



Southwest Marketing Network

Expanding Markets for Southwest Small-Scale, Alternative, and Minority Producers

Promoting Local Agricultural Marketing in the Southwest

October 2011

Native Projects Shine at Gallup Conference

The vast majority of presenters at the March SWMN 9th Annual Conference were from Native communities and groups across the region. The first conference that we have held in Gallup attracted many Navajo people as anticipated, but included those from other tribes as well as a good number of non-Natives. The result was an immersion into the great variety of Native projects aimed at improving community food systems in the region. From Navajo Churro lamb to greenhouse vegetables, from Pueblo beef production to Hopi Permaculture, from green jobs to policy innovations, the grassroots nature and strong cultural connections of these projects were evident.

This SWMN Newsletter issue highlights the issues, opportunities, and innovations around rebuilding community-based food systems—especially in the underserved parts of our region. You will find accounts of:

- The Gallup SWMN Conference
- Farm to School activities across the region
- Reports and notices from each of our states
- In depth articles from specific communities and more...

We hope these project highlights will serve to inspire and inform your efforts in your own community.

Jim Dyer, Southwest Marketing Network

Groups in the Southwest Creating Balance at Home: Food, Farming, Spirit

Morgan Yazzie shared his experience as a grazing official, sheep rancher and steward of the earth in a packed room at the 9th Annual Southwest Marketing Network conference in Gallup, New Mexico. He has been helping neighbors and visitors for decades in and around the Diné community of Teesto in the southwestern Navajo Nation in Arizona restore their lands “one handful at a time” by showing them how to walk the earth in springtime and broadcast the seeds of native grasses and forbs into the cracks left by winter.

When the rains finally come, an average of 6-7 inches per year on the high Colorado Plateau, the sprouting vegetation appears like a miracle. Morgan and other community members in the 1970s realized how traditions like broadcast seeding were being lost in their part of Diné Nation.

In 2005, the late Justin Willie pulled together a group of people, and in partnership with the diabetes prevention program from Northern Arizona University reestablished a sustainable farming program in Leupp, Arizona. The rationale was that traditional family farming was nearing extinction and needed revitalization. Their solution was to create North Leupp Family Farm,

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NLFF, a 100-acre family farming cooperative, training and teaching center of sustainable farming practices for the community along the Little Colorado River. North Leupp Family Farm is only one of two farms in the region that relies on irrigation.

Today, Tyrone Thompson, the farm manager, and the Board of Directors at North Leupp Family Farm help conduct on-farm workshops on native foods, seed saving, health and nutrition, traditional farming, wool and fiber processing, and incorporation of renewable energy into the farm all summer long. Visitors are welcome to contact the North Leupp Family farm about upcoming workshops: <https://sites.google.com/site/leuppfarm/>

A quick four-hour drive northeast of Leupp is Diné College Land Grant Office in Tsaile, AZ, a relatively new food and agriculture resource for the surrounding communities of Canyon de Chelly and Shiprock, NM. Felix Nez, extension agent at the Land Grant office, enthusiastically told SWMN conference participants about the school and community gardens, hoop houses, health and nutrition, and youth workshops that he and Patrick Blackwater have been providing the past five years. Felix has been in high demand for hoop-house workshops. The communities of Crownpoint, Tsaile, Chinle and Sheep Springs are now set up with hoop houses for season extension—growing greens in fall and spring past the frost dates. Diné College campus in Tsaile also established the first farmers' market in the area to encourage more gardening and greater appreciation of fresh foods. Director Benita Litson continues to be responsive to community requests in innovative ways, but finds it challenging to keep up with the demand, given her staff of two and modest budget. She believes it is great news that families and youth are becoming interested in healthier foods, growing gardens and learning more about their culture from the “Elderlies.” For more information on Diné College's programs, visit:

<http://www.dinecollege.edu/institutes/lgo/index.php>
Leaving Diné country and driving four hours toward Albuquerque, we come to our last stop at the Pueblo of Laguna, where John Romero coordinates the Sedillo Cattle Association. John presented to participants at the Southwest Marketing Network conference about the Association, a 25-member cow/calf cooperative of ranchers who work together to raise and market their grass-fed, free-range livestock. Last fall, John and the co-op members, in cooperation with Farm to Table,

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provided a tour of their operation to over 70 ranchers from the surrounding pueblos and Diné Nation. In 2009, the Association hosted the Society for Range Management summer tour to showcase the practices of sound range management and animal welfare. The Association was also featured on a segment of the “Cattlemen to Cattlemen” program on RFD TV. For these efforts, John and Wilbur Louis, Jr. were honored as the 2009 Rangeland Managers of the Year by the Society for Range Management. The co-op raises cattle in humane and respectful ways, and combines the knowledge and experience of their elders with new market approaches like video auctioning.

