

# CSU Extension Local Food Systems



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63<sup>RD</sup> EDITION

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Welcome to the **63<sup>rd</sup> edition** of the Colorado State University Extension Local Food Systems newsletter. As a key resource connecting our CSU team with local and state partners about events, news and opportunities, we are thrilled to see the momentum and growth happening in food systems across the state. As always, 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. You can help us be better connected in three ways:

1. **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.
2. **Send us** any events and news from your organization and other partners so that we may share them with our growing readership!
3. **Consider writing** a regional update so we can feature updates from Colorado regions in each newsletter. Contact us if you want to be a regional lead!

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>.

## CONTENTS

[Colorado MarketMaker Updates](#)

[USDA NASS Gathering Data On Conservation Practices](#)

[Listening Sessions: Healthy Food Access](#)

[2015 National Survey: Organic Farmers](#)

[FM Tracks App For Farmers Market Managers](#)

[Grants: Western SARE](#)

[Contest: 2015 Agricultural Photography](#)

[Choose Colorado Produce Challenge](#)

[August: Celebrate Colorado Proud Month](#)

[August: AgriCulture Fest and Feast- Greeley](#)

[September: Thinking Big About Short Chain Food Systems](#)

[September: Colorado Proud School Meal Day](#)

[Resources and Additional Information](#)

## COLORADO MARKETMAKER UPDATES



Check out a few of Colorado MarketMaker's businesses in the spotlight this month!

- Mame's Burrito Company: Selling handcrafted burritos in the Denver and Boulder areas. They deliver twice a week...see their [business profile](#) for more information.
- Wormies Earth Farm: Selling worm castings throughout Colorado and beyond...see their [business profile](#) for more information.

MarketMaker would like to share your business success with its partner network. Email your success stories, tips for new users, hot topics and current events to [newsletter@foodmarketmaker.com](mailto:newsletter@foodmarketmaker.com).



## USDA NASS GATHERING DATA ON CONSERVATION PRACTICES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is contacting farmers and ranchers from now through August as part of a national survey of conservation practices.

During the first phase of the National Resources Inventory – [Conservation Effects Assessment Project \(CEAP\)](#), NASS will contact approximately 24,000 farmers and ranchers nationwide to determine if their operations and properties meet eligibility criteria to participate in the survey. Farmers and ranchers deemed eligible may be contacted from October 2015 through February 2016 and asked to participate in the survey, part of a two-year project. The same survey process and schedule will be followed later in 2016 with a different set of producers.

Data obtained from the project may help NRCS conservationists and partners determine the efficiency and effectiveness of current conservation techniques and help identify best practices. For more information on the project and the survey, see NASS' [CEAP information](#).

## LISTENING SESSIONS: HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

If your community is focused on decreasing food insecurity, increasing access to food assistance programs, or promoting healthy food sources for low-income residents, consider lending your voice to the Colorado Department of Human Services' 2015 listening sessions. This series of town hall meetings is intended to solicit feedback, comments and suggestions to help inform the direction of the department and priorities for the coming year.

They would appreciate having stakeholders attend these sessions and discuss the many programs that build bridges to healthier eating and enhance access to healthy foods! For communities that are focused on increasing SNAP enrollment or enrollment in other federal food assistance programs, implementing SNAP-Ed programming, initiating or expanding SNAP at farmers markets, managing healthy food incentives such as "double SNAP vouchers", or other programs with your county human services department, this is an opportunity for you to share your experiences about what is working well and what continues to be challenging to implement.

Listening sessions start the week of August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Visit the website to see the dates and location of the listening sessions and to find the one nearest you, <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-Main/CBON/1251654263177>.

## 2015 NATIONAL SURVEY: ORGANIC FARMERS

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) is kicking off its [2015 National Survey of Organic Farmers](#). This survey will ask all certified organic farmers in the U.S. to share their experiences, and let the scientific community know what areas of research are most needed to advance organic farming.

The 2015 National Survey of Organic Farmers will be emailed to every certified organic farmer with a listed email address on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's certification database which lists a total of 13,352 certified organic farmers. Farmers without a listed email address will receive a mailed postcard asking them to access the survey via OFRF's website at [www.ofrf.org](http://www.ofrf.org). Organic certification organizations nationwide have also agreed to help distribute the survey to their members. Survey results will be used to update OFRF's National Organic Research Agenda, an influential roadmap for the USDA and other research institutions, identifying the issues most critical to the success of organic farmers.

## FM TRACKS APP FOR FARMERS MARKET MANAGERS

Technology to help farmers' market managers better understand and serve customers!

FM Tracks, a new digital app designed to help farmers' markets and local healthy foods initiatives manage and evaluate federal nutrition incentive programs, was launched Monday, July 13. The new technology, created to simplify the collection and evaluation process for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive](#) (FINI) program, also gives users in-depth reporting

tools and real-time information on market performance and trends. The FINI grant program supports projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among low-income consumers participating in the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase.

The development of the FM Tracks app was supported through funding from the Ohio Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and a direct investment by the Case Western Reserve Technology Transfer Office. Case Western Reserve's Technology Transfer Office negotiated an option and evaluation agreement for the FM Tracks app with Wholesome Wave, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing affordable access of healthy, locally grown fruits and vegetables for underserved consumers. Wholesome Wave, based in Bridgeport, Conn., will use FM Tracks to provide a common system for data collection and evaluation at more than 500 farmers' markets across the United States. The goal is to have nationwide rollout of the FM Tracks app and website in early 2016.

