaker (CMM) is a constantly updated database of food industry marketing and business data. Remember that you can use CMM to search among the more than 26,000 Colorado food and agritourism businesses listed. These include 119 farmers' markets, 85 wineries, and 193 agritourism businesses.

One of the newest businesses to register in CMM is **Truffnies Chocolate!**

Truffnies mission is to provide the highest quality products and services. They take great pride in their company, being a Colorado proud homegrown company, their commitment to customer service and

in the products they sell. Their online store is designed to provide customers with a safe and secure environment to browse the Truffnies catalog. See more at <http://co.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/business/883364-truffnies> or www.truffnies.com.

CONFERENCE: 7TH NATIONAL FARM TO CAFETERIA

The National Farm to Cafeteria Conference: Powering Up (<http://farmtocafeteriaconference.org/7/>) will convene a diverse group of stakeholders from across the farm to cafeteria movement—more than 1,000 food service professionals, farmers, educators, youth leaders, policy makers, state/federal agency professionals, public health professionals and others—working to source local food for institutional cafeterias and foster a culture of food and agricultural literacy across America.

Make plans to be in Austin April 15-18, 2014, for four days of inspiring field trips, workshops, speakers and networking. The conference is hosted by the National Farm to School Network.

WEBINAR: BRIDGING THE GAP: HELPING TO CONNECT GOOD FOOD WITH LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES

Join [Community Food Centres Canada](#) (Toronto, Canada) on October 9 from 10-11am MDT for a webinar on helping to connect good food with low-income communities. Featuring Gillian Flies of [The New Farm](#) and Ayal Dinner from the [West End Food Coop](#), this next event of their webinar series will discuss strategies for connecting low-income communities with fresh, local and sustainably produced food. The webinar will explore lessons learned from Community Food Centres Canada's '[Share the Health](#)' initiative which raises funds to integrate good food into programming at CFCs, and the West End Food Coop's 'Coop Cred' program which enables low-income community members to participate in the health benefits of local, organic and sustainable food sold at the cooperative.

Register Here! - <https://cfccanada.webex.com/>. For questions, please contact ross@cfccanada.ca.

SEMINAR: ESSENTIALS OF DISTILLING OILS, HYDROSOLS, AND VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS

The Lavender Association of Western Colorado, through a specialty crop grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture and support from CSU Extension, is hosting an educational seminar entitled “Essentials of Distilling: Oils, Hydrosols and Value Added Products” to be held October 26-27 in Grand Junction, Colorado.

This conference will feature:

- workshops on creating products with essential oils and hydrosols;
- live distillations using several types and sizes of distillers;
- how to distill for commercial as well as medicinal products;
- how to distill for hydrosols as the product, not the by-product of essential oil distillation; and
- the latest updates on the organization’s specialty crop grant progress

For more information, please visit their website at www.coloradolavender.org or contact Kathy

Kimbrough at kkimbro49@yahoo.com or (970) 255-1312.

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](#).