

Colorado State University Extension's Role in Food and Ag Policy in Colorado

- 75 respondents completed this survey in April 2009
 - 61 (81%) county-based
 - 14 (19%) campus-based
- Most county-based respondents are from the Central region (21%); Northeastern (18%) and Southeastern (11%). There were no respondents with responsibilities in 3 of Colorado's 64 counties: Las Animas, Moffat and Rio Blanco.
- Campus-based respondents are affiliated with the following departments:
 - Ag & Resource Economics (3)
 - Animal Science (1)
 - Bioagricultural Sciences & Pest Management (3)
 - Family & Consumer Sciences (2)
 - Horticulture (2)
 - Livestock Marketing Information Center (1)
 - Nutrition & Food Science (1)
 - Soil & Crop Sciences (1)
- Across all respondents, 30 individuals are already involved in a local or regional food and ag policy group.
- 37 respondents said they were interested in becoming or remaining involved in food and ag policy issues at some level in the following:
 - Campus departments (Ag & Resource Economics, Animal Science, Bioagricultural Sciences & Pest Management, Family & Consumer Sciences, Horticulture, Nutrition & Food Science)
 - Regions (Northeastern and Central)
 - Counties (Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson, La Plata, Logan, Morgan, San Miguel-had the most respondents.) 47 counties are covered by county staff interested in food and ag policy issues.
- An additional 23 respondents indicated that they might be interested in becoming or remaining involved in food and ag policy issues at another time.
- The greatest numbers of those interested are associated with the following work teams (individuals may be on more than one work team):
 - Competitive & Sustainable Ag - Sustaining Co Ag (11 individuals)
 - NR & the Environment - Small Acreage Mgt (10 individuals)
 - Food Safety Education for Consumers (10 individuals)
 - NR & the Environment - Pest Mgt (8 individuals)
- Of those who are currently involved in local food systems activities, 28 would be interested in getting additional funding.

- The majority are currently involved in community organizing/outreach and providing technical assistance to producers or food processors
- The target audiences for Extension staff involved in food systems activities include:
 - Consumers (23%)
 - Local, county or state government (19%)
 - Commercial ag producers (18%)
 - Non-commercial ag producers (18%)
 - Institutions associated with the food system (13%)
 - Food system businesses beyond the farmgate (10%)
- Extension staff would prefer the following additional resources to support their work:
 - Educational resources to support local food system programming (16%)
 - In-service training on local food system issues (14%)
 - Program support from Extension specialists (12%)
 - Program support from other field-based Extension colleagues (10%)
- Diverse state and local groups with which Extension staff are currently involved (those perceived to be most effective are in bold-face):
 - Baca County Economic Development
 - **Be Local projects (Buy Fresh, Buy Local)**
 - Boulder County Food Safety Advisory Team & Boulder County Nutrition Quadrant for Healthy Communities
 - Central Colorado Foodshed Alliance
 - Colorado Cattlemen's Association
 - **Colorado Dept. of Agriculture**
 - Colorado Dry Bean Administrative Committee
 - Colorado Farm Bureau
 - Colorado Onion Association
 - Colorado Sheep and Wool Authority
 - Colorado Woolgrowers
 - **Community Ag Alliance**
 - Conservation districts
 - **CSU Extension**
 - CSU Extension Food Safety and Farmers Market
 - Deep Roots (a local food trust for Routt County)
 - Dolores County Development Corporation
 - Early Childhood Education Care Council
 - **Farm to School**
 - **Farmers markets** (Cortez Farmers' Market, Norwood Farm and Craft Market, Telluride Farmers Market)
 - **Food Policy Council**
 - FSA
 - Grand community gardens
 - Growing Good Food: Harvesting Hope
 - Healthy Kids
 - **Healthy Lifestyles La Plata**