During the conference, John echoed the challenges that many cooperatives and individual families face when trying to access land and water for farming and ranching: It's a bin full of red tape, sometimes including paperwork and protocols from three separate governing bodies: the tribe, the BIA and the federal government or local municipality. He and others in sovereign nations are working one project at a time, bringing awareness to the community and to public officials about the need to improve the tangled process so that families and community groups can focus on raising food and fiber instead of persevering through months of applications and petitions.

At the end of the Southwest Marketing Network Conference, community groups from around the Southwest requested “a way to stay connected” and wanted to know when each group would be hosting trainings and celebrations. To learn more about Local Food Initiatives from groups in the Southwest, visit: www.swmarketingnetwork.org

*Tawnya Laveta, Farm to Table and
Southwest Marketing Network*

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The full issue is available at www.greenfiretimes.com.

Supporting the Producers of Local Food and Fiber

The Southwest Marketing Network's Decade of Impact in the Region

Standing with our sheep, seven miles north of New Mexico and 50 miles from the Four Corners of the Southwest, I sometimes marvel at the view of the world we are blessed with from our home. A couple arcs of the cartographer's compass pinpoint this place as Marvel, Colorado. Hesperus Peak is to the north, Durango and the snowy San Juans are to the northeast, the slopes of Mesa Verde's ancient farmlands are to the northwest and the warm horizons of Arizona and New Mexico lie to the south. And yet, these landmarks only hint at the diversity embedded in the Southwest Marketing Network's vast and varied landscape.

The Network formed nearly 10 years ago to address the "distance to market" problem in the Four Corner states by working with farmers and ranchers to develop alternative outlets for their products, such as farmers' markets, CSAs, farmer co-ops, and the like. The hypothesis was and remains simple:

Our producers already have the skills, ingenuity and determination to make impressive improvements in their operations, but they will gain momentum if given inspiring examples of innovative approaches, coupled with modest resources and training. Our job was simply to guide diverse people together, put on workshops and bring the best informational resources to the table.

One of our Steering Committee members, Clayton Brascoupe of the Traditional Native American Farmers Association, said it well early on: "We won't likely be driving trucks of produce, but rather guiding trucks full of information across the region."

And that we did. The Network's annual conferences began in Durango, but moved to Flagstaff, Albuquerque, Grand Junction, back to Flagstaff, then on to Santa Fe, back to Durango and over to Salt Lake. (Window Rock on the Navajo Nation will host us next.) Farmers, ranchers, agents and marketers were eager to share and learn, and Native American participation has impressively grown over the years. At each conference, our discussions seem refreshingly new, for we focus on promising opportunities in agriculture rather than rehashing the same old problems. Maybe our future never really was in those distant markets, but always a bit closer to home.

Of course, as the Network has grown and matured, we have needed to embrace new issues and adapt to opportunities. We found that many of us, especially those of us from rural areas, were not only distant from markets, but distant from the seats of economic and political power. Opportunities arose for us to support the development of food policy councils across the Southwest to help give a voice to all in the region in shaping the policies—local, state, tribal and federal—that can make or break a local food economy. New Mexico led the way in state level policy development and remains an inspiration to the rest of the region as policy working groups continue to develop. Arizona has offered a variety of market-driven innovations. But most importantly, the Southwest is increasingly heard, rather than herded in discussions of policies and practices that may benefit our populace.

Our producers already have the skills, ingenuity and determination to make impressive improvements in their operations, but they will gain momentum if given inspiring examples of innovative approaches, coupled with modest resources and training.

