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February 2019 Colorado Proud Newsletter

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Colorado Proud News & Events

Colorado Proud Recipe of the Month

Food and Ag Entrepreneurs Workshop. The Colorado Department of Agriculture is organizing a workshop to help food and agriculture businesses get started.

Colorado Food and Agriculture Entrepreneurs
February 13, 2019
8am-4pm
CoBank Center for Agricultural Education
4492 East County Road 56
Fort Collins, CO 80524

This one-day workshop is designed for start-up businesses and producers considering a path into the food and agriculture industry. This workshop is organized to be fast-paced and packed with vital information needed to begin a food or agricultural business. The agenda includes topics such as resources for start-up businesses, business organization and finances, building a brand, working with retailers, labeling and beginning production factors. Registration is \$55 per person and includes the program, workshop materials, a light breakfast and lunch. Online pre-registration is required for each event, and processing fees for electronic checks and credit card orders apply. Seating is limited and space is expected to fill fast. For a complete agenda, more information and to register, visit www.coloradoproud.org or contact Danielle Trotta at (303) 869-9176.

Calendar

- February 5-7 [Southern Rocky Mountain Agricultural Conference & Trade Fair](#), Monte Vista
- February 13 [Colorado Food and Agriculture Entrepreneur Workshop](#), Fort Collins
- February 13 [On-Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop](#), Durango
- February 15 [Produce Safety Rule Training](#), El Jebel
- February 15-16 [New Mexico Organic Farming Conference](#), Albuquerque
- February 19-21 [Preventive Controls for Human Food Training](#), Delta
- February 20-21 [Farming Evolution Event](#), Holyoke
- February 25-26 [Colorado Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Conference](#), Denver
- February 27 [Governor's Forum on Colorado Agriculture](#), Denver
- February 27-28 [High Plains Organic Conference](#), Cheyenne, WY
- February 28-March 3 [Colorado Agritourism Association Conference](#), Colorado Springs
- March 1-2 [Colorado Farmers Market Association Annual Meeting](#), Littleton
- March 1-3 [Rocky Mountain Horse Expo](#), Denver
- March 12 [Eat Colorado Food Show](#), Denver
- March 13-14 [Water in the West Symposium](#), Aurora
- March 14-16 [Four States Ag Expo](#), Cortez
- March 15 [Produce Safety Rule Training](#), Colorado Springs
- March 20 [Colorado Agriculture Day](#)
- March 24 [Vision Course for Aspiring Urban Farmers](#), Centennial
- March 25 [Farm Tax Planning Class](#), Colorado Springs
- May 31 [Centennial Farms & Ranches Program Application Deadline](#)
- June 12-13 [Rocky Mountain Food Safety Conference](#), Arvada
- September 7 [San Luis Valley Potato Festival](#), Monte Vista

Colorado Manufacturing Awards. The CMAs are presented by [CompanyWeek](#) and Manufacturers Edge. Colorado Proud is once again hosting the “Outstanding Food Brand/Co-Packer” category. Nominate your company at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WDZBFDY> by February 8. Awards will be presented on April 4 at The Cable Center in Denver. For more information, visit <https://coloradomanufacturingawards.com/>.

Tell Your Story. I'd like to keep a file of potential story ideas to promote Colorado Proud companies. [Click here](#) to download and complete a short form. Please e-mail the completed form, along with any photos or videos, to Wendy.White@state.co.us. I'll also use this information to share with buyers when they contact us.

What's New? If you have news to share in the newsletter and on the [Colorado Proud Facebook page](#), contact [Wendy](#) at (303) 869-9174.

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[Grants & Funding](#)

Looking for Grants? Visit www.grants.gov.

Know Your Farmer. Know Your Food. Visit www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer for information about grants and loans.

