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



John Hickenlooper
Governor

January 31, 2014

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 our January, 2014 report, as required by SB 13-174.

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.

COFSAC 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 dark ink that reads "Ron P. Carleton".

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**

JANUARY 31ST, 2014

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

Todd Jorgensen, Deputy Director, Office of Economic Security, Colorado Department of Human Services

Trudy Kareus, Colorado State Director, USDA Rural Development

Pat Kendall, Ph.D., R.D., Professor Emeritus, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Colorado State University

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

Victoria Treski, Executive Director, Colorado Farmers Market Association

Linda Yoder, Producer

STAFF MEMBERS

Wendy Peters Moschetti, Principal, WPM Consulting LLC

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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.

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. This continuation bill also added two new seats to the COFSAC, an academic seat and a seat for CSU Extension. Please refer to the October 2013 COFSAC report for details on those new members.

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.

NEW COFSAC MEMBERS

Todd Jorgensen is the Deputy Director in the Office of Economic Security at the Colorado Department of Human Services. He began participating in the COFSAC in January 2014 on behalf of Commissioner Bicha, as a replacement for retiring member Julie Kerksick.

Victoria Treski is the Executive Director of the Colorado Farmers Market Association. She was appointed in December 2013 as a Food Wholesaler/Retailer Representative for a 3-year term.

TARGETED ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL

A. 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.cofoodsystemscouncil.org/regional-and-local-food-systems-coalitions.html>), the COFSAC initiated several activities in 2013 in partnership with LiveWell Colorado, including:

- Chair Ron Carleton traveled to visit members of the Valley Food Partnership in Montrose and the San Luis Valley Food Coalition in Alamosa on behalf of the COFSAC to listen to and discuss opportunities, challenges, and innovations to advance local food systems.
- Member Linda Yoder traveled to Colorado Springs to attend their Local Food Week events on behalf of the COFSAC, including a lunch and discussion with an author who writes about American food systems.
- Member Jill Litt and staff Wendy Peters Moschetti are participating as advisors to the national Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network's (NOPREN) Food Policy Council Working Group and have attended monthly meetings to inform its work.
- The COFSAC has developed an issue submittal form (available here: <http://www.cofoodsystemscouncil.org/cofsac-issue-submission-form.html>) for local coalitions and other partners to submit issues for COFSAC review and action. The COFSAC has received one completed form. Discussion on the proposed issue is scheduled for the May 2014 quarterly COFSAC meeting.
- LiveWell Colorado continued to host monthly conference calls of local food systems coalitions and COFSAC members throughout 2013 and into 2014. COFSAC staff facilitates these calls. 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.

- As mentioned in the October COFSAC report, these local coalitions, the COFSAC, and LiveWell Colorado are collaboratively planning for a food system coalition summit to bring together members of the 20+ existing local food systems coalitions from around the state. The summit will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Denver on February 11th & 12th with an evening networking reception.
 - This convening will establish the foundation for creating a statewide coalition focused on increasing equitable access to quality, healthy foods.
 - This convening is intended to help foster new leaders, build relationships, and identify common issues across local coalitions in order to improve the efficacy of local efforts in the immediate term and set the foundation for developing a statewide coalition in the longer term.
 - It will close with agreement on next steps, which are likely to include the formation of an advisory committee to guide the creation of the coalition and a plan for on-going communications and engagement of participants.
 - Expected attendance is 80 individuals from local food system coalitions from across the state and all members of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC).
 - With travel support, the summit will bring together diverse members from coalitions from all corners of the state. Travel sponsors include The Colorado Health Foundation and other contributing partners, Natural Grocers by Vitamin Cottage and Whole Foods Markets.
 - Please see the attached proposed agenda in Attachment A.

B. “Advancing Food Systems Issues In Colorado” Briefs

The COFSAC developed two policy briefs in 2013. Both briefs focus on opportunities to grow Colorado’s agricultural economy while increasing access to healthy foods for all residents.

Advancing Food Systems Issues in Colorado: Enhancing Direct Market Technical Assistance

Key findings presented in detail in the brief include:

Direct markets are growing – and increasingly contributing to Colorado’s economy:

- There was a 10% increase in farmers markets nationwide from 2011 to 2012.¹

¹ USDA Agriculture Marketing Service Farmers Markets and Local Food Marketing. 2013. National Count of Farmers Market Directory Listing Graph: 1994-2013 .

- Sales growth in direct marketing in the Rocky Mt Region is almost twice the national average and is outpacing the growth of all farm revenues by a factor of five² in analysis of data from an earlier period (2002-07).
- Colorado saw 30% direct market sales growth between 2002 and 2007, and Colorado reported relatively high direct market revenues per farm compared to most other Western states³.
- New farm to school linkages could mean up to 30% more indirect economic activity⁴ for businesses and households within the state of Colorado.
- \$2.2 billion of the state's tourism activity is likely driven by experiences tied to agriculture⁵, is one of the most dynamic elements of the sector, and complements other tourism assets (outdoor recreation, arts and cultural districts) well.

Key recommendations included in detail in the brief include:

- Support a Vegetable Crop CSU Extension state-level position to complement the Research-Teaching position supported by the state's Specialty Crop Grant.
- Create and support an FTE position within CSUE to provide on-farm food safety training and outreach programming to support new supply chain models across the state.
- Expand the Colorado Building Farmers Program to additional regions with a potential extension of the current 8-week short-course through CSU OnlinePlus.
- Conduct a state-wide inventory of existing assets and infrastructure that support or could support production, processing, and sales of Colorado-grown products.