At the same time, the landscape of the Southwest has been changing. The region-wide drought gained strength just as our Network was forming, presumably through no fault of our own. Over the last decade, I've personally witnessed pinyon pines die in large swaths. I began hauling water, cutting dead pinyons, protecting junipers, planting fast-growing (though weedy) elms and wondering why magpies and morning doves were replacing our pinyon jays. I witnessed a pall of uncertainty and uneasiness settle over Southwest growers. We had dealt with short-term drought and climatic extremes before, but the depth of this drought—along with the realization that it could be a precursor of what

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was to be a new and even harsher climate—tested the resolve of my neighboring growers, and my own as well. How could I ask growers to try new, inherently risky enterprises, even if our ultimate hope was to reduce their risk in the long run.

Fortuitously, we found that the marketing landscape in the Southwest was changing as well, and in most cases, for the better. Rather than focus solely on helping farmers and ranchers make their new markets work better, just as times were getting tougher, we realized that we needed to connect these producers with allies in their communities—those working on childhood nutrition, local economic development, environmental stewardship and social justice. At our conferences, producers became outnumbered by their community neighbors who were committed to help their producers market their goods locally.

The local food movement has matured into a sophisticated dialogue between producers and buyers—and thus, communications have opened relaying the many reasons to advocate for selling and consuming fresh food from nearby farms within our local economies. What's more, a dialog has opened illuminating the sustainability values that people want to see embedded in their food system.

Local food system development is now increasingly seen as a tool to help reduce obesity and health care costs, boost local businesses and combat climate change and other environmental problems. Farm to School programs have captured the imagination and energy of countless neighborhoods across the nation. In tribal communities, there is renewed hope and interest in traditional foods, nutrition and culturally-adapted production practices. People are celebrating their place-based foods—their seasons, unique tastes, histories and those who grow them.

As we look ahead, the challenges are sobering, but our tools are impressive. If we forget our allies, we can become paralyzed by the uncertainty of our changing climate, our



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struggling economy, our children's vulnerability to obesity and the sluggish response and actions of our government. And yet, the determination, resolve and optimism that I have seen among our many partners, conference participants and funders of the Southwest Marketing Network gives me great confidence that we can come away with strong food systems, better than most of us have ever had.

Undoubtedly our lifestyles must change in many ways to cope with the challenges ahead—technology cannot and should not do it all. Improving the way we grow, move, eat and think about our food can be a crucial part of that needed change. And so, it has been an honor for the Network to have contributed to the community food movement in the Southwest. It is clear that we must do a better job to connect those working so hard to improve our food systems in this region, make available the best resources to get the job done and highlight all the inspiring projects going on across the Southwest. That is clearly our task as we enter our second decade.

To find out more about the Network and its many innovative partners, funders, projects, resources, events and our upcoming conferences, look us up on www.swmarketingnetwork.org

Jim Dyer, Southwest Marketing Network

This article was excerpted with permission from "State of Southwestern Foodsheds", A Special publication of Sabores Sin Fronteras, Southwest Center of the University of Arizona with Edible Communities, edited by Gary Paul Nabhan and Regina Fitzsimmons, www.uasouthwestcenter.org/folklore/sabores/

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Red Willow Farm—A community searching for reliable water

The Tohatchi Red Willow Farm is located approximately one mile SE of the Chuska Lake Reservoir from in the community of Tohatchi, NM. The land is managed by the Navajo Nation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for the purpose of farming and ranching. The Red Willow Farm was established during the Treaty of 1868 in Fort Sumner, NM and one year later it became officially established in 1869. The Chuska Lake Reservoir was built in 1934 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) along with local farmers and community members. Thus, the reservoir later became the lone source of water for the farmland by a man-made irrigation canal system. In 1987 the Navajo Nation formally recognized and certified the Red Willow Farm Land of the Tohatchi Community Chapter, Navajo Nation.

The farmland is approximately 938 acres with 124 plots. It is fenced in and has irrigation piping coming from the Chuska Lake Reservoir to the designated farm site. The plots are divided into an average of 2 to 5 acre lots. The plots require a farm permit that are available to each permittee from the BIA, Navajo Nation, and approved by the local chapter. Currently, there are 20 approved permittees producing a variety of agricultural crops for home use. The BIA has received an additional 30 permit requests that are pending approval for farm plot plans.

