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John T. Salazar, Commissioner
Ron P. Carleton, Deputy Commissioner



John Hickenlooper
Governor

October 15, 2013

Dear Governor Hickenlooper, Commissioner Salazar, and members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC), it is an honor to present to you preliminary findings on the Council's activities, as required by SB 13-174. The final report will be issued in late January, 2014.

The past year has been a transitional one for COFSAC. The General Assembly conducted a sunset review, and agreed to continue the Council until 2018. As part of this extension, two new seats were added to COFSAC: an academic representative and a representative from the Colorado State University Extension Program. Both representatives will add immeasurably to the work of the Council.

The Council also conducted a thorough review of its policy and procedures to help inform its work and direction for the coming years. To provide more researched and targeted recommendations to the General Assembly and the Executive Branch, COFSAC will endeavor to issue at least two policy briefs annually on key issues related to food and agriculture in Colorado. It is hoped that these products will prove useful to policymakers in understanding Colorado's food system.

COSFAC continues to believe that one of the most critical roles it can fulfill is to help connect local food system coalitions and organizations that are located throughout the state. To that end, COFSAC continued to reach out to these food groups and held various conference calls and discussions on food issues. A food systems coalition summit is being planned for February 2014 to exchange ideas and strengthen these connections.

On behalf of all the Council members, we look forward to working closely with all of you on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron P. Carleton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "C".

Ron P. Carleton
Chair, Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council
Deputy Commissioner, Colorado Department of Agriculture



**COLORADO FOOD SYSTEMS
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Annual Report to the Governor,
Commissioner of Agriculture, and the
General Assembly**

October 15, 2013

Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council

www.cofoodsystmscouncil.org

Council Members

Jane Brand, R.D., S.N.S., School Nutrition Director, Colorado Department of Education

Ron Carleton, Deputy Commissioner, Colorado Department of Agriculture

Mary Lou Chapman, President & CEO, Rocky Mountain Food Industry Association

Patricia Daniluk, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Services and WIC Director, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Steve Ela, M.S., Producer, Ela Family Farms/Silver Spruce Partners, LLC

Karen Falbo, C.N., Nutrition Program Manager, Natural Grocers by Vitamin Cottage

Summer Gathercole, Colorado State Director, Share Our Strength

Trudy Kareus, Colorado State Director, USDA Rural Development

Pat Kendall, Ph.D., R.D., Associate Dean for Research, College of Applied Human Sciences, Colorado State University

Julie Kerksick, Director, Office of Economic Security, Colorado Department of Human Services

Jill Litt, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Health, Colorado School of Public Health; Assistant Professor, Environmental Studies, CU-Boulder

Barbara Marty, Producer

Louis Swanson, Ph.D., Vice President for Engagement and Director of Extension, Colorado State University

Linda Yoder, Producer

Staff Members

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Staff is funded and managed by LiveWell Colorado, www.livewellcolorado.org.

Per the requirements of Senate Bill 13-174, this report describes the progress made by the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC) for Governor John Hickenlooper and his office, Commissioner of Agriculture John Salazar, and the State of Colorado's General Assembly.

The COFSAC wishes to thank the sponsors and co-sponsors of Senate Bill 13-174: Concerning the Continuation of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council, which was signed into law in 2013. These include:

Sponsors:

- Senator Gail Schwartz and Representative Steve Lebsack

Co-Sponsors:

- Senator Angela Giron, Senator Matt Jones, Senator Morgan Carroll, Senator Lucia Guzman, Senator Rollie Heath, Senator John Kefalas, Senator Lois Tochtrop, Senator Nancy Todd
- Representative Randy Fischer, Representative Joann Ginal, Representative Dickey Lee Hullinghorst, Representative Jeanne Labuda, Representative Diane Mitsch Bush, Representative Su Ryden, Representative Sue Schafer, Representative Jonathan Singer, Representative Ed Vigil

Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council Bill Signing 2013



Pictured: Representative Lebsack; Mary Lou Chapman, Rocky Mountain Food Industry Association; Lisa Walvoord, VP of Policy, LiveWell Colorado; Ron Carleton, Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture; Sara Odendahl, Aponte & Busam; Governor Hickenlooper.

