



## CHAPTER IV

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# 1. A PROFILE OF FARMERS' MARKETS

**Assessment Methodology.** Each of the markets listed below was researched for information regarding date, time, and location. Several interviews were conducted with market managers and farmers to address the issues surrounding and faced by markets and to discuss the community and food resources they bestow. Also, in consumer surveys, participants were asked to identify food resources in the community. When this question was asked, a common response was the farmers' market.

## USDA STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

- The number of farmers' markets in the United States has grown dramatically, increasing 111 percent from 1994 to 2004.
- According to the 2004 National Farmers' Market Directory, there are over 3,700 farmers' markets operating in the United States.

## INTRODUCTION

All over the country, farmers' markets have captured the heart and the spirit of the people in the communities they serve. Historically the only way to access fresh foods, consumers are returning to open-air markets and realizing the many benefits of purchasing food directly from the people who produce it.

The San Juan Basin is home to several markets, and following national trends, many new markets keep appearing. In 2006 eight were identified in the region.

Each of the markets profiled is unique in its own right. Some markets boast they only carry products from a 60-mile radius, and others have no limitations as to where the food comes from. Some simply ask vendors to show up when they have anything to sell. Some are producer-run, while others hire outside managers to run them.

*"Farmers' markets are advantageous because producers can get into one without the expectation that the CSA brings. Farmers can put their best foot forward and sell what they have."*

**Adrian Card, CSU  
Extension Agent,  
Boulder County**

## THE FARMERS' MARKET DIRECTOR PERSPECTIVE

Peg Redford, who has managed the Durango Farmers' Market (DFM) for two consecutive seasons, spoke in length about how many aspects of community development a farmers' market supports.

*"The more we grow as a town, the more the farmers' market can create an anchor for community-based relationships around the subject of food. But it's so much more than food; It's a space for music, for kids... It's a healing place."* **Peg Redford**

*"Many people come (to the market) for the community connection. The personal connection and enthusiasm is phenomenal. All of the growers are passionate about what they are doing. The market creates a place for slow food. People stop and spend time at the market for three hours. People stay and visit with each other."*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/facts.htm>

## THE CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE

It's clear the community at large views a farmers' market as a food resource in the community. When asked to identify food resources for the purposes of the CFA, farmers' markets were listed consistently.

Farmers' markets have been identified as venues that support:

- Quality food that people want
- Education
- Community exchange
- Kids' activities

## PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

As an example of very basic market research, two farmers' market coordinators were asked what items there could be more of at their markets. Peg identified a few items that either sell out very fast at DFM, or could be good items for local producers to consider: "Farm eggs, because no one can bring that many eggs. Vendors bring 10-12 dozen and sell out very fast. Goat cheese and yogurt could be a possibility. Although, these items have more complex regulations for processing and selling."

Rosie Carter, who sells at the Cortez Farmers' Market, suggests growers think about fresh berries. "Someone could do really well with berries. More fruit would do really well. No one in Cortez is making an effort to grow fruit." She also suggests there could be more produce offered in Cortez, and that a business offering bread and other baked goods and snacks is something the Cortez market is lacking.

The Farmington and Aztec Farmers' Markets have slightly different products available. New Mexico is home to a warmer climate and has greater cultural support for ethnic foods. Green chilies, melons, squash and fruit are common items at New Mexico farmers' markets.

## SUPPLY

There is a demand for more local food. However, in order to expand markets there must be enough local supply to support the expansion. On the consumer end there have been requests for one more market a week held in a variety of locations and venues. For this to happen there must be producer interest and willingness to participate in more markets and to simply grow more food.

Expanding production can be a scary thing for producers, who may already be pleased with their current circumstances. According to Peg Redford, "Right now supply and demand are pretty equal (at the DFM), but most definitely the demand is growing. Bread Bakery cannot bring enough product; they always sell out. Vendors such as James Ranch Artisan Cheese, Stonefree Farms and Sutherland Farms all have lines five-people deep before the 8 o'clock chime rings. At the end of market everything is gone! People are sold out." The DFM receives between 600 – 1,000 customers a week.

This is a list of some of the products available at regional farmers' markets:

- Produce
- Beef, pork and lamb
- Chilis
- Herbs
- Fresh baked goods
- Fruit
- Farmstead Cheese
- Honey
- Tinctures
- Flowers
- Plants – house, vegetable, and flower
- Candles
- Pottery
- Wool
- Soap

## CLIENTELE DIVERSITY

Each market hosts a slightly different clientele. In Durango the patrons are mostly Anglo, which is something Peg Redford would like to change. She wants the Latino population to feel comfortable at the DFM, but she realizes they aren't at this point. She attributes this to several factors. "Latinos don't perceive the DFM as 'their market'. Many don't own land here, so they can't be vendors. This means they cannot purchase food from other Latinos. Also, many don't speak enough English to ask about prices... they can't communicate this and are shy to come to the market."

"I would like to see more outreach to low-income, WIC recipients, and the Native American and Latino populations that I don't see at the DFM.

These people deserve to have whole, fresh foods as well."

**Peg Redford**

To address some of the issues surrounding ethnic diversity at the DFM and to increase access of fresh, local foods to the low-income sector of the local population, Beth LaShell, Professor at Fort Lewis College and Research Associate at the San Juan Basin Research Station, has proposed a series of creative solutions. In

December of 2006, Beth submitted a grant proposal to the Western Division of the Sustainable Agriculture, Research, and Education Program (WSARE) to connect county WIC recipients to local food sources. According to Beth, the project hopes to "strengthen local agriculture in Southwest Colorado by increasing awareness and education (through) monthly farm tours and general nutrition and cooking training for low-income program participants." She also hopes it will expand the customer base at the DFM to be more inclusive. This should ultimately result in new relationships between customers and producers that will encourage greater sustainability in the production of local foods.

The Cortez Farmers' Market (CFM) is a different scene. According to Rosie Carter, though the market has changed as Cortez has changed, it still supports a pretty diverse clientele. When Rosie first began selling products at the CFM twelve years ago, the market had the reputation for being the place to go to get cheap food. At that time, items were hawked by the bushel or in bulk, rather than sold individually as is more commonly seen today. What you see more of now, she says, is that "farmers' market prices are more competitive with grocery stores; farmers seem to be selling things to actually make a living."