Currently, the Red Willow Farm Board is seeking funding for a drilled water well that is needed to provide consistent water for farming purposes. Persistent drought over the years has made it difficult to assure an annual crop that is necessary to increase food security in a state that has the second highest food insecurity in the nation.

Some pertinent facts: The per capita poverty rate is 30.8 % and childhood poverty is at 39.5 %. McKinley County has the highest diabetes rate in the state at 13.6 %. The unemployment of the area (Navajo Nation) is at 53 %. The Red Willow Project will benefit the health of community people, increase food security, and increase job opportunities. The community support is at 100 % and this project is supported by the Navajo Nation.

The Red Willow Farm Project is divided into three phases:

1) Irrigation—completed

2) Fencing—completed and

3) Water Well—pending.

The final phase is to construct/install a drilled water well for agricultural purposes specifically for farming. For example, the following are initial phases of the construction that are required for this project:

- a. Archeological clearances & studies. Completed.
- b. A mobilization and demobilization of equipment will be needed for drilling of a 17³/₄ inch hole from 0-1600 feet; well logging (gamma, neutron, S.P. and resistivity).
- c. Installation of 8 5/8 inch casing from 0-1600 feet; mud displacement, well cleaning and development; procurement of well casing, pump, cable, etc; pump test 24 hours.
- d. Final infrastructure installment of the water well at the final location.

The Red Willow Farm Board is currently seeking funding for the water well project at an estimated cost of \$580,000 to complete this infrastructure. The Red Willow Farm Board has been in outreach to several agencies throughout the states of New Mexico and Arizona such as local County and State officials, the BIA, Navajo Nation, and the USDA.

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Learning Zuni Farming

When I tell people what goes on at Zuni High School, their first response is often, “Students raise bees?” followed by, “Can I buy some honey?”

Although this is an important part of the class, it is not the defining activity; the class is so much more. I facilitate the transfer of knowledge concerning traditional Zuni farming practices. Mostly I try to teach as little as possible, while keeping these practices relevant to my students. This is accomplished by help from Zuni elders, Zuni community members and experts in select topics such as soils.

At first glance, it seems impossible that a large population of people could have grown sufficient food in and around Zuni. The last frost can occur in July, and on average, less than 10 inches of rain can be expected. One hundred years ago, the Zuni were able to feed themselves as well as sell or trade excess produce. Old pictures show fields of corn growing up to the mesa’s edge. Now much of that land is uncultivated.

The Zuni grew a diverse library of crops in a variety of ecozones for hundreds of years. Why were they so successful? Students learn the why and the how over the course of the class. They build and maintain a waffle garden, learn how to preserve food, build tools and examine modern food issues that have ancient roots. The Zuni waffle garden, which is a kitchen garden, occupies most of the class time. This is the vehicle to effect change. At school, students learn it imperfectly. Then they go home and ask about it, and it opens up a dialogue across generations. They mention that they are making a waffle garden to their grandparents, and in turn, by the end of the conversation, their grandparents teach them far more than I can. When the students are ready to plant, many return with priceless seeds from their families. The traditional Zuni waffle garden was done along riverbanks with mud walls. A modified version can be built anywhere in Zuni using any type of wall materials. The class works closely with Daniel Bowannie from the Zuni Natural Resource Office. He is a great asset for the tribe, and his extensive knowledge of traditional practices connects the students across time with their culture.

The students also learn much from their elders. Last year the class brought Zuni Tea to the Senior Center. The elders talked with them about the importance of the tea, the types, its uses, and how to store and use it.

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The students also learned how to make a digging stick, and use it much like a shovel. Back at the classroom they tied several hundred bundles of tea, and during the downtime in the winter, each student carved a digging stick.

Although taking care of bees is not the main focus of the class, it is still important, and students take care of 14 beehives from spring until fall. The idea of using bees came from Kurt Voss, who also teaches science at the high school. Kurt was a farmer in Kansas prior to being a teacher. The class purchased two beehives one year and 12 more the following year. Dave Matarazzo, the technology teacher, manages the beehives. He is really the bees’ advocate. Dave can often be seen trying to save every bee he comes across at the high school. This is often the most popular section of the class, even after the inevitable bee stings. Everyone is fascinated by the raw power the bees exude, and by their ability to produce honey from flowers. The sale of honey is used to help finance the class as well as to provide the art, music and science departments with supplemental funds.