- **HomeGrownColorado**
 - Institute for Livestock and the Environment
 - Learning Landscapes Alliance
 - LMIC Multi-State
 - Local Beef Group
 - **Local CSAs**
 - **Local food coops**
 - **Local Living Economy**
 - Lone Cone Cattlewomen
 - **Master Gardeners**
 - **New Community Coalition**
 - Northern Colorado Food Policy group
 - **Northwest Colorado Products**
 - NRCS
 - Pathways 2 Market
 - **Pikes Peak Urban Gardens**
 - **Pueblo County Stockmen's Association**
 - San Juan Bioenergy
 - Share Our Strength -- Operation Frontline
 - **Slow Food**
 - Southwest Colorado Organic Growers Club
 - **Southwest Marketing Network**
 - Springfield Chamber of Commerce
 - Sustainability Alliance of SW Colorado
 - Sustainable Living: Loveland
 - The Harvest Center
 - **Valley Organic Growers Association**
- Extension staffs' local food systems activities:
 1. Direct education:
 - a. To consumers:
 - Vegetable gardening & food preservation
 - Colorado Master Gardener training
 - Home-scale food production class in fall
 - Local Food Growing Classes
 - Community meetings to determine "What's in your Foodshed?"
 - Cooking demonstrations at farmers markets
 - Workshops and talks on all aspects home-scale greenhouse (and other modified environments) production of fruits and vegetables (herbs, etc)
 - Homegrown festival - large festival celebrating backyard fruits and vegetable
 - b. To producers:
 - Use of greenhouses and other methods to extend growing season, safe food
 - Growing Farmers Program
 - High altitude gardening techniques

- Workshops and talks on all aspects of small-scale production of fruits and vegetables
- Educating producers and legislators about noxious and invasive weed species

2. Other technical assistance:

a. To consumers:

- Developing urban farms and community gardens
- Helping residents with home food production
- Improving school lunch programs
- Articles in the local paper
- Providing better fresh foods to underserved communities

b. To producers:

- Certified Naturally Grown inspections of farms and ranches
- Assisting CSAs
- Starting a mobile livestock harvest facility
- Agri-Tourism development to support local agriculture

3. Connecting consumers & producers:

- Networking meetings to connect local restaurants, consumers and ranchers
- Farmer-chef connection events
- Farm to School
- Getting informational brochure out to consumers and organizing the producers of local ag products
- Tour de farms - bike tour of urban and rural agriculture
- Information booth at Farmer's Market
- Local marketing options especially related to natural livestock production
- Facilitated formation of Norwood Farm Market

- 89% of those interested in local food systems activities are willing to meet with a group of Extension staff/faculty (61% of those prefer a conference call to an in-person meeting).

Tables with additional survey results

Region for county-based staff:

	Frequency	Percent
Central	13	21.3
Northeastern	11	18.0
Southeastern	11	18.0
Southwestern	6	9.8
Northwestern	6	9.8
Northern Mountains	5	8.2
North Central	4	6.6
South Central	4	6.6
Statewide	1	1.6
Total	61	100.0

Extension staff/faculty by work team:

Rank	Work Team	Number of respondents	Num interested in food systems
1	Competitive & Sustainable Ag Sustaining Co Ag	16	11
1	NR & the Environment Environmental Hort	16	7
2	NR & the Environment Small Acreage Mgt	15	10
3	4-H & Youth Development-Project & Curriculum	14	5
4	Food Safety Education for Consumers	13	10
5	Competitive & Sustainable Ag Beef	11	6
5	NR & the Environment Pest Mgt	11	8
6	Family Economic Stability	10	5
6	Food Safety Education Information for Farmer's Market Vendors	10	3
6	4-H & Youth Development K-12	10	2
7	Competitive & Sustainable Ag Systems ag & Business Mgt	8	5
7	Sustainable Community Development	8	6
8	4-H & Youth Development Leadership & Volunteer Development	7	-
8	NR & the Environment Water Resources Mgt	7	3

Rank	Work Team	Number of respondents	Num interested in food systems
9	Food Safety Education Training for Workers in Retail Food Establishments	5	3
9	Health Promotion/Disease Prevention-Nutrition & Wellness	5	4
10	Growing Strong Colorado Families	4	3
10	Health Promotion Disease Prevention-Diabetes	4	1
10	Competitive & Sustainable Ag Systems Small Ruminant Systems	4	3
11	Health Promotion/Disease Prevention-Nutrition Education	3	3
11	Competitive & Sustainable Ag Wheat Improvement	3	1
12	Colorado Healthy Homes	2	2
12	Food Safety Education for High risk Audiences	2	-
13	4-H & Youth Development Dare to be You	1	-
13	Master Gardener's program	1	-
13	Clean Energy Strategic Initiative Team--Solar	1	-
13	Nutrition and Cooking	1	-
13	4-H Meat Quality Assurance Training	1	-
13	Livestock and Marketing Information Center Multi-State	1	-