The Farmington Farmer's Market (FFM) hosts an EBT Program, meaning they accept food stamps for farmers' market goods, and a WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Both of these programs attempt to diversify the farmers' market atmosphere by making locally produced, fresh foods available to Food Stamp and WIC participants through coupons redeemable at the market. For this reason, the FFM now hosts an additional market each week, on Tuesdays, as the organizers found low-income customers were more likely to shop on a weekday evening rather than on the weekends.

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## A FARMERS' MARKET DIRECTORY



### AZTEC

**Location:** Westside Plaza in Aztec, NM

**Time:** Wednesdays, 4:30PM – 6PM

**Description:** The Aztec Farmers' Market hosts an EBT Program, which means Food Stamps are redeemable at the market.

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### BAYFIELD

**Location:** Bayfield Town Park, Highway 160 just west of Bayfield, CO

**Time:** 8:30AM – 12PM

**Description:** This market started 16 years ago in Gem Village. It is now housed in beautiful Town Park off of Highway 160 under the cottonwood trees that line the Pine River. The market hosts approximately 10 vendors, mostly producers and some craft people. The market welcomes anyone interested in selling his or her products and does not charge for membership. This market was started by a group of dedicated regional farmers who first hoped to sell their products in the city of Durango. The market later moved to its current home of Bayfield Town Park. The Bayfield Farmers' Market (BFM) is still very loose in structure. In fact, the person who runs the market prefers it this way and hopes that this type of market will continue to encourage backyard gardeners and those interested in trying to farm to, in essence, test their products for market in this comfortable, laid-back setting. The BFM tries to encourage as much local product be sold as possible, but occasionally it does have vendors re-selling products from the Palisade region of the state.

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### CORTEZ

**Location:** Cortez Courthouse Parking Lot on Main Street in Cortez, CO

**Time:** Saturdays, 7:30AM – 11AM

**Description:** The Cortez Farmers' Market is hosted by the Montezuma Cooperative Extension Office and has been running for 27 years. It has approximately 40 vendors who sell all types of fresh produce, dry beans, honey, beef and lamb. They also host live music every weekend and host a wellness tent that offers massage, aromatherapy, facials and more.

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### **DOLORES**

**Location:** Town Hall Parking Lot, 420 Railroad in Dolores, CO

**Time:** Wednesdays, 4PM

**Description:** Five years ago, the owner of the Dolores Food Market, Tazwell Vass, started this farmers' market in his grocery's parking lot. Eventually outgrowing this location, it moved to Town Hall and now has about 15 vendors. The market is laid-back in nature; vendors pay no fees, show up when they have something to sell and stay until they are sold out. The Dolores market hosts many backyard gardeners as well as production-size farms.

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### **DURANGO**

**Location:** First National Bank Parking Lot, 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Durango, CO

**Time:** Saturdays, 8AM – 12PM

**Season:** Mid May – the end of October

**Description:** “It is the mission of the Durango Farmers Market (DFM) to strengthen community ties to agriculture by providing a venue for regional agricultural producers to sell their products. By preserving open space, by promoting healthy farming practices and by providing educational benefits through hands-on experience, the DFM seeks to improve the quality of life for all community members.” The DFM is a locally based market, sourcing food, fiber, and crafts from within a 60-mile radius. They host approximately fifty vendors, kids' activities, a Master Gardener booth and live music.

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### **FARMINGTON**

**Location:** Animas Park, off Browning Parkway in Farmington, NM

**Time:** Saturdays, 8AM – 11AM, Tuesdays, 4:30PM – 6:30PM

**Season:** First week in July – mid October

**Description:** This market is run by the Cooperative Extension Office and the Farmington Chamber of Commerce. It hosts farmers and ranchers from within a 100-mile radius from backyard to full production scale. The market has been in operation since 1992 and has up to 30 vendors. It hosts a WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, where WIC participants are issued coupons specifically for fresh market produce, and in 2007 will host a Food Stamp EBP Program to accept food stamps for market produce. The Extension Office offers recipes, food preservation tips, some cooking demonstrations and gardening fact sheets to customers.

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## MANCOS

**Location:** 300 North Willow Street, at the corner of Willow and Hwy 160 in Mancos, CO

**Time:** Thursdays, 3PM – 6PM

**Season:** June – October

**Description:** This market just completed its first year. It was started by the people at Zuma Natural Foods in Mancos, whose goal is to support ethical consumer choices and local food systems.

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## TELLURIDE

**Location:** South Oak Street in Telluride, CO

**Season:** June – October

**Time:** Fridays, 12PM – 4PM

**Description:** Started just 4 years ago, the Telluride market is home to approximately 15-20 local vendors. The market carries fresh organic fruits and vegetables, grass-fed elk, buffalo, lamb and beef, and items such as honey, juice, cider, jams, fresh breads, herbal tinctures and fresh-cut flowers.

## 2. CHARITABLE FOOD PROGRAMS

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**Assessment Methodology:** The information for this section came from 23 Growing Partners Program Surveys completed as in-person interviews by staff and volunteers. Due to time restraints, some of the surveys were completed without interviews. The surveys were completed between May and September 2006. The surveys were presented as a tool to identify the food needs and resources of the communities the programs serve, and to provide a baseline of information on all the programs in the area that either offer food or may be interested in future community food projects.

### THE BEGINNINGS OF A RESOURCE GUIDE

A need for an accessible list of charitable food programs was expressed by two agencies serving low-

“We have enough food, but it's not in the right place at the right time. It's a matter of communicating with people to know what is where and when.”

Lon Irwin, Director Food SHARE

income individuals and their families in La Plata and Archuleta counties. They wanted a guide to serve low-income program recipients and agencies, leading these people to further available food resources.<sup>2</sup> Although it does not currently contain contact information for the programs it mentions, the guide is meant to create greater awareness about the agencies that offer food-

related programming in the area. It is the hope of Growing Partners to further develop this section of the assessment to meet the needs of specific organizations and individuals.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: This request was made by an agency that serves the Latino, and mostly recent, immigrant population. Their hope was that there could be a guide to serve those just arriving to the county, who were not familiar with charitable programs, with those resources available to them in the community.