Last year a student learned to make natural cosmetics from the natural resources found around Zuni. This year, students will learn about starting small businesses with the help of Michael Patrick from New Mexico State University. With Michael’s assistance, a grant was secured to teach the students these skills. Some of the future class projects will include community gardens with roof-runoff cisterns. I hope to work with the class in coming years on the genetics of corn and have students doing independent study on narrow topics related to Zuni agriculture such Zuni Tea farming.

William Becker is a science teacher at Zuni High School in Zuni, New Mexico. william.becker@zpsd.org

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Building Local Economies Together—Cooperatively

Approximately one in ten businesses fails. This is an unfortunate statistic, but one that helps us recognize that, even in prosperous times, starting and growing a business is hard. Cooperatively owned businesses, interestingly, have a much greater success rate—an estimated 50% of cooperative businesses succeed. One could easily speculate on the reasons for this—it could be the fact that the business starts out with greater support, given that it's of great benefit to the member/owners to support their own business through the democratic model of one member/one vote may help keep the business from getting in over its head as easy. Also, it is quite likely that the leveraging of resources and sharing of risk among many owners instead of one entrepreneur alone shouldering that burden helps capitalize the business without sinking the owners. There are many reasons for the success of cooperatives, and each cooperative success story is probably similar, but also with distinct characteristics attributed to its success or failure. In these tentative economic times, it is even more common to see cooperative businesses form. The idea of sharing risk and leveraging resources to meet a common goal becomes more appealing, when everyone has fewer resources to contribute on their own.

So, how does one go about starting a cooperative business? Enter the Southwest Cooperative Development Center, a newly formed rural economic development center that works to provide technical assistance and other services to groups wanting to form cooperatives or other mutually-owned businesses. The SW Co-op Center is a partnership between Farm to Table, La Montanita Co-op, and the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center. Some of you may have attended a session about the new co-op center and its work during the last SWMN conference in Gallup. The new SW Co-op Center brings together the resources of all three partners—who have each been doing their own great work to support cooperative development for several years, and coordinate services to groups in rural communities around the state who are interested in starting agricultural cooperatives, local food hubs, and cooperative retail food stores or alternative markets.

Demand for the services of the SW Co-op Center have already begun to grow and spread. At its inception, the SW Center took on five projects that were already in progress through the partner organizations'

efforts. In addition, the SW Center has conducted outreach and provided information, developed a web site and literature, and has been contacted by approximately 10 other groups for assistance. The interest is already growing beyond the stated area of focus (food system efforts) for the SW Center. Requests are coming in for everything from helping a dysfunctional water co-op to revive itself, to starting a new housing co-op in a historic downtown, to initiating a co-op book club. The SW Co-op Center's efforts are reaching into the north central, north east, Four Corners area, mid west, and even slightly into south central New Mexico, as well as into northeastern Arizona. Services include general information and education about cooperatives, technical assistance with basic start-up, board training and membership development, assistance identifying and securing funding, and other resources. The needs and circumstances for each cooperative and each community are different, and services are tailored to those needs.

In addition to providing technical assistance services to individual cooperatives and start-up groups, the SW Co-op Center attempts to conduct general outreach and education, and to initiate and facilitate other activities that will help strengthen cooperatives and the cooperative community in the southwest. One example of this is an upcoming event for October, which is National Co-op Month that will take place on Friday, October 28th in Albuquerque. This event is a Co-op Month Celebration—bringing together cooperatives from all around the state to demonstrate the diversity of the cooperative business model—showing everything from long-standing, large-scale cooperatives such as Rural Electric Co-ops, to credit unions, to small, start-up marketing co-ops and retail co-ops. The event will celebrate the success of cooperatives and their economic and social impacts—locally and statewide.

Visit the SW Co-op Center's web site at www.swcoop-center.org for details.