Advancing Food Systems Issues in Colorado: Increasing SNAP at Farmers Markets

Key findings presented in detail in the brief include:

SNAP redemption is growing at Colorado's direct markets:

- Approximately 22 markets first became equipped with EBT technology in Colorado in 2007. In 2012, 53 markets or individual producers were SNAP-certified. There are currently approximately 70 CFMA-member markets overall.

² USDA-AMS Report from 2013 Food Distribution Research Society Meeting

³ Thilmany et al. 2012. Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing in the Western US: Market Trends and Linkages with Food System Issues. www.waeaonline.org/UserFiles/file/WEFFall2012v11n2.pdf

⁴ Gunter A, and Thilmany D, Economic implications of farm to school for a rural Colorado community wrdc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9857945.pdf

⁵ Thilmany D. and Sullins M. and Ansteth A. 2006. The 2006 Economic Contribution of Agritourism to Colorado: Estimates from a Survey of Colorado Tourists. <http://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/DARE/EDR/EDR07-24.pdf>.

- Of participating markets, at least 5 also run an incentive program that matches SNAP benefits redeemed for fresh produce⁶. Nationwide, 526 markets offered such programs in 2012⁷.
- During the 2012 season, \$186,691 in SNAP benefits were redeemed at Colorado farmers markets⁸.

SNAP redemption is good for the economy – and for consumers:

- According to the USDA, every \$5 in new SNAP benefits generates as much as \$9 of economic activity.⁹
- SNAP sales at farmers markets nationwide topped \$11.7 million between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011.¹⁰
- 81% of SNAP customers at farmers markets offering incentives through one national program indicated that the amount of fruits and vegetables they purchase and consume increased because of SNAP incentives.¹¹
- Low-income mothers at farmers markets indicated their primary reason for attending was to teach their kids about healthy eating¹².

Key recommendations included in detail in the brief include:

- Commit state support for staff within both CDHS and CFMA to continue to provide technical assistance to producers, farmers markets, and county human services
- Provide support for organizations offering SNAP Outreach and SNAP Education to include farmers markets and producers as resources for SNAP clientele.
- Support an application process specifically designed for agricultural retailers of SNAP.
- Create state-wide incentive programs (e.g., double-voucher programs) to enhance the value of EBT benefits used to purchase fresh produce.

These briefs were informed by COFSAC's extensive outreach and listening sessions around the state over the past two years. The COFSAC developed these two briefs in partnership with several other organizations. The EBT at the Farmers Market Coalition (which was initiated by Share Our Strength and the Colorado Farmers Market Association as a result of COFSAC activities) developed and reviewed the SNAP at farmers markets policy brief

⁶ Colorado Farmers Market Association

⁷ *Healthy Food Incentives Cluster Evaluation: 2011 Final Report*, Fair Food Network, 2011.

⁸ Farmers Market Coalition, 2013

⁹ Hanson, Kenneth, *The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier (FANIOM) Model and Stimulus Effects of SNAP*, USDA Economic Research Service, 2010.

¹⁰ *Healthy Food Incentives Cluster Evaluation: 2011 Final Report*, Fair Food Network, 2011.

¹¹ *Healthy Food Incentives Cluster Evaluation: 2011 Final Report*, Fair Food Network, 2011.

¹² Colorado EBT at Farmers Markets Coalition Evaluation of EBT Use, 2011

with COFSAC staff. Multiple CSU administrators and faculty as well as CSU Extension staff worked with COFSAC members to frame, develop and refine the direct market technical assistance brief.

The COFSAC revised its policies and procedures in 2013 to focus on the development of such targeted policy briefs throughout the year. The current issue briefs are available at the bottom of the COFSAC homepage: <http://www.cofoodsystemscouncil.org>.

C. Issue Brief Dissemination & Engagement

In order to build awareness around the “advancing food systems issues” briefs and to highlight immediate opportunities for the state of Colorado, COFSAC members will work throughout 2014 to actively engage appropriate legislators and relevant state agencies as well as the Governor’s Office on the issues and recommendations put forth in the issue briefs. Additional engagement activities include:

- December 2013 Presentation to CDHS Executive Committee
- Report to the two legislative AG committees during the 2014 session by Chair Ron Carleton
- Presentations at March 2014 Colorado Farmers Market Association annual conference
- December 2013 state-wide webinar:

Three members of the COFSAC also presented on a December 12th, 2013 webinar hosted by LiveWell Colorado, “Advancing Colorado’s Food System: Issue Briefs from the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council”.

Members presented the two COFSAC issue briefs, Enhancing Direct Market Technical Assistance and Increasing SNAP Participation at Farmers Markets, and discussed ways in which the recommendations from these briefs are being promoted in state agencies and offices. Eighty-one individuals registered for this webinar and 43 attended. This webinar is also archived by LiveWell Colorado at <http://livewellcolorado.org/livewells-commitment/research-and-publications/webinars>, allowing for most webinars to receive dozens of additional views after they are posted.

NEXT STEPS

Throughout 2014, the COFSAC will:

- Disseminate the two policy briefs to the Governor’s Office and legislators through group presentations and one-on-one meetings.
- Conduct outreach around the briefs to the members and stakeholders they represent.
- Co-host the February 2014 food systems coalition summit and continue participation in monthly networking calls with local food systems coalitions.

- Following the summit, participate in committee work to formalize a network of food systems coalitions, establish communication plans for the network, and identify common issues for the network's efforts.
- Convene a subcommittee to think broadly about the work of the COFSAC and the ways in which it can best communicate its efforts with stakeholders across Colorado and beyond. This subcommittee will include community stakeholders to ensure that the needs and perspectives of Colorado's food policy stakeholders are represented.
- Continue to seek COFSAC issue form submissions from local coalitions and other partners and develop two new issues briefs for 2014.