



# Southwest Marketing Network

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

*Promoting Local Ag Marketing in the Southwest*

December 2002

## Nested Networks

Digging potatoes a few days ago, I was thinking of the seed catalog I had read last winter touting the “nests” of potatoes that their featured variety would yield. And sure enough, the next turn of the fork uncovered just such a nest of Yukon Golds. Certain words and phrases just seem to possess a great deal of richness. Digging those nests of potatoes brought to mind another such phrase that I have found useful over the years—mostly when I am struggling with how things fit together—“nested networks.”

When we try to define local food, and how far we “should” go to get it, the easy answer for me is “as close to home as we can.” As much from our home garden near Durango as possible, then from neighboring gardeners and farmers, then just across the state line to New Mexico with its endless growing season as compared to ours. And yes, perhaps coffee and pineapples from far away—but more as the exception than the norm. A series of food supply networks, nested if you will, in this case centered ideally on the home garden, and moving outward—but with restraint and reason.

Similarly, as we struggle with how our Southwest Marketing Network fits in with the many groups of producers, marketers, and service providers in the region, I return to the nested networks model. It’s not a concentric model in this case, but overlapping networks of different scales, in different areas, and dealing with different products and services.

As we compiled our mailing list of organizations in the region for our first survey (described inside), we realize just how rich a set of groups exist in many areas of the Southwest—and how disconnected they often are on a regional level. Our hope is that the Southwest Marketing Network may help link these networks to the marketing resources they need and to each other, to learn from one another, to avoid duplication of efforts, and to work together toward common goals. In this way they won’t just overlap, they will “nest” together in a more deliberate and useful fashion.

*Jim Dyer, Project Director*

## Our Goal

The goal of this project is to ensure that new, existing, and prospective Southwest producers—especially small-scale, alternative, and minority producers—have the connections with others, technical and financial assistance, marketing information, business and marketing skills, and peer examples needed to improve their marketing success as a means to improve their profitability, viability, and numbers.

## Survey

This month we sent out a survey called "Agricultural Training and Information Needs in the Four Corners" to over 300 key organizational contacts in the Four Corner states. We hope to gain important insights about the current training and information capacity in agricultural marketing, as well as the needs of producers and organizations, in these states. The information will help us tailor the project's training and information and, we hope, provide information to other resource providers. Look for details about the results of the survey in the spring of 2003. **If you received a survey, please help us by returning it as soon as possible.**

*Lydia Oberholtzer*

## Website

[www.swmarketing.ncat.org](http://www.swmarketing.ncat.org)

Our fledgling website for the Southwest Marketing Network, is up and running. It currently features an initial list of resources, a calendar and the last newsletter issue. We welcome your suggestions for content, and we expect many changes to the site as we respond to your ideas! If you have questions or information needs that you would like to see addressed on the site, or if you would like to publicize a regional event or training please send an email to:

[teresam@ncatark.uark.edu](mailto:teresam@ncatark.uark.edu)

*Teresa Maurer*



**New Mexico Organic Farming & Gardening Expo**, February 7-8, 2003. Featured speakers include Wes Jackson, author and founder of *The Land Institute* and Deborah Madison, noted chef and author. A sampling of topics for 24 workshops: Soil Building, Organic Greenhouses, Selling What You Sow, Grazing Management for Organic Livestock, Organic Goat and Sheep Production, Beekeeping Native and Adapted Trees for Windbreaks and Shelterbelts. For more information contact: NMOCC at 505-266-9849, [joan.quinn@state.nm.us](mailto:joan.quinn@state.nm.us) or The Farm Connection at 505-579-4386.

*Lynda Prim*

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# Networking Partnerships

The Southwest Marketing Network (SWMN) was initiated to increase regional marketing expertise and opportunities for farmers and ranchers, especially those in more isolated areas of the Four Corner states. The SWMN brings together projects already “on-the-ground”, their sponsors, and participants to learn together and form a network with a structure responsive to the needs of the participants. Most important is that it takes partnerships to develop and implement lasting projects in our communities. The SWMN has partners who are dedicated to community-based food systems. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the USDA Risk Management Agency provide funding to this project as well as tools that directly benefit the farmers, ranchers, organizations and agencies involved.