Funds Available for Audit Costs. The Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) Fruit and Vegetable Section announces a pilot program to assist Colorado fruit and vegetable producers in obtaining USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) audits. The cost-share incentive program is designed to encourage producers to undertake verification audits for the first time and help producers already participating in the program to continue. Most retailers, food service operators, and even some schools and farmers' markets require some form of third party verification of food safety practices. The GAP and GHP voluntary audits verify an operation's efforts to minimize the risk of contamination of fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts by microbial pathogens. The administrative cost to producers for these verification audits has recently increased. Farmers who are new to the audit program can be reimbursed for half the cost of the entire audit, up to \$500 per audit. Farmers who are renewing their audits are eligible for reimbursement of one half of the new USDA administrative fee. Producers must submit an application for reimbursement. The application is available at www.coloradoagriculture.com or producers can request one by calling (719) 852-4749 or emailing brian.pauley@state.co.us. This form must be submitted to the Fruit and Vegetable Section office, with a copy of the audit certificate, the invoice(s) showing the cost of the audit, proof of payment and a completed W-9. Applications will be reimbursed in order in which they are received, as long as funds remain available. Audits must have been conducted on or after October 1, 2018. Audits eligible for reimbursement include: Basic GAP/GHP, Produce GAP Harmonized, and Harmonized GAP Plus+. This cost-share program is made possible by a Specialty Crops Block Grant from USDA, obtained by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) Program. The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) FSFL program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers' markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved populations. Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement, and loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 may require additional security. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. Please see the extensive list of eligible commodities on this [factsheet](#). For more information, [click here](#). To contact your local FSA county office, find your local office [here](#).

USDA Funding for Underserved Groups and Beginning Farmers. The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers targeted farm ownership and farm operating loans to assist underserved applicants as well as small, beginning, niche and non-traditional farmers and ranchers. This direct and guaranteed loan program offers two types of loans: 1) Farm ownership loans and 2) Farm operating loans. Through the direct loan program, FSA also offers [Microloans](#) for ownership and operating finance needs focusing on small, beginner farmer, niche and non-traditional farm operations. To qualify as a beginning producer, the individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements outlined for direct or guaranteed loans, including that the individuals and all entity members must have operated a farm for less than 10 years. For more information, [click here](#).

Organic Cost Share Program. The USDA Organic Cost Share Program is being operated by the USDA Farm Service Agency. Please visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/occsp/index> for more information.

USDA Rural Development Programs. The vision of USDA Rural Development is "a rural America that is a healthy, safe and prosperous place to live and work" and its mission is "to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans." Rural Development helps communities meet their basic needs by building water and waste water systems, financing decent, affordable housing, supporting electric power and rural businesses, including cooperatives and supporting community development with information and technical assistance. Colorado Rural Development made grants, loans, and loan guarantees for over \$645 million in Fiscal Year 2015 for community facilities, rural businesses, renewable energy, housing, and value added agriculture. For information regarding USDA Rural Development's grant and loan programs, visit <http://www.rd.usda.gov/co>.

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Trade Shows, Events & Festivals

Eat Colorado Food Show. The Eat Colorado Food Show is March 12, noon-4pm, at the National Western Stock Show complex in Denver. The event is back for its fourth edition bringing Colorado's diverse and innovative food and beverage producers together with buyers from restaurants, caterers, grocers, hospitals, municipalities, and school systems to create more connectivity, understanding and meaning within our dynamic food system. The Food Show will showcase Colorado produce, grains, meats, preserves, condiments, honey, spirits, wines, beers, baked goods, and more, with over 120 producer booths. More information is available at www.eatcolorado.org.

Colorado Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference. The Colorado Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) will hold its fifth annual conference February 25-26, 2019, at the Renaissance Denver Stapleton Hotel. It will feature a two-day format and the Produce Innovation Business Pitch introduced in 2018. Added to the line-up for 2019 are deep dives, which are educational sessions formatted for day one of the conference to allow participants to choose a topic and spend more than an hour learning about it. Planned deep dive topics include food safety, succession planning and scaling up for beginning and small farmers. More information on the CFVGA conference, including a link to register at <https://cfvga.org>.