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### 1. USDA COMMODITIES, THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)

#### Mission or Goal

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) supplements the diets of low-income needy persons, including elderly people, by providing emergency food and nutrition assistance.

“This program is available to all people within the guidelines regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap, according to quantities available.”

**Commodities Food Distribution flyer**

#### Background

Emergency Food Assistance is distributed in Durango at the La Plata County Fairgrounds for the Durango and Ignacio communities, and in Bayfield at the Senior Center. The distributions are made by the Durango Food Bank on a quarterly basis. Quantities are limited, so they are distributed on a first come, first served basis.

#### Population served

Participants must qualify based on monthly income levels. Income is based on household size compared to monthly earnings. For current income guidelines, contact the Durango Food Bank.

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### 2. DURANGO FOOD BANK

#### Background

This service is only offered to participants once every three months. Thus, it is designed to help people in an emergency situation. The Food Bank distributes exclusively on donated food from places like City Market, Albertson’s, food drives (at the Post Office) and donor bins in the City Market and Albertson’s grocery stores. They also receive leftover items from the Food Share Program’s distributions.

#### Population served

Participants can be anyone living in La Plata County who obtains a referral to the Food Bank from an accredited agency. These referrals verify the clients’ need for service by requiring the applicant to fill out a form that provides basic information about them. Referrals come from agencies like Human Services, the VOA Shelter, the Safe House, Community Connections and local churches.



### 3. FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

#### Mission or Goal

Food Stamps Make America Stronger: The Food Stamp Program helps people with little or no income buy nutritious food.

#### Background

The La Plata County Food Stamp Program office is housed in the Office of Social Services in Durango. For someone to qualify, he or she must submit an application. Food stamps are issued in monetary allotments based on the number of people in the household who qualify. They can be used at local grocery stores and convenience stores that accept food stamps to purchase food. Food stamps cannot be used to buy alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, household supplies or other non-food items. They cannot be used for food that will be eaten in the store, or for hot foods that are ready to eat.

#### Population served

Participants are required to have a Social Security Number and must qualify based on income. Other resources, such as bank accounts, household resources and assets, must be below a certain level.

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### 4. FOOD SHARE

#### Mission or Goal

The goal of Food SHARE is to help families save about 50% on their groceries, while encouraging the building of relationships with their neighbors in the community.

#### Background

Food SHARE is a once-a-month food program that operates much like a co-op buying club. Participants can order food through the Archdiocese of Denver, which purchases food in bulk and ships orders from a central warehouse facility in Colorado Springs. Regionally, Cortez, Aztec, Mancos, Dolores and Durango receive Food SHARE deliveries.

#### Population served

If you eat, you qualify.

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"The program appeals to underserved, low-income populations, but people of many different backgrounds participate."  
**Lon Irwin, Food SHARE Program Coordinator**



### 5. MANNA SOUP KITCHEN

#### Mission

We provide nourishing meals for those who are hungry in the name of Jesus Christ.

#### Goal

To assure that in this community of plenty, no one goes hungry. A hot nutritious meal is served seven days per week to all those in need.

## Background

Manna Soup Kitchen was founded in May 1986. In the winter of 1985 a woman died from starvation and exposure at the Durango Fairgrounds in a horse stall. Written on the wall were the words “Nobody cares.” This tragedy resulted in a small group of Christians organizing to provide food for the hungry. Meals were served in motor home parking lot on tables carried from the basement of the Spanish Assembly of God Church. This became Manna’s permanent home for the next 8 years. In 1992, Sacred Heart Catholic Church offered their parish hall to serve meals. By 2000, plans were made for a facility to serve over 150 persons a hot meal, out of the rain and snow. The new facility was completed in 2002.

“We provide people with a warm, safe, communal place to go.”

**Kim Workman, Manna Soup Kitchen**

## Population served

All hungry persons, including college students, single parents, low income families, the working poor and anyone else in need. There is no geographic boundary for the population served; Manna has clients from Farmington, Ignacio and other communities. In 2005, the soup kitchen served 36,124 meals, which works out to be approximately 100 meals per day.

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## 6. SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE, FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

### Mission or Goal

To provide food assistance to Tribal members.

## Background

Historically the Bureau of Indian Affairs would distribute food rations as federal food assistance to the Tribe. The US Government allotted food rations to each native family at a time when they were trying to convert many of the Utes into subsistence farmers. Dave Sanford, of Tribal Extension Services, recalls, “Truckloads of food would be ordered from all over the state. In the old days this is how many of the Tribal members got their food, their staples, and they would hang on to these and use them throughout the year.” This system, mostly due to tradition, is still in place today. Although it has changed slightly, it is now administered by the Tribe. Similar to the USDA Commodities Program that serves La Plata County, this program offers federal commodity shipments, but they are exclusively for Tribal members.

## Population served

Southern Ute Tribal members.

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## 7. WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN PROGRAM (WIC)

### Mission or Goal

“WIC was established more than 30 years ago to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. It provides nutritious foods to supplement diets (in the form of grocery store vouchers), as well as providing

“Sometimes the food provided by WIC is the only food available to a family.”

**Betzi Murphy, M.S. R.D.,  
WIC Director**

information on healthy eating, breastfeeding, and referrals to other health care and social service programs.” Betzi Murphy, Area WIC Director

### **Background**

The WIC foods offered at no charge to participants often include milk, cheese, eggs, cereal, juice and peanut butter or beans. Currently, changes in the foods packages are in the works and may soon allow for more variety and flexibility in what is offered.

Examples of some agencies and programs that WIC staff may refer their clientele to include: Medicaid, Head-Start, San Juan Kids, the Nurse-Family Partnership program, Dept. of Human Services, Health Care Program for Children with Special Needs, prenatal and family planning care, doctor and dental offices and immunization programs.

### **Population served**

Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding (up to 1 year after delivery), non-breastfeeding women (up to 6 months after delivery), infants up to 1 year of age, and children up to age 5 are eligible. They must meet a state residency requirement and income guidelines. The San Juan Basin Health Department WIC serves La Plata, San Juan, and Archuleta counties.

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## **OTHER AGENCIES OFFERING FOOD PROGRAMS WITH AN INTEREST IN COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS**

There are over 100 non-profit and public service agencies in La Plata County. Many of these agencies, while it is not their primary mission, offer food related programming and services. This is a list of agencies and some of the food related programs they offer.

