

HEALTHY, LOCAL FOOD NEWS FOR YOU TO USE

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VOL. 2

summer 2010

... brought to you by the

Growing Partners of SW Colorado and
the **Healthy, Local Foods** Committee
of Healthy Lifestyle La Plata

Welcome to the Second Edition

Greetings and welcome to the **second edition** of *Healthy, Local Food News*. I hope the first edition of the newsletter provided you and your clients with information about current healthy, local food work and facilitated connections in our community. I received positive feedback on the issue, and hope to continue to provide with *Healthy, Local Food News You Can Use* throughout the year, including:

- * updates on local food projects;
- * a list of upcoming local food events, and
- * a directory of local food resources and volunteer opportunities.

This edition finds us entering the busiest time of the year for local food work. Gardens, food production and festivals celebrating food are all coming into full swing.

Please continue to send me your updates and ideas for future editions. And, thank you for your all of your support and contribution to the healthy, local food movement in our community.

Sincerely,
Katy Pepinsky
GPSWCO, 09-12 CFP
Project Manager
katypepinsky@gmail.com



Students plant the Fort Lewis College,
Environmental Center garden

The Beginning Farmer Apprenticeship Program

Sponsored by [Growing Partners of SW Colorado, CFP](#)

Gabe Eggers will lead the first farmer apprenticeship training program of its kind in La Plata County this summer. Developed to increase the number and diversity of individuals who have a command of the fundamental skills and concepts associated with organic horticulture and agriculture, the BFAP aims to provide training for La Plata County residents in ecological agricultural production techniques.

In 2010, three apprentices were invited to participate in a season-long program designed to educate and prepare those for a career in agriculture. The course began in May and will go until the end of September, 2010. In 2011, 5 apprentices will be selected for a similar program.

The apprenticeship is free of charge; however the *cost* is accounted for in course and volunteer participation hours. Each apprentice commits to 100 *course hours* between May 28th and October 1st, including six classes ranging from 3-5 hours each and 75 hours of required farm tours and volunteer time in community gardens and local farms.



Manna Soup Kitchen Garden, Durango, CO 2007

The course includes working in organic farming using integrated agro-ecological principles, market CSA gardens, and other sustainable agricultural techniques. Topics covered will include crop culture, soil management, composting, pest

control, crop planning, irrigation, farm equipment, and marketing techniques.

For more information on the program, please contact:
Gabe Eggers, Director BFAP
mountainegg@yahoo.com



[GPSWCO's 09-12 CFP Projects](#)

include: broad partnerships to help support cooking and nutrition classes; Farm-to-School; school and community gardening; gleaning programs; the FLC EC Food Fellows Program; Beginning Farmer Programs; and food networking.

The Mesa Verde Guide to Local Sustainable Food and Fiber

Healthy Community Food Systems, in partnership with Healthy Lifestyle La Plata and Fort Lewis College Office of Community Service, have created a new website to help strengthen connections between local agricultural producers and buyers in SW Colorado. The Mesa Verde Guide to Local, Sustainable Food and Fiber (MVG) started as a paper document eight years ago, and was primarily distributed as a local food directory to consumers at regional farmers' markets. In 2008, the paper directory was converted into a web-based, interactive tool for producers, buyers and consumers to source local food.

The site, www.mesaverdefood.org, launched this May, includes several exciting features creating new resources for the area's local food networks.

CSU Extension's Beginning Farmer Classes

The CSU Extension Office in La Plata County offers several educational opportunities to build beginning farmer skills.

The Backyard Food Production Series is currently in full-swing with 42 students. The class is held annually throughout the food production season, starting in April and ending in October. Students learn how to grow their own food - from design and seed starting to harvest, storage, and preservation. All classes are taught by local experts - Extension Agents and

Specialists, growers, and professors - and give the students the tools to effectively and efficiently grow lots of food, whether they have a few square feet or a few thousand feet.

The Colorado Building Farmers Program, a series of 9 evening classes is designed to provide intermediate and experienced farmers with tools and ideas to refine and enhance their business management, production, and marketing skills; and to help new farmers explore farming as a business. The Colorado Building Farmers program will start on Monday, October

18th and will be held in the Extension Building at the La Plata County Fairgrounds.

For registration information, as well as potential scholarship opportunities, contact:

Darrin Parmenter: (970) 382-6464,
parmenterdm@co.laplata.co.us.