Susann Mikkelsen, Director, Southwest Cooperative Development Center

Join us to celebrate Co-op Month
on Friday, October 28, 2011 at the
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center,
Albuquerque, NM

For more information or to RSVP call 505-761-4953
or email kim.giang@nm.usda.gov

Reviving the Navajo Green Economy

In the spring of 2008, Black Mesa Water Coalition formed Diné Binaanish Yá'at'éehgo Nooséél (DBYN or Navajo Green Jobs), formerly called the Navajo Green Economy Coalition. DBYN was formed as a coalition of organizations and individuals to organize a Green Jobs initiative for the Navajo Nation. In addition to the Black Mesa Water Coalition, DBYN's current member organizations include the Grand Canyon Trust, the Sierra Club and New Energy Economy New Mexico. DBYN seeks to diversify the Navajo Nation's economy to make it more sustainable and less dependent on energy extraction and other industries that contradict our traditional values. Together with Navajo individuals, supporting organizations and local governments (chapters), DBYN has embarked on a precedent-setting approach to address local concerns of economic development and environmental justice, while contributing to the well-being of the planet as a whole by reducing carbon emissions and providing more sustainable energy options in the southwestern U.S.

DBYN partnered with the Speaker of the 21st Navajo Nation Council, Lawrence T. Morgan, and in July 2009, the Navajo Nation became the first tribal nation to adopt a green jobs policy. The "Navajo Nation Green Economy Commission" and the "Navajo Nation Green Economy Fund" were created as new entities within the tribal government to work across tribal departments helping to tackle the high unemployment rate and low per capita income on the Navajo Nation by supporting green job opportunities.

After the creation of the Fund and Commission, DBYN member organizations agreed to continue working on three priorities: 1) Community Education and Outreach, 2) Creation of a Navajo Green Business Incubator, and 3) Implementation of a Green and Sustainable Curriculum into Schools. Additionally, in October, 2010, DBYN hired Claudia Jackson as the DBYN coordinator to start moving the priorities forward.

DBYN and Black Mesa Water Coalition is partnering with Northern Arizona University and the National Science Foundation to educate local Navajo communities on climate change and the opportunities for solutions. The Navajo Nation has 110 Chapters spread across the Colorado Plateau into Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. DBYN will reach out to a majority of these communities to provide the Navajo people with

the knowledge they need to understand and think critically about environmental problems and solutions from the multi-disciplinary perspectives of environmental science, green technology and public health. Not only can they apply this to their daily lives; they can also learn about ways to create job opportunities in the green-business sector.

Many families are unaware of the typical meaning of "green," and an outreach and awareness process will help educate, engage and support advocates for green living. Although many families already practice sustainable farming and ranching on the Navajo Nation, there is still a great need to bring awareness of the importance of transitioning to a clean-energy economy. Therefore community outreach is required to bring awareness of traditional and modern techniques of sustainable living.

The Navajo Nation's first Green Business Incubator will educate new entrepreneurs and grow local and regional opportunities by creating a new green-business marketplace and cultivating a knowledgeable community that fuses talent, capital and opportunity. The incubator will offer hands-on business incubation programs by partnering with established entities on the Navajo Nation that can provide clients with equipment, capital resources, intellectual property and shared working spaces. An extensive network of mentors with various areas of professional expertise will be involved.

The network is expanding nationally with two members, Anna Rondon and Claudia Jackson, becoming part of the Green For All Leadership Academy, 5th Class Fellow Candidates, 2011-2012. The Fellowship and Academy Program aims to expand, educate and engage the base of support for climate solutions and a clean-energy economy in America. It does this by identifying and cultivating local leaders from communities of color and low-income communities across the nation, and helping them develop and apply their skills and resources to organize for change in their cities. Green For All Fellows are on-the-ground leaders in the movement to create an inclusive green economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty.

For more info and to contact Claudia Jackson, visit:
www.navajogreenjobs.com.

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The full issue is available at www.greenfiretimes.com.

New Mexico Farmer to Farmer Training

Española will be the site for this year's Farmer to Farmer training. This will be the second year of the training offered by Farm to Table with a grant from the USDA-NIFA through the Western Center for Risk Management Education. During the eight-week session, participants will go on farm tours, enjoy networking dinners and participate in discussions led by experienced farmers and others.

The goal of the session is to assist farmers in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their enterprise and how to create a plan to make their farm sustainable. In addition, expansion into new markets, alternative financing, quality assurance practices and marketing will be covered.

Last year the training was held in Albuquerque and one participant said "This class was immensely helpful, has gotten me motivated to organize, plan, and otherwise act to turn our farm into a profitable enterprise."

