

## Rio Grande Farm Park Hires Co-Program Directors

The San Luis Valley Local Food Coalition has accepted a creative offer to engage a team of two Co-Program Directors to run programming for the Rio Grande Farm Park. The Rio Grande Farm Park (RGFP) provides land access and education for youth and adults and especially farmers in all aspects of the food system.

Valentina Valdez and Seth Armentrout will join forces to lead education, to further the fulfillment of the Rio Grande Farm Park Master Plan and to join in partnerships and collaborations important to the regenerative agricultural community.



Valdez is excited to return to the San Luis Valley Foods Coalition (LFC) as the Program Director of the Rio Grande Farm Park from her previous position as a Colorado Department of Agriculture Workforce Intern in the summer of 2021.

She likes to say she was born and “grazed” in this valley, in La Jara, and she is a 5th generation farmer. She graduated from the University of Southern California with a B.S. in Business Administration and an emphasis in Social Entrepreneurship. “I’ve found my way here via my interest in regenerative systems and desire to give back to the community that raised me. It’s my wholehearted belief that holistic agriculture and decentralized food systems have the power to change the trajectory of the youth in our area for the better and I am beyond excited to leverage the potential of the Farm Park and the LFC in this position.”



Her partner in RGFP leadership is Seth Armentrout who recently finished a Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA) service year on the land, so both are familiar with the vision and values of the RGFP and the LFC.

During the past year, Armentrout helped manage volunteer, education, and land projects at the Farm Park with the SLV community. Originally from Brighton, Colorado, his background includes youth development in New Orleans, data and mapping with US EPA in the Mountain West, and Peace Corps service in the mid-hills region of Nepal. Seth loves bats, yak, carrots, writing songs, and cutthroat trout.

Armentrout sees great opportunity in his role, "The Rio Grande Farm Park is a space of community dreams: vibrant local foods production, regenerative ideas in practice, wild play for young people, owls in cottonwoods, beavers in the Rio, artwork that inspires, space to be together. It's an honor to help the Farm Park live its mission, evolve into its vision, and continue to create opportunity for community wholeness and a thriving future for the Valley, Colorado, and beyond!"

Valdez can not agree more, "It is with great joy and anticipation that I join an already incredible group of passionate staff at the LFC and RGFP. What an honor to work alongside them to accomplish that which is greater than ourselves: the sufficiency and liberation of our community. Gracias por la oportunidad y las buenas vibras!"

The San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition team is thrilled to have this strong pair of talented young leaders to help achieve the mission to “*foster an equitable local food system*” in the San Luis Valley. For more information on the work of the LFC go to [www.slvlocalfoods.org](http://www.slvlocalfoods.org)