

For Immediate Release

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Boone, Salida, and Cortez Colorado– The Colorado Tourism Office, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union and Guidestone Colorado are co-hosting ***Growing Your Farm Business: Visioning and Scaling Up Workshops*** in January and February for beginning and expanding farmers and ranchers. These workshops are in partnership with Local Food Hub organizations: Excelsior Food Hub in Boone, Valley Roots Food Hub in Mosca, and Southwest Farm Fresh in Mancos and will take place during the following dates and locations:

January 11-12 (Boone, CO)

January 18-19 (Salida, CO)

February 2-3 (Cortez, CO)

Pre-registration is required at www.GuidestoneColorado.org.

“This exciting initiative is not only an investment in the next generation of farmers and ranchers but in the future of our State’s agricultural and agri-tourism economy too,” said Elizabeth O’Rear, Manager of CTO’s Heritage & Agritourism Program. “The Colorado Tourism Office is proud to partner with the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, Guidestone Colorado and Local Food Hub organizations to build on the success of existing programs in the State by increasing resources and enhancing opportunities to help Colorado’s newest producers expand their work and more quickly achieve success.”

Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP), these workshops aim to support and enhance the success of the next generation of farmers and ranchers in southern Colorado.

"Guidestone is excited to work collaboratively with partners to support aspiring producers in creating their vision and a plan of support for launching their agricultural businesses," said Jennifer Visitacion, Executive Director at Guidestone.

This three-year initiative will develop a coordinated education and mentorship program to help train early farmers and prepare them to enter emerging wholesale and agritourism markets.

"Beginning producers in rural and remote areas often have limited marketing options available to them," said Dan Hobbs, Cooperative Specialist at the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union. "That's why this multi-year cooperative project is so important, to facilitate new choices, opportunities and resources for family farmers throughout southern Colorado."

About the USDA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program provides grants to organizations for education, mentoring, and technical assistance initiatives for beginning farmers or ranchers. According to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service's most recent Ag Census data, the number of young people entering farming continues to decline, but the number of new farmers and ranchers over the age of 35 rises, as does the number of smaller farms and ranches nationwide. Ensuring there will be a "new generation" of beginning farmers and ranchers—regardless of age or production choice—is especially important to the continuation of agricultural production in the United States. For more information visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/beginning-farmer-and-rancher-development-program-bfrdp>