Vision Course for Aspiring Urban Farmers. Guidestone Colorado, in partnership with the Colorado Building Farmers Program, is offering a Vision Course for Aspiring Farmers who are hoping to start an urban farm on March 24. Participants undergo an in-depth exploration of their own vision and the core competencies and resources needed to launch! This course examines current trends, resources, case studies, and stories from experienced farmers while digging into a framework to begin strategic business planning. The event will be held at the Arapahoe County CSU Extension Office in Centennial, and registration is \$60. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Interested in Exporting? The Colorado Department of Agriculture's International Marketing Specialists can help you identify new market opportunities around the globe. They are also involved with several trade shows throughout the year. Visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/agmarkets/export-assistance> for more information.

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Workshops, Seminars and Training

Produce Safety Rule Grower Training. The Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union and Colorado Department of Agriculture will be hosting several FSMA Produce Safety Rule trainings in 2019. The course provides a foundation on FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and co-management information, and details on how to develop a farm food safety plan. Individuals are expected to gain a basic understanding of:

- Requirements in the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and how to meet them;
- Microorganisms relevant to produce safety and where they may be found on the farm;
- How to identify microbial risks, practices that reduce risks, and how to begin implementing produce safety practices on the farm;
- Parts of a farm food safety plan and how to begin writing one.

The registration fee is \$50 which includes a light breakfast, lunch, PSA materials, and a certificate of completion as required under FSMA. Note that attendees must be present for the entire course to receive a certificate. See calendar for days and locations. Questions? Contact Martha Sullins at Martha.Sullins@colostate.edu or (970) 491-3330.

On-Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshops. Some form of GAPs audit is becoming a standard requirement for produce buyers across market channels. To support Colorado growers, we are offering an opportunity to get a head start writing their plans through a day-long workshop that will include: a grower overview of different GAPs schemes, updates about the current audit and regulatory framework, insight from Colorado Department of Agriculture GAPs and Produce Safety Rule Program staff, and hands on writing assistance to help you craft a food safety plan for your farm. The food safety plan writing component will focus on the most daunting topics of a food safety plan; mitigating and documenting risk associated with wildlife, water quality monitoring and management, cleaning and sanitation, and worker health and hygiene. The format will be very interactive with ample opportunity to discuss challenges and find solutions with experts. See calendar for days and locations.

Preventive Controls for Human Food Training. The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules and provisions are already in effect, and Western Growers is providing additional training to help the produce industry stay in compliance. The FDA's Preventive Controls for Human Food rule requires that certain activities must be completed or overseen by a "preventive controls qualified individual." One way to meet the requirements for a "preventive controls qualified individual" is to complete the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) Preventive Controls for Human Food Course. This course, developed by the FSPCA, is the "standardized curriculum" recognized by FDA. This course is geared for members of the produce industry because it will feature examples relevant to produce packinghouses covered by this rule; however, fresh-cut produce operations and other food facilities will benefit from this course, as well. This training is hosted by Western Growers (WG), the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) and United Fresh Produce Association (UFPA) with the support of the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA), Colorado State University (Extension), Local Food Safety Collaborative and the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union (RMFU). PMA's Dr. Trevor Suslow, United Fresh Produce Association's Dr. Emily Griep, and Western Growers Association's Sonia Salas will be teaching this course. The course will be February 19-21 in Delta, CO. [Click here](#) for more information.

Succession Planning Workshops. Colorado State University Extension, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and other partners are offering succession planning workshops across the state. Registration is \$25. Visit <http://files.constantcontact.com/3b4cbbaf301/4067108c-9806-478d-ab65-0fc220ea6932.pdf> for location and registration information.