This by no means is a complete list, but can be used as an example of how connecting with other agencies in a community creates a stronger, diverse network in which to offer and address food-related programming.

“There needs to be communication between agencies so resources are pooled, not abused.”  
**Angie Raulston, First United Methodist Church**

### **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS INCORPORATED**

**Mission or Goal:** To educate businesses, families, and communities to be advocates for change and to promote independence and to provide opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

**Population served:** The developmentally disabled

**Food related programs offered:** Grocery services, nutrition and cooking classes.

**Community food projects of interest:** They have a greenhouse and garden space that they would like to get up and running. They also have interest in farm tours for their participants and cooking classes.

### **DURANGO COMMUNITY SHELTER**

**Mission or Goal:** To serve as an advocate for the homeless, as a community resource center, to provide community education, and to treat people with dignity and respect.

**Population served:** Homeless children, women, and men in La Plata County

**Food related programs offered:** The shelter provides three meals per day. Individual and group nutritional and dietary information is communicated. There is a garden located on shelter property.  
**Community food projects of interest:** Transportation initiatives, community gardens, and cooking/nutritional workshops.

### **FAMILY CENTER OF DURANGO**

**Mission or Goal:** To provide support for families through parent education and family support programs.

**Population served:** Low-income families in Durango are served through the Family Support Program and all community members are served through the Parent Education Program. In 2006, the parent program (La Plata Family Centers Coalition) served 4,000 individuals in La Plata County.

**Food related programs offered:** Food Bank and Food SHARE program referrals and assistance, mini food pantry access and emergency food relief programs.

**Community food projects of interest:** Affordable cooking classes that incorporate education, community garden programs, and school gardens.

### **FAMILY CENTER OF FORT LEWIS MESA**

**Mission or Goal:** To provide support for families through sponsoring activities, support services, referrals to Family Center programs etc.

**Population served:** 900 residents in Fort Lewis Mesa, Rafter J, Mancos Hill, May Day: up to the state line

**Food related programs offered:** Food Bank and Food SHARE program referrals and assistance, mini food pantry referrals, referrals to LDS Church for support, school does a food drive and delivers to food to 5 families; this is PTO sponsored.

**Community food projects of interest:** Transportation; seniors could be taken in for shopping.

### **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DURANGO**

**Mission or Goal:** To offer emergency assistance to those in need.

**Population served:** 25 adults in La Plata County. They deal one-on-one with people in need and do not advertise.

**Food related programs offered:** The church refers people to the Durango Food Bank and to Manna Soup Kitchen after offering them \$10 City Market Cash Cards. They also have funds donated by members so that they can offer assistance apart from Charitable Food Programs.

**Community food projects of interest:** Transportation services

### **HAR SHALOM**

**Mission or Goal:** Har Shalom is an unaffiliated Jewish community for the Four Corners area.

**Population served:** Jews and their families

**Food related programs offered:** NA

**Community food projects of interest:** Har Shalom would like to be a conduit between food related issues in the community and the Jewish population. They are interested in starting a garden, but are concerned about maintenance.

### **LA PLATA COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES**

**Mission or Goal:** La Plata County Senior Services is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all people and helping them age with dignity and purpose. Through information, advocacy, and service, we are committed to building a healthier community.

**Population served:** Seniors

**Food related programs offered:** La Plata County Senior Services offers a variety of services for Durango, Ignacio, and Bayfield residents including nutritional meals, home chore services, transportation, family caregiver support, information, referral and outreach. Congregate meals are served at the Durango/ La Plata Senior Center, 2424 Main Avenue, Durango at 12:00 noon Monday through Friday. Meals on Wheels are also delivered to homebound seniors daily. The SUCAP Senior Center in Ignacio prepares and serves congregate meals at 115 N. Goddard Avenue, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Meals on Wheels are delivered to homebound seniors in Bayfield and Ignacio Monday through Friday. Congregate meals are available for Bayfield seniors on Fridays at the old Middle School, 110 South Street. The suggested donation price for all sites is \$3.00 for adults age 60 and over. Cost for adults under 60 is \$5.

**Community food projects of interest:** Having an intergenerational horticultural therapy program. Raised beds.

### **LA PLATA YOUTH SERVICES**

**Mission or Goal:** To prevent further penetration of the juvenile justice system.

**Population served:** La Plata County youth, ages 7-18

**Food related programs offered:** As part of “Growth Education,” La Plata Youth Services psycho-educational support group program, youth participate in a session that focuses on health and nutrition. They have been the volunteer work force for The Garden Project of SW Colorado since 1998, assisting with garden education and maintenance.

**Community food projects of interest:** Cooking classes for youth, attendance at a farmers’ market with a mentor or parent more than 1 time/week and planting gardens to lower the cost of organic fresh vegetables.

### **SAN JUAN BASIN HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**Mission or Goal:** To enhance the personal and environmental health of our community through education, advocacy, collaboration, and the direct provision of services; preventing disease and disability, promoting healthy lifestyle choices, preserving and restoring the environment and assuring basic health services for all.

**Population served:** La Plata and Archuleta counties; some service to San Juan and Montezuma counties also.

**Food related programs offered:** The San Juan Basin Health Department is home to WIC, Promoviendo la Salud, and Prenatal and Family Planning offices. All personal health programs may have a nutrition component.

**Community food projects of interest:** Food Banks with healthier choices, enabling gardens, and cooking classes.

### **SAN JUAN BASIN HEALTH DEPARTMENT – Prenatal and Family Planning Clinic**

**Mission or Goal:** Family Planning: Contribute to a reduction in unintended pregnancy, provide preventative health screenings, and improve reproductive health of individuals and communities. Prenatal: Provide prenatal healthcare and education, contribute to healthier birth weights, and support healthy families through partnerships with community based and other public healthcare providers working with at-risk populations.