There is room for twenty participants in the session that takes place on Tuesdays from 4:30 -7:30 pm and begins mid-November and ends January 17th. The cost is \$100 to cover meals. Some scholarships may be available. Once farmers have completed the program they are eligible to participate in a one-on-one, farmer to farmer mentoring program.

An informational brochure, applications for the Farmer to Farmer training and scholarship applications can be found on Farm to Table's website at www.farm-totablenm.org. Applications are due by November 1st. Sessions will be held on area farms and at the Rio Arriba Health Commons in Española.

Farm to Table is grateful to Lauren Reichelt, Health and Human Services Director for Rio Arriba County, the National Center for Appropriate Technology and Washington and Colorado State Universities for their support of this Building Farmers in the West program. See www.buildingfarmersinthewest.org for more information on this program happening in 7 western states, including NM and AZ.

FoodCorps Comes to New Mexico

In September, Farm to Table welcomed FoodCorps member, Kristi Silva, to the office for a one-year term of service. FoodCorps is a national nonprofit, affiliated with AmeriCorps, which seeks to reverse childhood obesity in limited-resource communities. FoodCorps has recognized that to do this, children need to learn more about healthy food in the classroom, in the garden, and in the cafeteria. Fifty FoodCorps members are serving in ten states in this its first year. Arizona and New Mexico are the states in our region that have been given this opportunity. Kristi joined FoodCorps to learn more about the role of locally-based agriculture in chronic disease prevention in disparate populations.

Her year of service will involve many tasks, the primary of which is a food system mapping project. This dynamic resource tool will be used to analyze New Mexico's food system to provide a resource to be utilized by the agriculture, public health, farm to school, civic engagement, policy-making, and research communities to strengthen the understanding of the local food system and how it relates to the economic vitality and health of the people of New Mexico. Beyond a general understanding of the local food system, this project will aid in the identification of farms and their distribution routes and processing sites, schools participating in food-related programs and school gardens and relevant determinants of health.

Kristi is returning to her native New Mexico after working in Munich, Germany for two years as a Guest Scientist at the Technische Universität München, where she worked to identify sociocultural determinants of pediatric cardiovascular disease in children, a study funded by the German Heart Foundation. Her areas of interest include health disparity & inequity, social epidemiology and chronic disease prevention. She is an alumna of Drake University, the University of Texas and the University of Texas School of Public Health.

Farm to Table staff

Free Food System Tools from HCFS

Healthy Community Food Systems (HCFS) is continuing to develop resource booklets or “Food System Tools” on a variety of topics to help communities rebuild their local food systems. These free Tools are meant to be viewed on-line and printed out as needed for meetings, outreach to the public, and trainings. Several of these Tools have more extensive on-line resources as well.

These Tools have been developed with funding from The Christensen Fund and Healthy Lifestyle La Plata/LiveWell Colorado. We have funding from Christensen to meet with Tribal groups to discuss and provide assistance on any of these topics, and to develop Tools on other topics as needed. Contact Jim Dyer (jadyer@frontier.net) to find out more.

Click on “Food System Tools” on the SWMN website (www.swmarketingnetwork.org) to be directed to these Tools:

Overview Tools (introduces a food system topic)?

- Rebuilding Your Local Food System
- Extending the Local Food Season
- Climate-Friendly Food Systems
- Biodiverse & Wildlife-Friendly Food Systems
- Year-Round Local Food Calendars
- How and Why to Buy Local
- Native Farming Practices
- Organic & Sustainable by Tradition
- USDA Organic Certification: An Option for Traditional Farmers
- Alternatives to Organic Certification for Traditional Farmers

“How To” Tools (helps you implement an activity)

- Eat Local Cooking Competition
- Farmer-Chef Connection Event
- Starting a Buy Local Food Campaign

Resource Lists (links to key resources)

- Farm to School—How to Buy Local
- Farm to School for Producers
- Farm to School Educational Activities

Jim Dyer, Healthy Community Food Systems

Colorado Farm to School Primer

Even if you don’t live in Colorado, this 30-page Primer will provide you a comprehensive view of the many aspects, issues, and rewards of Farm to School as well as how to reap its many benefits. Patterned loosely after the excellent Vermont Primer, this publication explains

- What is Farm to School all about?
- How does school food work—just the basics?
- What is happening in Farm to School now?
- How can gardens and educational activities support better local food in schools?
- What is the potential of Farm to School for our children, farmers and ranchers, and communities?
- How can you get involved?

