

6 – Wheat Supply Chains and Management

2019 Extension Internship Proposal

Research and Extension Mentors

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Region: Peaks and Plains Region—Northeastern to Eastern Colorado

Internship goals, scope and objectives:

This internship will support an ongoing project to evaluate and understand the Colorado wheat supply chain. The internship **Goal** is to collect information on factors that guide wheat producer decisions around market alternatives and how differentiated market options may influence management practices. **Scope:** The intern will use a structured interview developed by the project team to interview a minimum of 15 Colorado wheat producers, including producers using or considering two differentiated market options: organic certified production and Snowmass (hard white wheat). The **Objective** is to gain understanding of economic and social factors that lead producers to consider or not consider different market channels. In addition, management histories will be collected for a minimum of 2 fields per farm to understand how market channel may influence management practices. The results of these interviews will inform both agent-based and process-based models of the wheat supply chain being developed by the larger project.

Student learning outcomes

The intern will gain a deep understanding of wheat production systems from multiple angles, including the agronomy, social and economic factors the influence producer decisions. The student will learn basic interview skills as well as the ethical considerations, including understanding the IRB process and requirements for working with human subjects. The intern will have the opportunity to attend wheat field days and network with leadership of the Colorado Wheat Growers. By working in partnership with Dr. Trujillo, the intern will also gain a broader understanding of how extension works and will assist Dr. Trujillo in other field work as needed throughout the summer.

Ongoing collaborations

The two mentors of this project currently collaborate on field-based research evaluating grazed cover crop systems within dryland wheat production systems. This internship will expand the mentors' collaborations. The food systems project that the intern will be linked to has a broader goal to increase participation and collaboration with extension staff who work closely with wheat producers. This internship will facilitate this partnership.

Support of stakeholder needs

The need for differentiated market channels has been identified by the Colorado Wheat Growers as a priority area. For example, the need to identify more domestic markets for wheat was discussed as a priority at a recent board meeting of the Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee (T. Benninghoven, *personal communication*). This internship will provide important information for a broader research effort that has received funding from the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation to link urban food policies to rural producer communities.

Travel funds

Due to the mileage that will be required to carry out the interviews, the intern will have funds available for travel. The student will need to be based in Logan, Morgan, or Washington County for the time period of the internship. Housing assistance will not be provided.