The CO Building Farmers Program Graduates - with their certificates 2009 Season

Community & School Gardens

An update from [The Garden Project of SW Colorado](#)

On Saturday May 8th, 28 people attended a **School Garden Training** at Escalante Middle School, hosted by The Garden Project of SW Colorado. Over 9 schools and community gardens, along with volunteers and community members were in attendance. The training covered *SW Colorado Growing Guidelines, Starting a School Garden, Profiles of local School Gardens, Biodiversity in the Garden, Integrating Gardens into the Curriculum*, and a tour of the new *Escalante Greenhouse and Garden*. The training connected garden coordinators, parents and teachers with other school gardens and our local food and gardening resources. Attendees received garden supplies, seeds, a local lunch and the new School Garden Resource Guidebook.

Resource Guidebook On-line: The resource guidebook for schools has been updated with school garden profiles, lesson plans and local resources for school gardens. More lesson plans will be posted throughout the summer season. http://www.thegardenprojectswcolorado.org/site/Resource_Guidebook.html

School Gardens: Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary and Needham Garden have been in full swing this spring season including having guest speakers: from The Garden Project, Darrin Parmenter, Katrina Blair from Turtle Lake Refuge and Gabe Eggers. Garden activities included soil volcanoes and milkshakes, composting activities. Students also worked on garden art and released over 1000 ladybugs. Other active school gardens include Escalante Middle School, Animas Valley Elementary, Southern Ute Tribal Academy, DELC and many others. Profiles and updates are at http://www.thegardenprojectswcolorado.org/site/La_Plata_County_School_Gardens.html.

The Backyard Garden Project, sponsored by HLLP and the CFP, will be looking for a new family to award a new garden in their backyard this year!

For more information, please contact:
The Garden Project: (970) 259-3123,
thegardenproject@yahoo.com



Farm-to-School

An update from Jim Dyer, [Healthy Community Food Systems](#)

HEALTHY
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LA PLATA



Since the last full Farm-to-School (FTS) monthly meeting in September 2009, a great deal has been

happening. Local purchases have occurred all this school year, school garden trainings occurred in December and April, Food Service Directors from surrounding counties met to collaborate on FTS, and local FTS advocates have been working with other FTS groups around the state on state level issues.

Food Service Director Meeting:

Food Service Directors from Ignacio, Durango, Srn Ute Academy, Mancos, Cortez, and Pagosa met in Ignacio in April with reps from Wacky Apple — a fruit product distributor, Andrews Food Service— a distributor, and Brent from FoxFire Farms to discuss local food needs.

Policy: Colorado has passed bills to set up a Food Systems Advisory Council and a Task Force to design a state FTS program. Groundwork laid for both bills will further FTS in Colorado in a sustainable way.

Healthy Community Food Systems received funding from the CO Dept of



Needham Elementary students put their gardens to rest last fall.

Ag to provide outreach, assessment, and technical assistance for FTS across the state.

A FTS group met in May at the 9-R Administration Building, and decided to schedule regular quarterly meetings and send e-mail updates in between.

To get more information on FTS,

Contact: Jim Dyer,
jadyer@frontier.net

Turtle Lake Refuge

Farm-to-School Update

Turtle Lake Refuge (TLR) has been involved with the local Farm-to-School group since its conception in 2005. TLR grows organic greens for all ten public schools in Durango, the Southern Ute Indian Academy as well as other schools in the area. In addition to the produce they provide for the salad bars, we also provide granola for the breakfast program and other treats for special occasions. They offer educational workshops to the public school systems and other school groups focusing on sustainable living practices such as identifying wild edible foods, sprouting and growing local food all year long in the classroom.

Contact: (970) 247-8395
turtlelakerefuge@yahoo.com



Mark Your Calendar for Local Food Events and Workshops

Ongoing

*Meals at Manna Soup
Kitchen*

Take a break and come have lunch at Manna Soup Kitchen. Chef Warren puts out some fantastic meals daily that include soups, fresh salads, fruits and delicious main courses and we would be delighted if you would share a meal with us.



*Saturdays May - October
Durango Farmers' Market*

8 - 12 pm

First National Bank parking lot, Camino del Rio and 8th Street, Durango. Food Stamps accepted.



June - August (ongoing)

*Keeping Green \$\$\$ Food
Preservation Classes*

Food Preservation classes will start June 21 at the La Plata County Fairgrounds and take place throughout the summer months throughout the County. Classes vary in length, structure and venue -- some in the series will be more hands on and some will be more of an interactive discussion. For details and costs please contact CSU Extension of La Plata County.