**Population served:** Adults and youth in La Plata and Archuleta counties

**Food related programs offered:** Referrals to WIC, Share Our Strengths (SOS)

**Community food projects of interest:** NA

## **SAN JUAN BASIN HEALTH DEPARTMENT – Promoviendo la Salud**

**Mission or Goal:** To reduce health disparities among Latinos in La Plata and Archuleta counties.

**Population served:** Latino population in both La Plata and Archuleta counties: established families & new immigrants

**Food related programs offered:** Cooking classes, sponsored by Share our Strength: Operation Frontline, a nutrition education and financial planning program nationally sponsored by Tyson Foods, Inc.<sup>3</sup>

**Community food projects of interest:** Cooking classes and grocery store tours – having someone go to Wal-Mart and take people around the store to tell them more about certain products. Teach people how to read labels, to understand things such as serving size, salt content, sugar content: breaking the language barrier for those people who can barely read English.

## **SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION**

**Mission or Goal:** To promote responsible care of natural and cultural resources through education and hands-on involvement that inspires respect and reverence for our lands.

**Population served:** Outdoor recreationists, school children, and families

**Food related programs offered:** Edible plant walks, working with schools (in Dolores) on a greenhouse project

**Community food projects of interest:** Service learning projects for youth aimed at connecting them with the land (gardening, etc.), edible plant walks, and wild food cooking classes.

## **SOUTHWEST CONSERVATION CORPS**

**Mission or Goal:** To empower individuals to positively impact their lives, their communities, and the environment.

**Population served:** People in the San Luis Valley, Southwest Colorado, Southern Arizona, Western New Mexico, and Southeastern Utah.

**Food related programs offered:** Southwest Conservation Corps uses the Durango Food Bank, food SHARE, and various distributors and grocery stores to provide food for their crews, trying to source healthy, organic foods for participants. Crews cook together while camping on 11-day hitches.

**Community food projects of interest:** Community gardens, and they might have a plot to contribute for a garden in the future.

## **SOUTHWEST SAFEHOUSE**

**Mission or Goal:** To provide a temporary home for women and children survivors of domestic violence and other violent crimes and to encourage a positive and successful lifestyle, free from fear and violence.

**Population served:** Women and children survivors of domestic violence and children and their mothers who are victims of child abuse

**Food related programs offered:** Gardening and occasional individual and group meetings to discuss nutrition. They supply three meals per day to residents of the shelter, and often, past residents enjoy meals at the Safehouse. They also provide food boxes to past residents when extra food is available.

**Community food projects of interest:** Transportation services, community gardens, and cooking and nutritional workshops.

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<sup>3</sup> Operation Frontline, a direct service program of Share our Strength, offers short and long-term solutions to malnutrition through education by providing hands-on knowledge and skills for daily living. [www.strength.org/ofcolorado](http://www.strength.org/ofcolorado)

## **SUN UTE RECREATION CENTER**

**Mission or Goal:** To expand and improve the quality of life for the Southern Ute Tribal Members and surrounding communities by stimulating social, physical, emotional, mental, cultural and spiritual growth through recreational activities.

**Tribal Vision:** Mankind has a universal need during milestones of time to gather together in celebration of where we have been and what we want to become. Native Americans celebrate mind, body and spirit through events that share wisdom; through participation in games and physical contest; and thus renew cultural values to a higher power. Toward this end, we strive to constantly improve ourselves for the membership we serve.

**Population served:** Ignacio: Tribal and non-Tribal members

**Food related programs offered:** The Senior Program combines social orientation with healthy eating and physical activity. They host a Friday breakfast serving healthy options and offer low cholesterol and diabetes conscious cooking classes.

**Community food projects of interest:** Linking food and agricultural projects to Native agriculture, cooking classes, and youth community gardens.

## **SUSTAINABILITY ALLIANCE OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO**

### **Farm-to-School Working Group**

**Mission or Goal:** To ensure that our Pre-K through College students consume the highest quality, sustainably produced, culturally appropriate foods from local farms and ranches.

**Population served:** Pre-K through college students throughout the county is the target population.

**Food related programs offered:** Currently small, but very nutritious amounts of local greens are being supplied to nine local schools with salad bars as one of the first steps in this program. Special event meals featuring local foods.

**Community food projects of interest:** Farm tours, farmer/rancher presentations in classrooms, school gardens, and cooking classes all support the goal of more local foods consumed by school children.

## **3. GROCERY AND RETAIL FOOD OUTLETS**

**Assessment Methodology:** Volunteers completed grocery store data collection between March and September of 2006. They were asked to retrieve information on commercial, local, and organic price points from each store. In addition to price points, volunteers interviewed staff and store managers to ask questions about who are the major food distributors, and where are they based; about availability of and demand for culturally appropriate foods; about the challenges and benefits of working with local food vendors and distributors; and about transportation and access to the store.

## **INTRODUCTION<sup>4</sup>**

A survey of grocery stores and other retail food outlets was completed to assess availability and affordability of various foods in rural and urban parts of the county. Thirteen supermarkets, local markets, convenience stores and one buying club were surveyed to compare the availability and price of certain products.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> All numbers, with the exception of BLS statistics, listed in this chart are based on the lowest available product price/brand. Due to fluctuations guided by the national market, it must also be taken into account the price of these goods constantly changes.

<sup>5</sup> Stores surveyed: South & North City Markets, Albertson's, Nature's Oasis, Durango Natural Foods, Mountain Valley Market, Mac's Hermosa Supermarket, Shur Value, The Grocery Store, Wal-Mart, Lake Vallecito Country Market, Mesa Market, The Mesa Mercantile, & ShopNatural Cooperative – as a buying club.

This data is used to show price differences in La Plata County versus a national average. Because affordability of local and organic foods is a common concern for the support for a locally based food economy, this data also compares the cost of commercial foods, locally produced and processed foods and organic options.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides an average U.S. city price for food items. These prices were taken into account to compare the information drawn from La Plata County grocery stores to those on a national scale.