FM Tracks users can gather data from people receiving benefits from SNAP, which provides nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. Data collected from the use of FM Tracks will be critical to inform future policies impacting the affordability and accessibility of healthy foods, consumer health and economic development for local communities and small and mid-sized farms. Find additional information [here](#).

## GRANTS: WESTERN SARE

Now available: Mini Grants!

Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE) is now offering up to \$2,000 per mini grant for educational programming and training. These grant applications will be reviewed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. There are two types of applications for professional development travel scholarships and professional development mini-grants for projects. Please visit <http://www.westernsare.org/> for more information.

Other open grant programs include:

- Professional Development (Due October 28<sup>th</sup>)
- Farmer/Rancher (Due December 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Professional + Producer (Due December 2<sup>nd</sup>)

Descriptions of each program and links to the full Call for Proposals can be found at [westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants](http://westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants). The Western SARE Administrative Council will select reviewed proposals that are innovative; diverse in content, subject matter, and geography; demonstrate tangible outcomes; and provide readily adaptable technologies and information suitable to the adoption of sustainable farming and ranching systems by producers in the western region.

## CONTEST: 2015 AGRICULTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY



The Colorado Department of Agriculture is hosting its 18<sup>th</sup> annual agricultural photography contest!

All entries must relate to Colorado agriculture in some way. Entries representing all types of agricultural enterprises, scenes and people are encouraged. Amateur and professional photographers are encouraged to enter; however, professionals may only enter agriculture-related photographs in the “Open Professional” category.

Prizes will be awarded in five subject areas:

1. Agritourism (activities, events and services related to agriculture that connect consumers with heritage, natural resource or culinary experiences),
2. Crops,
3. Livestock,
4. People, and
5. Open Professional.

Other awards and honorable mentions may be awarded as determined by judges. Of the category winners, a Grand Prize will be awarded to the photograph that best portrays the spirit of Colorado agriculture. All images must have been photographed in Colorado during the 2015 calendar year. For [official rules visit here.](#)

## CHOOSE COLORADO PRODUCE CHALLENGE

The “[Choose Colorado Produce Challenge](#)” – an online photo contest complete with local challenges and produce trivia – will launch August 1 during Colorado Proud Month, to encourage Coloradans to get reacquainted with the state’s bountiful produce.

The contest runs August 1 through August 31. Contestants will learn fun facts and trivia about Colorado produce and complete up to 16 local challenges. To enter the contest, contestants are required to upload photos of their completed challenges to the Produce Challenge contest page and use #ChooseColorado in the entry description. All approved submissions will be eligible for public vote throughout the month of August.

Two winners will be selected—one for completing the most challenges and one for acquiring the most public votes on one photo entry. Each winner will receive one \$500 Safeway gift card.

## AUGUST: CELEBRATE COLORADO PROUD MONTH



August is Colorado Proud Month and the perfect time to find a bounty of Colorado produce available at grocery stores, farmers' markets, roadside stands and u-picks. Join fellow Coloradans on a fun [Choose Colorado Tour](#) or Pop-Up Picnic in August and celebrate Colorado agriculture.

## AUGUST: AGRICULTURE FEST AND FEAST- GREELEY



Date: August 22, 2015

Location: 8th Street Plaza, Downtown Greeley

Fest: Free community event 11am

Feast: Greeley Creative District Fundraiser. Limited ticketed event starts at 6pm

### FEST

An afternoon of delicious discovery, delight & community spirit. Friends, families & neighbors will share a late summer day celebrating the good life in Weld County. Fest activities are growing & evolving every day! Experiences include:

- Foods
- Merchants
- Petting Zoo
- Tractor Show
- History Display of Weld Agriculture
- Demonstrations & Education
- Live Music
- Beer & Spirit Garden

### FEAST

An evening showcase of visual, music & culinary arts. Experience local foods crafted into delicious meals by local professional chefs, served family-style under the stars. Feast proceeds benefit the Greeley Creative District. Seating is limited. Tickets [available online](#) or by calling the DDA at 970-356-6775. Access more information [here](#).

## SEPTEMBER: THINKING BIG ABOUT SHORT CHAIN FOOD SYSTEMS

September 28-29, 2015 in Fort Collins!

Participate in Colorado State University's One Health Food Systems workshop featuring two days of creative conversation with local and national voices around the dynamics of food production, distribution, marketing, and health and consumer issues. Details to follow in August!

## SEPTEMBER: COLORADO PROUD SCHOOL MEAL DAY

Seeking chefs, farmers, and industry professionals interested in educating students about the industry, food, and/or nutrition—your expertise is needed for **Wednesday, September 30, 2015!**

Give back and get back. Help local schools statewide educate, showcase local product, and celebrate Colorado Proud School Meal Day on Wednesday, September 30. Your efforts will be recognized! Receive promotional opportunities and recognition from the Colorado Department of Agriculture. If you are interested in volunteering and making a connection with our state's youth by promoting Colorado agriculture please contact Shaina Knight at (303) 869-9176 or [Shaina.Knight@state.co.us](mailto:Shaina.Knight@state.co.us).

## 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](#).