History

The Council was formed in 2010 with the signing of Senate Bill 10-106: Creation of Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council. Senate Bill 13-174: Concerning the Continuation of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council was signed into law in 2013 to support the continuation of the COFSAC until September 1st 2018 when the next sunset review will occur.

Mission and Purpose

COFSAC has refined its initial charge to focus on the core of its mission. The Council's charge is "to advance recommendations that strengthen healthy food access for all Coloradans through Colorado agriculture and local food systems and economies."

The purpose, as outlined in Senate Bill 10-106 and extended in the sunset review process through Senate Bill 13-174 is to:

- Purpose A.** Identify and use existing studies of the food system and examples of best practices, whenever possible;
- Purpose B.** Work with other task forces, committees, or organizations that are pursuing initiatives or studies similar to the purposes and duties outlined in this article and develop relationships with other task forces, committees, or organizations to collaborate on similar efforts;
- Purpose C.** Develop local food recommendations that promote the building of robust, resilient, and long-term local food economies;
- Purpose D.** Develop recommendations regarding hunger and food access;
- Purpose E.** Collaborate with, serve as a resource to, and receive input from local and regional food policy councils in the state;
- Purpose F.** Collaborate with the department of agriculture in promoting the marketing program known as "Colorado Proud", which helps consumers, restaurants, and retailers to identify and purchase Colorado food and agricultural products; and
- Purpose G.** Develop recommendations for actions that state and local governments, businesses, agriculturists, and consumers can take to build robust, resilient, and long-term local food economies.

Expanded COFSAC Membership

In late 2012 and early 2013, the COFSAC replaced three retiring members and added two new seats through its sunset review legislation process. The COFSAC now consists of 15 members representing diverse geographies and sectors, the public and private sector, and academic institutions. New members include:

Jill Litt, Ph.D is an Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Health, Colorado School of Public Health and an Assistant Professor in Environmental Studies,

University of Colorado at Boulder. She was appointed in July 2013 as an Academic Representative for a 3-year term.

Louis Swanson, Ph.D., is the Vice President for Engagement and Director of Extension at Colorado State University. He was appointed to COFSAC in his position as the Director of the Colorado State University Extension Program Representative in July 2013 for a 3-year term.

Summer Gathercole is the Colorado State Director for Share Our Strength. She was appointed in July 2013 as the Anti-hunger and Food Assistance Representative for a 3-year term.

Trudy Kareus is the Colorado State Director for USDA Rural Development. She was appointed in July 2013 as the Representative from Rural Community & Regional Development or Community & Economic Development for a 3-year term.

Steve Ela, M.S., is a producer and owner at Ela Family Farms/Silver Spruce Partners, LLC and was appointed in November 2012 as an Agricultural Production Representative for a 3-year term.

Partner Meetings & Collaboration

Since its last annual report, the COFSAC has continued to meet quarterly and has focused on outreach and engagement of partner organizations in preparation for the mandatory sunset review of the COFSAC as an advisory committee.

- During 2013, the full council held meetings in January, April and July throughout metro Denver. A fourth meeting is scheduled for late October.
- In late 2012, COFSAC members and staff met with staff from LiveWell Colorado and administrators and faculty from within the College of Agricultural Sciences, the College of Health & Human Sciences, and the Community Partnerships Office at Colorado State University to discuss the COFSAC, how it can continue to partner with CSU, and how it can best use research, students, and Extension services to inform its recommendations.
- COFSAC members, staff, and LiveWell Colorado staff held several meetings throughout late 2012 and early 2013 to discuss the sunset review, gauge support for the continuation bill, share updates about the COFSAC, and capture the interests of partner organizations. These meetings included Western Dairy Association, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, Colorado Farm Bureau, Rocky Mountain Farmers' Union, Colorado State University Extension, Colorado Farm to School Task Force, and Hunger Free Colorado.
- LiveWell Colorado staff and COFSAC members also met with legislators throughout the state to share updates about COFSAC and gauge support for the continuation bill.
- Several partner organizations provided testimony in support of the COFSAC continuation bill in 2013. These included:

- LiveWell Chaffee County
- A farmer, a beekeeper, and staff from the San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition
- Colorado Farmers Market Association
- Colorado Farm Bureau
- Colorado Department of Agriculture
- CanDo Coalition, Fort Collins
- Rocky Mountain Food Industry Association
- LiveWell Colorado
- Additionally, LiveWell community coordinators spoke in support of the bill to their legislators at LiveWell Colorado's Day at the Capitol 2013 and LiveWell Colorado activated their grassroots advocacy network to submit letters and make phone calls in support of the continuation bill.