## PRICE POINTS & AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL & ORGANIC PRODUCTS

**Table 1. LA PLATA COUNTY COMMERCIAL, LOCAL, ORGANIC PRODUCT PRICE POINTS<sup>6</sup>**

ITEM	BLS September 2003 average prices <sup>7</sup>	Commercial	Local <sup>8</sup>	Organic	Food Buying Club <sup>9</sup> <i>Organic Items</i>
½ gal. nonfat milk	NA <sup>10</sup>	2.32		3.32	3.12
½ gal. whole milk	1.61 <sup>11</sup>	2.52		3.36	3.12
½ gal. soy milk	NA	2.29		2.69	1.99
8 oz. cheddar	NA	2.51		3.81	3.33
8 oz. mozzarella	NA	2.39		3.43	3.85
1 dozen eggs	1.26 <sup>12</sup>	1.39	2.49	3.19	3.60
1 lb. chicken	1.02 <sup>13</sup>	2.33	6.99 <sup>14</sup>	5.86	3.25
1 lb. turkey	NA	3.02		2.69	2.63
1 lb. dried lentils	NA	1.04		1.52	1.82
1 lb. dried beans	NA	1.02	1.52	1.49	0.80
6 oz. can tuna	1.79	1.34			
1 lb. ground beef	2.51 <sup>15</sup>	2.55	5.04		6.26
whole wheat bread, 1 loaf	1.08 <sup>16</sup>	2.42	3.19	3.32	
1 lb. rice bulk	0.46 <sup>17</sup>	1.09		1.27	1.68
32 oz. bag rice	NA	2.22		3.36	4.60
12 oz. bag spaghetti	0.87/lb	0.92		2.21	1.47
flour tortillas (12)	NA	1.68	2.48	2.45	1.25
corn tortillas (12)	NA	1.47		1.15	1.79
1 lb. apples	1.02 <sup>18</sup>	1.34	1.16 <sup>19</sup>	1.73	

<sup>6</sup> All La Plata County data for commercial, local, and organic price points is based on averages from 11 grocery stores.

<sup>7</sup> These are selected items from CPI Detailed Reports, Bureau of Labor Statistics, various issues from Family Economics and Nutrition Review. Winter 2003. Food prices are US city averages.

<sup>8</sup> This information applies to in-season products.

<sup>9</sup> ShopNatural is a local food buying club based in Tucson, AZ that makes monthly deliveries to Durango. [www.tcwfoodcoop.com](http://www.tcwfoodcoop.com)

<sup>10</sup> Data is not available for these food items from BLS.

<sup>11</sup> The most recent BLS data for milk is only for the whole variety in 1997. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>12</sup> Grade A, large

<sup>13</sup> Fresh, whole

<sup>14</sup> This item is a boneless, skinless chicken breast. It is listed to show that there is a local chicken option, even though the price is for another variety of chicken.

<sup>15</sup> The most recent BLS data for ground beef is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>16</sup> Only available data is for white bread: The most recent BLS data for bread is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>17</sup> White, long grain, uncooked

<sup>18</sup> Red delicious variety

<sup>19</sup> Most of the local apples now come from local, urban, hobby backyard gardens. DNF used to carry apples from White Buffalo Farm in Paonia, but as gas prices increased, this prohibited the farm from making any more deliveries to Durango. Also, Kiva Orchard, an organic orchard in Durango that supplied the Durango farmers' market, a CSA, and local grocery stores, went out of business last year.

1 lb. oranges	1.48 <sup>20</sup>	1.26		1.41	
1 lb. onions	NA	0.76		1.22	1.28
1 lb. carrots	NA	0.99	1.25/bunch	1.16	0.80
1 lb. tomatoes	1.91 <sup>21</sup>	2.29	2.50	4.06	
1 lb. salad greens	0.95 <sup>22</sup>	3.27	5.99	6.71	
1 lb. bananas	0.49	0.53		0.82	
1 lb. potatoes	0.44	0.92		1.01	1.40
1 lb. coffee	3.17 <sup>23</sup>	4.97	8.82 <sup>24</sup>	8.81	6.29
18 oz jar peanut butter	1.89	2.50		4.61	4.49

## LOCAL OPTIONS

Although the prices on many local food items are slightly more than the conventional food price, comparing local food options to more conventional options is like comparing apples to oranges – the products are very different in their make-up and in their social implications. Local food, for the purposes of this study, is food grown, raised or processed within a six county radius. (La Plata; Archuleta; Montezuma, San Juan, CO; San Juan, NM and Dolores.) This food, because it travels a shorter distance, can be picked “ready to eat” at peak ripeness. Because the food travels a short distance, it uses less fossil fuel to transport from farm to table. And, because in many cases the food is delivered directly by local farmers and ranchers, more of the food dollar spent on that food goes directly into the pockets of the people who produced it.

Durango Natural Foods, Nature’s Oasis, and Mountain Valley Market, the “natural” food stores, seem to be the most committed to working with local purveyors. As locally owned, independent stores, they can choose where they source product and can use a variety of vendors. Although these stores may have more flexibility, they have less buying power. They must often place small orders and do not receive the type of price breaks the large chains or conglomerates enjoy.

The Welkers, who opened Mountain Valley Market in Bayfield two years ago, also own a farm. Being farmers themselves, they wanted to open a store committed to working with local farmers and ranchers. They currently work with Chimney Rock Farms, RAS Farms, Sunnyside Meats, and Desert Sun Coffee. They also carry apricots, raspberries and other fruits from local folks. The Welkers have a 3,000 square foot greenhouse, which they plant with greens, tomatoes, peppers, herbs and other items to sell in the store.

Durango Natural Foods (DNF), a cooperative market, and Nature’s Oasis, a locally owned natural food store, are committed to carrying local products. Both DNF and Nature’s Oasis receive produce from Chimney Rock Farms, RAS Farms, and Stone Free Farms, who all make seasonal deliveries to the store. In addition to the items listed in our chart, these stores are carrying local items such as flour, chocolate, jelly, honey, pesto spreads, and a line of raw, organic snacks from the local non-profit Turtle Lake Refuge.

<sup>20</sup> The most recent BLS data for navel oranges is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>21</sup> Field grown varieties: The most recent BLS data for tomatoes is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>22</sup> Iceberg: The most recent BLS data for lettuce is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>23</sup> Ground roast: The most recent BLS data for coffee is from September 2006. <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>.

<sup>24</sup> Although coffee beans are harvested from all over the world, there are several Durango-based coffee roasters and packers. Each of these companies practices Fair Trade and has organic options.

## **ORGANIC OPTIONS**

Once only available at “natural food stores” organic products are making their way onto most grocery store shelves. This is evident in La Plata County, where most stores are now carrying at least some organic products.