Colorado Farmers Market Association Annual Meeting. This annual gathering of the state's farmers market managers will include tours of local farmers' markets and farms, a networking happy hour, and presentations on topics including: Getting Involved in Food Access/Food Systems Advocacy, EBT Machines/Double-Up Food Bucks, and Promoting Farmers Markets. Throughout the two days there will be time built in for small group sharing and problem-solving, as well as informal networking. The event is March 1-2 in Littleton and registration is \$75. For more information, [click here](#) or contact CFMA Executive Director Rosalind May at cofarmersmarketassociation@gmail.com or (970) 493-4361.

Water in the West Symposium. The Water in the West Symposium is March 13-14 at Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center in Aurora, Colo. The Symposium will focus on solutions to water challenges. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Farm Tax Planning Class. Optimizing Farm Taxes and Your Management Strategies will be held on Monday, March 25, 5:45–8:00pm at 17 N. Spruce Street in Colorado Springs. Registration is \$20/person and advance registration is required. Contact Michele Ritchie at (719) 520-7600 for more information.

Food Safety Training for Cottage Food Vendors. This 4-hour training provides a 3-year certification and meets the food safety training requirement for Colorado Cottage Foods Act. Learn the specifics for operating a food business from a home kitchen. Review the law, permissible foods and ingredient labeling requirements. We will cover basics of food safety-including proper hygiene; preventing cross contamination and cross contact of food allergens; temperature control for safe food preparation, storage, transporting produce and sales. Resources for food preparation at altitude and for going further with your business will be shared. For workshop days and locations and more information visit <http://csu-ext-food-preservation.eventbrite.com> or contact Anne Zander at (303) 678-6238 or azander@bouldercounty.org.

Dairy Corner

Did you know over 900,000 direct jobs and more than 2 million total jobs are created by the dairy industry? [Click here](#) to learn more about how dairy farmers help local economies!

El Paso County Cottage Foods Classes. CSU El Paso County extension is hosting several Cottage Food classes in 2019. The fee is \$40 and each session will be held at 17 N. Spruce St. in Colorado Springs. Visit <https://elpaso.extension.colostate.edu/food-safety-certifications/> for more information or contact Michael Lucero at (719) 520-7689.

Food Preservation Classes. CSU Extension offers a variety of food preservation classes, in addition to their Cottage Foods Safety training. Visit <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/csu-extension-food-preservation-6622808397> for information, including dates and locations.

Developing a Safe Food Business Certificate. Planning to start a cottage food business in your home kitchen, rent a commercial kitchen to produce your product, or begin a small-scale food manufacturing facility? It's an exciting time to be a food entrepreneur, but there are also many regulations and requirements to navigate. Even if you're thinking something more local, such as selling homemade foods at a farmers' market or maybe a holiday fair, this safe food handling certificate is a must for you! CSU's online curriculum covers two topics a week for eight weeks, and you will learn about many of the necessary food safety practices and regulations needed to start your food company. [Click here](#) for more information.

Better Process Control School Available Online. The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture offers the Better Process Control School course online and in person. Federal requirements state that operators of retorts, processing systems, aseptic processing and packaging systems, and container closure inspectors be under the operating supervision of someone who has successfully completed a course of instruction in these matters. Better Process Control School (BPCS) is a course that has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration as well as the United States Department of Agriculture for processors of acidified and low acid canned foods. This course is offered online as well as a 2-day workshop (acidified only) or a 3 1/2-day workshop for the entire course. Contact Connie Bowman at cbowma14@utk.edu or (865) 974-7331 for more information or visit <http://foodscience.tennessee.edu/betterprocesscontrolschool/>.

Food Handlers Training Offered. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is offering an online training for food handlers. By taking this training, food handlers will learn the basics of safe food handling in the workplace as they are presented with activities that will allow them to respond to scenarios they may encounter in the workplace. The fee is \$10.00 and the training can be accessed at <http://www.statefoodsafety.com>.

Workshop Resources. There are a variety of local organizations that host business workshops. Be sure to visit the following sites for great information and event calendars.

Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA): www.arvadaeconomicdevelopment.org

Aurora Business Development Center: www.aurorasbdc.com

Colorado Small Business Administration: <http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-content/2/3104>

Colorado Small Business Development Center Networks: www.coloradosbdc.org

Denver Metro Small Business Development Center: www.denversbdc.org

Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute: www.rmmfi.org

SCORE: www.score.org

The Food Processing Center-University of Nebraska, Lincoln, http://fpc.unl.edu/professional_development

New Mexico State University Better Process Control School, <http://aces.nmsu.edu/ces/foodtech/better-process-control-s.html>

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[Other News and Opportunities](#)

Centennial Farms & Ranches Program Application. The Centennial Farms & Ranches Program honors farms and ranches that have been in the same family continuously for 100 years or more. The property must be a working farm or ranch and have a minimum of 160 acres, or if fewer than 160 acres can qualify if they gross at least \$1,000 in annual sales. To apply for Colorado Centennial Farms and Ranches designation, owners must submit an application providing information about the history of the property and its buildings/structures, indicating that the farm or ranch meets the program's requirements. For the Historic Structures Award, photographs of the buildings/structures are required. Application forms must be mailed to the Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, or emailed to the Centennial Farms and Ranches Coordinator by the deadline, which is May 31. For more information and to apply, visit <https://www.historycolorado.org/centennial-farms-ranches>.

National Western Center Public Market Survey. The City of Denver is studying the feasibility of transforming an historic landmark at the National Western Center, the 1909 Stadium Arena, into a Public Market. Public Markets are typically publicly owned and operated by a non-profit organization, so that they can fulfill a public purpose - to showcase a community's unique character and culture while also being affordable enough to serve everyday shopping needs. With a projected 2.2 million visitors each year and easy access from downtown, I-70 and I-25, the National Western Center is an ideal central location to connect Colorado farmers, food producers and small businesses directly with local and global customers. As part of a Feasibility Study, the City of Denver is reaching out to business owners across the state of Colorado to gauge the level of interest in becoming a vendor at a Public Market located at the National Western Center. Please note that it would take approximately 5-8 years before the Stadium Arena could be renovated, so there's plenty of time for businesses and vendors to plan ahead. Please take 5 minutes to fill out this survey. Expression of interest at this time will be used for planning purposes only and does not imply a commitment by the business owner to participate as a vendor. Results of the survey will only be reported in aggregate. Information about individual businesses or respondents will be kept confidential. To take the survey, please [click here](#).

Love Colorado Potatoes? Sign up for The Perfect Potato newsletter at <https://www.coloradopotato.org/> (scroll down to the bottom of the page).

Free pH Testing for Cottage Foods Producers. Free equilibrium pH testing of pickled fruits and vegetables is now available to Colorado Cottage Food Producers through the Laboratory Services Division at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Samples can be dropped off or shipped to the lab or left at one of the free courier pick up locations. This free service offers producers the ability to validate their standardized, personal, or family recipe(s) for pickled fruits and vegetables and verify a finished equilibrium pH of 4.6 or below. A producer may submit up to five different products for free equilibrium pH testing. Results will be mailed directly to them and will confirm if their recipe is just right or prompt them to make adjustments to assure the safety of their product for their customers. Samples will be collected and processed on a first come first serve basis. Funding is limited so take advantage of this free opportunity while it lasts. Visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/cottage-foods-act> for more information and appropriate forms.

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[Manufactured Food Program](#)

Manufactured Food Program Newsletter. The Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment has a quarterly newsletter for the Manufactured Food Program, with helpful information to foster understanding and collaboration between the program staff and the community they serve. If you would like to receive this quarterly newsletter, contact Jon Strauss at jon.strauss@state.co.us.