The basic message is that there are many wide-ranging benefits of a well-designed comprehensive Farm to School program. Schools are encouraged to take the first steps, however small, to get started, and then continue to raise the bar over time so that all potential benefits are achieved.

A recent webinar on the Primer had exciting reports on communities that are supplying schools with fresh food from school/community gardens, farmers successfully selling produce to schools, food service directors forming regional associations that provide training for their members on how to budget for, purchase and prepare fresh local food.

Kelsey Reeder and Jim Dyer of Healthy Community Food Systems wrote the Primer which was published by LiveWell Colorado.

You can view and print the Primer online at: www.livewellcolorado.org/FTSPrimer. A recording of the webinar on the Primer as well as a copy of the presentation are now available at about.livewellcolorado.org/livewell-toolbox/webinars/webinars.

Building Community Power to Eliminate Food Deserts in the Borderlands

The Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona has served Pima County in Arizona for 35 years and is known as a national leader and model in bringing together emergency food distribution with local food systems development in a continuum of services. Four years ago, the food bank acquired contracts to serve additional counties of Santa Cruz, Cochise, Graham and Greenlee counties. Two years ago, the Community Food Resource Center was approached by WhyHunger to lead a project looking at rural food deserts in the new service area counties. WhyHunger became the catalyst for Somos La Semilla, "We Are the Seed," a network of leaders from varying sectors in borderland counties of Cochise, Pima and Santa Cruz Counties to develop strategies that combat high rates of diet related diseases and poverty that characterize borderland communities.

Since their major February 2010 gathering, Somos La Semilla has organized and sponsored two farm tour educational events with about 800 people attending; established a small seed money and technical assistance grant program to distribute resources to groups wishing to invest in community food projects in the network area; is sponsoring three Fresh Fest events in Santa Cruz County; and, is researching collective leadership and consultation/training models. Somos La Semilla is also contributing our story to WhyHunger for the use in a toolkit about food deserts for the online Food Security Learning Center. To learn more about Somos La Semilla visit www.somoslasemilla.org.

Kelly Watters, Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, kwatters@communityfoodbank.org

Calendar of Events

October 28-29, 2011 • Traditional Agriculture & Sustainable Living Conference—"Children of the Earth Unite –Sharing Traditional Knowledge to Restore the Health of our World" • Española, NM

Hosted by Four Bridges Traveling Permaculture Institute, Institute of Natural & Traditional Knowledge, the Pueblo of Tesuque, Sostenga, TNAFA, and others. The conference will address food security and sustainable ecology in the 21st century, food and nutrition, water issues, traditional farming, land restoration, and medicinal herbs.

Keynote speakers Vandana Shiva, Percy Schmeiser, and Galen Knight. At Northern New Mexico College in Española. For further information, visit www.fourbridges.farming.officelive.com

November 8-11, 2011 • Quivira Coalition's 10th Anniversary Conference—"New Agrarians: How the Next Generation Leaders Tackle 21st Century Challenges" • Albuquerque, NM

"Across the nation, a new agrarian movement, centered on food and land health, is growing into a dynamic force. Led by youth (including the young-at-heart) and their mentors, this burgeoning movement is tackling some of the most daunting challenges of our time: food security, land restoration, conservation, climate adaptation and sustainable prosperity. In the process, they are overturning traditional paradigms of conservation and agriculture. In this Conference we will hear from a wide variety of new farm, ranch and conservation leaders and their innovative, hands-on ideas and practices that are changing the way we look at the land, our water and ourselves." Courtney White, Executive Director, Quivira Coalition

For more information, contact Catherine Baca at: cbaca@quiviracoalition.org or visit the Quivira website: http://quiviracoalition.org/10th_Anniversary_Conference/index.html

Register online at: http://quiviracoalition.org/10th_Anniversary_Conference/Online_Registration/index.html

Go to www.swmarketingnetwork.org to find updated information on the Southwest Marketing Network and other activities in our region. For more events outside our region, visit the ATTRA calendar at www.attra.ncat.org/calendar/index.php

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