There are also stores in the county that are committed to providing almost exclusively natural and organic food products. The greatest organic food selection in La Plata County is still found at DNF, Mountain Valley Market and Nature’s Oasis. City Market North and South have the greatest selection of organic products for chain grocery stores in the county, and Mountain Valley Market has a great selection for a rural market.

As seen in the news, Wal-Mart is making a commitment to carry more organic products. Our survey, which took place in July, notes that Wal-Mart currently offers organic milk, natural meats and few organic produce items. Where they seemed to have more organic options were in the canned and processed food aisles. These include items such as organic stewed tomatoes, canned fruits, jams, jellies, granola bars and cereals.

The main organic distributors are Veritable Vegetable, a produce provider out of Los Angeles, CA; Rainbow Distributing, a provider of organic and natural grocery items owned by United Natural Foods Incorporated (UNFI), which has a warehouse in Denver, CO; and Nobel Sysco, a provider of restaurant/deli items that has started to carry more organic options.

### ***A local buying club***

ShopNatural Cooperative<sup>25</sup> is a company based out of Tucson, Arizona that delivers natural and organic foods at reduced, wholesale prices to established buying clubs. This enables individuals to buy organic food at prices just above what most grocery stores pay for their food. The Durango area receives a shipment from ShopNatural once a month, and buying clubs meet the truck to get their delivery.<sup>26</sup> The general manager, Reggie Smith, is currently trying to develop ways to work with more regional producers to carry their products.

## **RURAL FOOD OPTIONS**

As is evident by the data, national food cost averages are lower than what is available in La Plata County.<sup>27</sup> Prices vary depending on product as well. In some cases, local is less expensive than organic, and rural less expensive than urban. What is evident is that there are more choices in the urban setting, and for this reason many rural inhabitants tend to use urban markets to make their food purchases.

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<sup>25</sup> ShopNatural, formerly known as Tucson Cooperative Warehouse, has been in business for over 30 years. They now offer more than 7,000 products to thousands of individuals in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada. They also accept Food Stamps. For more information, see their website: [www.tcwfoodcoop.com](http://www.tcwfoodcoop.com).

<sup>26</sup> A partial list of ShopNatural’s products and their prices is available in Table 1.1. For a more complete list, or to find out how to get involved in the Buying Club, see their website.

<sup>27</sup> Let it be noted, however, these are city averages, and due to La Plata County’s rural and isolated aspects, these prices are less applicable.

**Table 2. RURAL VERSUS URBAN GROCERY STORE PRODUCT PRICE POINTS<sup>28</sup>**

ITEM	BLS September 2003 average prices	URBAN	RURAL
½ gal. nonfat milk	NA	2.21	2.40
½ gal. whole milk	1.61	2.52	2.51
½ gal. soy milk	NA	2.08	2.93
8 oz. cheddar	NA	2.65	2.40
8 oz. mozzarella	NA	2.54	2.28
1 dozen eggs	1.26	1.50	1.28
1 lb. chicken	1.02	2.68	1.99
1 lb. turkey	NA	2.62	4.99
1 lb. dried lentils	NA	1.17	0.91
1 lb. dried beans	NA	1.24	0.80
6 oz. can tuna	1.79	1.18	1.52
1 lb. ground beef	2.51	2.46	2.60
1 loaf whole wheat bread	1.08	2.13	2.70
1 lb. rice bulk	0.46	1.05	1.12
32 oz. bag rice	NA	1.18	3.27
12 oz. bag spaghetti	0.87/lb	0.68	1.12
flour tortillas (12)	NA	1.68	1.69
corn tortillas (12)	NA	1.49	1.44
1 lb. apples	1.02	1.40	1.29
1 lb. oranges	1.48	1.32	1.18
1 lb. onions	NA	0.89	0.66
1 lb. carrots	NA	0.71	1.37
1 lb. tomatoes	1.91	2.45	2.18
1 lb. salad greens	0.95	1.83	4.71
1 lb. bananas	0.49	0.49	0.57
1 lb. potatoes	0.44	1.25	0.66
1 lb. coffee	3.17	5.56	4.50
18 oz jar peanut butter	1.89	2.61	2.39

***Expanding rural food options and increasing rural food security***

As consumer demand for both local and organic food options has increased in La Plata County, so too has the supply of these products in all grocery stores, rural and urban. The two ‘natural’ food rural markets that opened in the past two years in La Plata County, Mountain Valley Market and Mesa Mercantile, are each the passionate venture of a local farm and ranch family to bring healthy, sustainable food options to the communities in which they live.

**HESPERUS**

The Mesa Mercantile, in Red Mesa, has reopened under the ownership of a local rancher dedicated to carrying local and organic food options for her neighbors. Denise Boheimer, the owner, works with ShopNatural and Rainbow Natural Foods (UNFI) to receive natural and organic foods for the store. Denise is committed to carrying as many local products from area farmers as possible, however she did note that obtaining availability lists from producers was a challenge. She currently carries Blue Horizons flour and Butter Sweet soaps, both from producers in the Fort Lewis Mesa District located close to her store.

<sup>28</sup> All products listed are commercial price points. For more information about organic and local options in rural markets, please see the section: “organic and local choices in rural markets” on the following page.

## BAYFIELD

Mountain Valley Market offers local products close to home. Dedicated to selling as many local products as possible, the Welker's opened their store close to their own farm in Bayfield.

Mountain Valley Market and the Mesa Mercantile are each the passionate venture of a local farm and ranch family to bring healthy, sustainable food options to the communities in which they live.

The Grocery Store in Bayfield has an adequate selection of organic options for a rural, mostly conventional, grocery store. They carry organic milk, soymilk, butter and bagged lettuces. These products are integrated into the store, i.e., there is no separate organic section. Although these make up a small portion of product carried in the store, the owner, tries to get what organic products he can from the one distributor he works with, Associated Foods out of Amarillo, TX. He has worked with Miller Farms to carry some seasonal produce like squash. However, he mentioned that ordering from several vendors creates more work for his small staff, and is a segment of his store he currently chooses not to expand. Other rural grocery stores carry organic soymilk, and some local beans from Adobe Milling in Cortez.

### ***Rural consumer demand affects product availability***

Although some rural market owners are committed to carrying local, organic products, this may not be what is most in demand from their customers.

