

15 – Food and Ag Business Curriculum
Application for Food and Farm Business Curriculum Development Intern

1. **Extension mentors:** Danielle Ardrey (303.738.7977; DArdrey@arapahoegov.com), Martha Sullins (970-91-3330; Martha.sullins@colostate.edu), and Greg Perry, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics (970-491-6955; Greg.Perry@colostate.edu)
2. **Internship region:** This internship can be located at the Arapahoe County Extension Office or on campus. The focus of the internship is statewide.
3. **Proposed internship goals, scope, and objectives:** This internship focuses on researching existing food and agricultural business development curricula from around the U.S., and synthesizing where strong programs have been built and identifying where gaps might lie, based on needs identified in a 2018 survey conducted by the Food Systems PRU. The PRU surveyed over 1,000 small-scale entrepreneurs and, of those surveyed, one half identified developing a business plan as a specific need. Among cottage foods producers; however, the majority of respondents indicated that they were not confident in their ability to create a business plan. In terms of specific topics about which they would like to learn, over half of the respondents selected record keeping/financial statements/taxes, production costs and pricing, marketing and promotion, developing a business plan, and packaging and brand design. The intern will use the survey results to conduct a comprehensive curriculum review, so the PRU can ensure that its resulting curriculum meets the needs of the diverse business types and regions of Colorado.
4. **PRU activities included in the scope of this internship:** The PRU focuses on providing technical assistance for agricultural and food producers, improving existing or exploring new marketing channels, production practices, and alternative business approaches across the supply chain. This internship will directly support the PRU's business development committee's goal of outreach and education to agricultural and food producers and complement the existing Building Farmers and Ranchers program.
5. **Anticipated student learning outcomes/ opportunities for professional development:** The intern will be charged with developing a survey/interview tool that s/he will administer to fellow educators to understand the learning objectives, audience, scope and outcomes associated with food and ag business development curricula that have been developed and taught around the U.S. This will permit the student to engage with professionals at universities, small business development centers and community colleges, as well as understand the importance of leveraging existing educational resources and adapting them to the unique needs of Colorado's food business entrepreneurs.
6. **Internship support of identified stakeholder needs around Colorado:** CSU Extension Agents from across the state have trained nearly 2,500 cottage food producers, and determined that they lack access to business skill development resources. These food producers were among the 194 who responded to a statewide survey requesting additional information on their perceived needs for education and support in this area. The Food Systems PRU has been teaching a Building Farmers and Ranchers course since 2006 and is aware of the needs of beginning businesses, but also of how food product businesses differ from ag production, especially in terms of the regulatory environment and planning for distribution and business scalability.
7. **On-going connections with CSU faculty associated with this project:** Faculty supporting this project are in the Department of Ag and Resources Economics, and the College of Business.
8. **Travel funding and housing availability:** Although some travel funding is available, there is no provision for intern housing.