Useful Links:

Program Information

[Manufactured Food Program Facts](#)

Regulations

[Wholesale and Manufactured Food Regulations](#)

External Resources

[Food Defense Plan Builder](#)

[Food Recall Plan Guidance](#)

[Food Safety Modernization Act](#)

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[Agritourism Update](#)

Colorado Agritourism Association Conference. The Colorado Dude & Guest Ranch Association and Colorado Agritourism Association will be jointly hosting the 2019 "Sharing the Best of the West" Convention February 28-March 3 at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs. Visit the [agenda](#) and [registration](#) page for more information.

CSU's New Graduate Certificate in Agritourism Management. Whether you are an experienced farming professional, burgeoning agritourism entrepreneur, or in an industry support role, Colorado State University's Online Graduate Certificate in Agritourism Management has experience that runs deep and is positioned to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the agritourism industry. This certificate was developed as part of CSU's recent grant, partnering with the University of Northern Colorado, UC-Davis and the USDA Economic Research Service. This is the first program of its kind in the U.S. that integrates research, work with producers and Colorado's own success stories. Certificate details at: <https://warnercnr.colostate.edu/hdnr/agritourism/>.

Looking to Build Up Tourism in Your Community? Apply to bring a CRAFT Workshop, hosted by the Colorado Tourism Office, to your community. These 1-1.5 day workshops offer intense training and hands-on working sessions so that community members come away with a thorough strategy for taking a specific tourism segment to the next level. Workshops are now available for Culinary & Agritourism, Cycling Tourism, Heritage & Cultural Tourism, Outdoor Adventure Tourism, and Sustainable Tourism. More details, including information on the application, can be found here at https://industry.colorado.com/sites/default/files/CRAFT%20Workshop%20Guidelines_7.31.18.pdf. Apply by April 1, 2019.

Colorado Agritourism Association. The Colorado Agritourism Association is a member-based organization designed to develop agritourism operations in Colorado. Learn more at www.coloradoagritourism.org.

Agritourism Safety. Agritourism is seen more often today than ever before. Types of agritourism operations vary: corn mazes, pumpkin patches, pick-your-own operations, dude ranches, and more. As agritourism continues to grow in popularity, implementing safety strategies to help maximize fun and minimize liability is increasingly important. This [website](#) provides tools and resources that can assist and educate.

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[Farm to School Update](#)

Farm to School Webinars. Visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/videos-and-webinars> for free webinars from the USDA.

National Farm to School e-mail alerts list. Want to hear right away about important FTS events, funding opportunities, and more? [Join their mailing list](#) today!

USDA Farm to School newsletter has a wealth of timely information you don't want to miss. Sign up for the [Farm to School E-letter](#) today.

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[Classifieds](#)

If you have information you would like to include in the "Classifieds," please send a short paragraph to Wendy at Wendy.White@state.co.us by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the newsletter. Ads will be removed after two months.

New Farmers' Market Looking for Vendors. The new Golden Triangle Farmers' Market is looking for vendors to participate in the weekly Sunday morning market at 11th and Broadway in Denver. For more information call (720) 523-3331 or visit www.goldentrianglefm.com.



Business for Sale. “Turn-key” Colorado gourmet food manufacturing business is for sale. It is ready to move to your chosen location. Timber Peaks Gourmet has a prosperous 28-year history in Colorado and other states. We produce over 65 delicious, nutritious foods. All recipes, equipment, inventory, contacts, and excellent reputation go with the sale. Our loyal customer base includes wholesale accounts, retail accounts, internet sales, craft fairs/markets, and word-of-mouth. Our products include: bean soups, breads, dips, desserts, munchie mixes, and gifts comprised of these products. Interested parties can check our website, www.timberpeaksgourmet.com. Then, call Laurie at (720) 556-5367 for further information.

Service Guide. Looking for label printers or a graphic designer? How about a web development company or food consultant? Be sure to visit the [Colorado Proud Service Guide](#) for a helpful list of contacts.

Looking for Kitchen Space or a Co-Packer? Visit the [Colorado Co-Pack Directory](#) online.

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*Not all events are sponsored by Colorado Proud, and inclusion in the newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.