The Kellogg Foundation’s Food and Society initiative is based on a vision of a local food system for all segments of society. A local food system provides safe and nutritious food grown in a manner that protects health and the environment and adds economic and social value to rural and urban communities. The Foundation is focused on partnering to support farmers and ranchers producing and marketing their products to consumers, either directly or through restaurants, grocery stores and other local venues. The Foundation and the SWMN are a strong partnership with common goals.

The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) supports the SWMN’s objectives to develop lasting connec-

tions between farmers and ranchers, producer groups, agencies, organizations and others involved in marketing in the Southwest. Their assistance will help the SWMN develop programs for producers and groups, especially small-scale, alternative and minority producers participating in our trainings, conferences, and gleaned information from the website and newsletter.

The USDA RMA offers additional assistance to farmers and ranchers such as crop insurance for more than 100 crops. James Turner of RMA’s regional office in Oklahoma states, “Our policies, such as the ‘Multiple Peril Crop Insurance’, insure producers against losses due to natural causes such as drought, hail, wind, frost, insects, and disease.” RMA provides a comprehensive education program that helps producers understand and make effective use of risk management tools and strategies, and to integrate them into their business, personal and community goals. Farmers and ranchers can access the USDA website for local weather forecasts and direct assistance to help in day-to-day decision making in their businesses. For more information log onto [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov)

These partnerships, as well as the Cooperative Extension Services, Departments of Agriculture, tribal agencies and many other groups bring valuable resources to the SWMN. We look forward to sharing them with you!

*Pam Roy*

## SW Marketing Network Conference

- **First annual conference** in Durango March 31 and April 1, 2003. We are planning a working conference for participants to share, learn, and engage with fellow participants to improve local marketing in the region.
- **Who should come:** Individuals and organizations who can commit to participate fully in one of the Collaborative Work Sessions (below), before, during and after the conference.
- **Planned Collaborative Work Sessions:** Cooperative Marketing, Farmers’ Market Development, Institutional Purchasing of Local Food, State Level

Policy Initiatives, Ecolabel Opportunities in the SW, and Marketing Issues for Very Small-Scale and Minority Producers.

- **Planned Trainings and Presentations:** ecolabels, organic marketing, tools for collaboration, business planning, Southwest marketing success stories, selling to schools and other institutions, starting and enhancing farmers’ markets, cooperative marketing, how to change policy, and much more.
- **Poster Sessions, Resource Room full of success stories, Great Local Food!**

See Back Page Calendar Listing for Contact Information

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Marketing in the Southwest*

## Calendar of Events

**December 17, 2002** • Chew on This! Get to Know Your Food Conference, Telluride, CO  
Contact: Green Media Works at 970-728-8701 or [info@greenmediaworks.org](mailto:info@greenmediaworks.org)

**February 3-10, 2003** • North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference, Charlotte, NC  
Contact: 888-884-9270 or [www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com)

**February 6, 2003** • Colorado Produce Convention and Trade Show, Pueblo, CO  
Contact: Frank Sobolik at 719-583-6566 or [fsobolik@coop.ext.colostate.edu](mailto:fsobolik@coop.ext.colostate.edu)

**February 7-8, 2003** • NM Organic Farming and Gardening Expo, near Santa Fe, NM  
Contact: NMOCC at 505-266-9849 or [joan.quinn@state.nm.us](mailto:joan.quinn@state.nm.us)

**February 20, 2003** • Colorado Agricultural Outlook Conference, Denver, CO  
Contact: David Carlson at 303-239-4112

**February 24, 2003** • Arizona Direct Farm Marketing and Tourism Conference, Young's Farm, Dewey, AZ  
Contact Russ Tronstad, 520-621-2425 or [tronstad@ag.arizona.edu](mailto:tronstad@ag.arizona.edu)

**March 31-April 1, 2003** • Small Farm & Ranch Marketing Conference  
(Southwest Marketing Network), Durango, CO  
Contact: 505-473-1004, [pamelaroy@aol.com](mailto:pamelaroy@aol.com) or [ladams@cybermesa.com](mailto:ladams@cybermesa.com)

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