Contact: Wendy Rice (970)

382-6461

ricekw@co.laplata.co.us

August 11 - 15

La Plata County Fair

Look for the Growing Partners/ Healthy Lifestyle La Plata booth at this year's Fair. We'll have interactive activities as well as lots of great local food information to share. We are looking for volunteers to help us staff this year's booth! If you're interested in joining us, please contact Katy, GP, CFP Project Manager.

Contact:

Katy Pepinsky (970)375-7705

katypepinsky@gmail.com



*Saturdays, August 28 &
September 11*

Iron Horse Chef

Competition



Sunday, September 5

4th Annual Tour de Farms



Sunday, October 17

Homegrown - Apple Festival

Contact: Gabe Eggers,
Coordinator,

mountainegg@yahoo.com

Monday, October 18

*CO Building Farmers
Program*

A series of 9 evening classes is designed to provide intermediate and experienced farmers with tools and ideas to refine and enhance their business management, production, and marketing skills; and to help new farmers explore farming as a business. The Colorado Building Farmers program will start on Monday, October 18th and will be held in the Extension Building at the La Plata County Fairgrounds. For registration information, as well as scholarship information, please contact CSU Extension of La Plata County.

Contact: Darrin Parmenter

parmenterdm@co.laplata.co.us



Other Announcements

The Ignacio Community Garden is seeking supplies...

Any supplies that can be donated, such as lumber, soil, seeds, fruit trees (2), benches would be greatly appreciated.

Contact: Diane Downing, SUCAP Garden Director: ddowning@sucap.org

Giving to Manna Soup Kitchen...

The average community in the United States already possesses, and likely expends, enough resources to end hunger five times over. But these abundant resources meet only about one-fifth of the need because of how and where funds are spent.

The Manna Soup Kitchen benefits from a very generous community and food donations flow into our kitchen throughout the day. Our chef makes on-the-spot assessments of the food available to determine what should be served immediately, what can hold over for another day, what can be frozen for later and what needs to be redistributed to other area non-profits.

Cash contributions enable the Kitchen to leverage five times the amount of food than what can be purchased locally for the same cost by partnering with the Care and Share Food Bank in Colorado Springs. Care and Share has partnerships in place with local farms and national food distributors and therefore they are able to supply emergency food agencies such as Manna with groceries at deeply discounted prices. Manna is also able to leverage large donations from corporations that are distributed through Shamrock Foods. (A 1,000 lb pallet of assorted meats was donated with our last purchase.)

The Mesa Verde Guide to Sustainable Food and Fiber is

now on-line.. A new website has been created to increase connections between local food producers and buyers in our region. Check out the new local product availability list!

Growing Partners of SW Colorado to host this year's Homegrown - Apple Festival - Sunday, October 17

The 3rd Annual La Plata County Homegrown -- Apple Festival -- will be hosted by the Growing Partners this year. Many of the Growing Partners, including The Garden Project of SW Colorado, Turtle Lake Refuge, the CSU Extension Office and the Fort Lewis College Environmental Center, in partnership with the City of Durango and Durango Brewmasters, have been involved in organizing past year's festivals.

Growing Partners is honored and excited to take over this event -- once that demonstrates and celebrates the abundance and affordability of local food. Each year families have fun pressing, decorating, tossing and eating apples collected from local orchards and in-town trees that would otherwise go wasted. Recipes are shared, family friendly activities are enjoyed over local food and music, and demonstrations are given on how to grow, prune and preserve apples.

If you would like to be involved in this year's festival -- either as a volunteer or as a presenter, please contact, Gabe Eggers (mountainegg@yahoo.com). We look forward to seeing many of you there.

Respectfully yours,

The Growing Partners of SW Colorado



Volunteer

Ignacio Community Garden

This is a great opportunity for want-to-be gardeners to learn more about gardening, veteran gardeners to assist and teach others, and for those who like to eat fresh produce.

Contact:

Diane Downing: ddowning@sucap.org

The Garden Project

The Garden Project is always looking for volunteers or interns to work with them during garden days, community events, or are welcome to create their own volunteer opportunities.

Contact:

thegardenproject@yahoo.com

or call (970) 259-3123

Unity Project

To volunteer for the community interpreter/translator pool or to request interpretation/translation services...

Contact: contact@laplataunity.org

or call (970) 903-1761

Animas Valley School Garden

Volunteers can help with spring classroom projects and assist with summer projects and maintenance.

Contact: Renea Muller

rmuller@durango.k12.co.us

Escalante School Garden

The school has a new vegetable garden and greenhouse. Volunteers could help in the ground on greenhouse and garden.

Contact: Sharon Orr

sorr@durango.k12.co.us