Additional updates on COFSAC activities and partnerships can be found in their last report, submitted on January 31st 2013 and available here: <http://www.cofoodscouncil.org/january-31-2013.html>.

Targeted Activities of the Council

Local Food Systems Coalitions Networking & Engagement

Building upon the COFSAC's report of findings on the status, interests, challenges, and successes of local food systems coalitions across the state (available here: <http://www.cofoodscouncil.org/regional-and-local-food-systems-coalitions.html>), the COFSAC initiated several activities in 2013 in partnership with LiveWell Colorado, including:

- LiveWell Colorado has hosted seven monthly conference calls (through October) of local food systems coalitions and COFSAC members in 2013. COFSAC staff facilitates these calls. Approximately 10-15 individuals representing 8-12 different coalitions participate each month. The calls include guest presenters, regular updates on successes and challenges from coalitions, question and answer periods, and discussion of opportunities to enhance networking amongst groups.
- These local coalitions, the COFSAC, and LiveWell Colorado are collaboratively planning for a February 2014 food system coalition summit to bring together members of the 20+ existing local food systems coalitions from around the state. Through two days of dialogue, discussion and debate, this summit will help elevate shared issues and lay the foundation for a collective state-wide voice focused on addressing the local, state and federal issues that challenge or promote access to healthy foods across the state. It will culminate in the adoption of a charter for a Colorado food coalition network that is created by, committed to, and carried out by as many coalitions as possible.
- The COFSAC has developed mechanisms to formally collect feedback from local and regional coalitions and other groups on an on-going basis. Many groups have identified

a need to know when and how to communicate with the COFSAC. Additionally, the COFSAC will benefit from consistent communication from groups across the state. The COFSAC's submittal form is available here:

<http://www.cofoodscouncil.org/cofsac-issue-submission-form.html>.

Policy Brief Development

The COFSAC revised its policies and procedures to focus on the development of targeted policy briefs. Specifically, the COFSAC outlined the following procedures:

As the primary focus of its advisory activities throughout the year, the Council commits to seeking, requesting, reviewing, and advancing food systems issues that warrant a more in-depth report than provided through its annual report of recommendations. The Council commits to the following in order to provide substantive guidance and advice to relevant state agencies throughout the year:

- At least two (2) written briefings per year to relevant legislative committees and state agencies.
 - Briefings will examine targeted issues that address the Council charge.
 - Briefings will follow a standard format that includes: issue background; status in Colorado; role of state government; state policy or regulatory barriers; potential opportunities for the state; and, stories from Colorado that illustrate the key issue.
- Necessary meetings, discussions, or forums to advance the briefings and engage relevant policy makers.

The COFSAC adopted these procedures in July 2013. The COFSAC then developed two policy briefs for the year. These two briefs will be disseminated to the Governor's Office and members of both the House and Senate agriculture and health committees in October 2013. Both briefs focus on opportunities to grow Colorado's agricultural economy while increasing access to healthy foods for all residents. The two are:

- Enhancing direct market technical assistance in Colorado.
- Expanding tools, training, outreach, and education to expand SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits at farmers markets in Colorado.

The COFSAC developed these two briefs in partnership with several other organizations. The EBT at Farmers Market Coalition (which was initiated by Share Our Strength and the Colorado Farmers Market Association as result of COFSAC activities) developed and reviewed the SNAP at farmers markets policy brief with COFSAC staff. Multiple CSU administrators and faculty as well as CSU Extension staff worked with COFSAC members to develop and refine the direct market technical assistance brief.

Next Steps

For the remainder of 2013, the COFSAC will:

- Disseminate the two policy briefs to the Governor's Office and legislators through group presentations and one-on-one meetings.
- Disseminate and engage local coalitions around the new COFSAC feedback form.
- Continue planning for a February 2014 food systems coalition summit.
- Continue participation in monthly networking calls with local food systems coalitions.