Those interested in becoming or remaining involved in food and ag policy issues at some level

	Frequency	Percent of all staff	County staff	Campus staff
Yes	37	56.1	27	10
Maybe at a later time	23	34.8	20	3
No	6	9.1	5	1
Total	66	100.0	52	14

County staff's interest in food and ag policy work by Colorado region

	Frequency	Percent
Northeastern	5	18.5
Central	5	18.5
Northern Mtns	4	14.8
Southeastern	4	14.8
North Central	3	11.1
Southwestern	3	11.1
Northwestern	3	11.1
Total	27	100.0

Interest level:

	Frequency	Percent of all staff	County staff	Campus staff
County	27	41%	22	5
Regional	24	36%	18	6
State	15	23%	7	8
	66	100%	47	19

Extension staff food systems activities:

	Total	County	Campus
Community organizing/outreach	21	20	1
Technical assistance to producers or food processors	18	13	5
Research	12	8	4
Coordination	8	8	0
Policy	6	3	3
Total	65	52	13

Target for Extension staff food systems activities:

	Total	County	Campus
Consumers	22	18	4
Local, county or state government	18	14	4
Commercial ag producers	17	14	3
Non-commercial ag producers	17	12	5
Institutions associated with the food system	13	11	2
Food system businesses beyond the farmgate	10	7	3
Total	97	76	21

Additional resources desired:

Rank	Additional resources desired	Number	Percentage
1	Educational resources to support local food system programming	38	16%
2	In-service training on local food system issues	33	14%
3	Program support from Extension specialists	29	12%
4	Program support form other field-based Extension colleagues	24	10%
5	Documenting outcomes of local food system programming	22	9%
6	Knowledge to carry out programming on the food system	21	9%
7	Organizational incentive/rewards to do programming in local food systems	19	8%
8	Skills to facilitate local food system dialogue	17	7%
8	Personal interest in food system issues/activities	17	7%
9	Skills to organize community coalitions	14	6%
10	Other	4	2%

Note: 2 individuals indicated they were not interested in local food systems work.

Most effective organizations in Colorado communities:

- Be Local Northern Colorado COPA
- Buy Fresh, Buy Local group
- Campus-based staff and faculty
- CFM, SWCOGC, SWMN, Buy Local Campaign, and of course CSU-E.
- Chamber of Commerce sponsors a Farmer's Market. A regional non-profit sponsors a community garden. A local non-profit is attempting to start a local community garden.
- Colorado Dept. of Agriculture, all ag commodity groups, Whole Foods, King Soopers, Safeway
- Cooperative Extension Local Farmers and Ranchers
- CSU Extension, Western State College, Local Farmers Market, Office of Resource Efficiency (ORE).
- Extension Healthy, Local Foods Farm to School
- Extension, local food promotion is just beginning to occur in this area.
- Extension, local producer organizations, conservation districts
- Farmers markets, livestock and small grain assn.
- Farmers markets, CSA, Extension, Eat Locally
- Food Banks through the churches, Hugo Development Partnership, a group called Resources Unlimited (includes several agencies that work together in the county)
- Healthy Lifestyles La Plata, CSU Extension, Farm to School
- Local farmers markets
- Local Living Economy HomeGrownColorado

- New Community Coalition and Farm Markets
- Pikes Peak Urban Gardens (non-profit for promoting local food production, urban farms, community gardens).
- Pueblo County Stockman's, Farmers Marketer's
- Routt County Extension Northwest Colorado Products Community Agriculture Alliance
- Slow Foods, CSU Extension, Farmers Markets,
- The Harvest Center, Farmers Market
- We interface with local food co-ops and CSAs in Loveland. We also gain information from projects, such as Kip Nash's in Boulder.