Mesa Market at the corner of Highway 160 and 172, also known as Elmore's Corner, is a good example of how consumer demand can directly affect a stores' product availability. The owner, Jody Gans, who has been living on the northeast side of the county for 15 years, remembers when he would have to drive to South City Market to pick up a food item. "There just wasn't any other option, and I wanted to provide a place where people could pick up something they may need for a recipe without driving into town."

Over time, Jody has developed his stores' product list based on what sells. His top selling items are frozen, convenience foods – items that customers can pick up on their way home and cook easily without much time – like frozen pizzas and frozen dinners, candy, and tobacco products<sup>29</sup>, in that order. He only carries a few fresh fruits and vegetables. When he does, he only carries one variety of each, not multiple varieties of apples, oranges and other fruits. On September 8, the day of the survey, he did have fresh tomatoes, lemons and limes.

Jody works with local vendors to source some of his products, and although they don't sell as fast as candy and tobacco, as a small local business owner, he is committed to supporting other small local businesses. Some of the local products he carries include: elk jerky, Durango Diner chili, CJ's Burritos and products from Adobe Milling and Honeyville.

Lake Vallecito Market is a rural market/convenience store that caters to tourists and non-locals. Due to the nature of their clientele, they have food available mostly in "weekend quantities" and a very limited number of choices. They have a restaurant on site and do offer a large selection of food choices there. According to the volunteer that completed the survey, the Vallecito Market is geared towards a tourist crowd and serves many more processed, easy to prepare items.

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<sup>29</sup> Jody had to keep increasing the amount of tobacco products that he carries. Now makes up over 20% of his TOTAL sales.

## CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD OPTIONS FOR LATINOS

### *Expanding culturally appropriate food options for Latinos in La Plata County*

As noted in our Latino interviews<sup>30</sup>, the availability of culturally appropriate food choices for Latinos in La Plata County is an issue. In fact, many Latinos travel to Farmington, NM, 50 miles from Durango, to make their food purchases. In Farmington there are more Latino grocery stores and food options.

There is, however, hope for more culturally appropriate food choices in La Plata County on the horizon. In completing a restaurant survey with Fiesta Mexicana, a Mexican food restaurant located on North Main Street in Durango, staff reported plans to open a Mexican foods grocery store in the white stucco building next door. Although there is not much more to report at this time, the potential for more Latino food options is one that generates a lot of local excitement.

## CONCLUSIONS

This data provides a good jumping off point to discuss local, organic, and culturally appropriate food options and availability by showing all of the options available to consumers in a retail setting. It also illustrates there is a commitment and interest from rural communities to increase local and organic food options, and from the Latino community to address the lack of culturally appropriate food options.

There is a commitment from rural communities to increase local and organic food options, and from the Latino community to address the lack of culturally appropriate food choices.

The data does not, however, make any correlation between the cost of food and its setting. Things such as fresh produce seem to be less expensive in rural stores, whereas other processed foods seem to cost less in urban stores. What is clear, however, is that there is greater availability of food choices in urban stores and this may be what causes rural community members to purchase more of their food in an urban setting.

What is not addressed, but what could provide more insight into these issues, is the quality of foods in a rural setting versus an urban setting. Community food security relies on the premise that all people at all times have access to enough food that is fresh, affordable, safe and produced in ways that are sustainable. As pointed out by storeowner testimonials, working with fresh, local food sources is important to more and more people these days. What is lacking, however, is this concept's widespread community knowledge and acceptance.

There is greater availability of food choices in urban stores and this may be what causes rural community members to purchase more of their food in an urban setting.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 5, Low-Income – Latino section, for more information about Latino interviews.

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## LOCAL FOODS MENU

*A Contribution from Traci Ford*

### INTRODUCTION

In order to address the issue of local foods being more expensive, and thus less accessible as a food option, a local foods menu was established to price out the difference between a meal prepared with local ingredients versus a conventional meal.<sup>31</sup> For purposes of the menu, local ingredients are defined as items grown and/or processed within a 500-mile radius of La Plata County, with a preference towards items closest to the county. Conventional items were chosen from City Market grocery store and were average in cost when compared with similar items. When there were no local ingredients available, such as cooking oil, the item/s were not included in total price. The local foods menu was developed as a research and educational tool for future community food projects.

### **SAMPLE MENU PLAN: *Cost Comparisons between Local & Non-Local Products for a Family of Four***

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#### **BREAKFAST:**

- Local pancakes – using *Blue Horizon flour, local eggs, Horizon organic milk*: \$5.14 vs. Aunt Jemima pancake mix: \$4.77
- Eggs and Sausage: \$6.98 vs. Non-Local: \$4.78
- Toast with Jam or Honey and Fruit \$10.98 vs. Non-Local: \$9.57

#### **LUNCH AND DINNER:**

- Hamburgers: \$9.97 vs. Non-Local: \$6.47
- Pasta with pesto: \$11.06 vs. Non-Local: \$11.46
- Local Stir fry with rice – using *local spinach, peppers, zucchini, onion, and Lundberg bulk rice*. \$10.45 vs. Non-local stir fry – using *Kroger brand rice*. \$8.55
- Beef stew (4lb) – using *James Ranch stew meat, local onions, potatoes, & carrots*. \$9.96 vs. Non-local: \$7.06

#### **...A BREAKDOWN IN PRICE**

##### **BREAKFAST – *For a Family of Four***

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###### LOCAL Eggs and Sausage:

Nada Agua Eggs, 2.39/doz	Hermosa
Gosar Sausage, 4.59/lb	Monte Vista
<b>Total cost:</b> \$ 6.98	

###### Eggs and Sausage

Kroger Eggs, 1.29/doz	Ohio (distribution)
Tennessee Pride Sausage, 3.49/lb	Tennessee
<b>Total cost:</b> \$4.78	

**COST DIFFERENCE:** \$2.20

###### LOCAL Toast with Jam or Honey and Fruit

Bread bread, 3.19/loaf	Durango
O'hara's jam, 0.80	Durango

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<sup>31</sup> Prices for both conventional and local items were collected in the summer of 2006.

Honeyville honey, 0.37  
Chimney Rock Strawberries, 3.99/lb  
Horizon butter, 0.64 ½ stick

Durango  
Pagosa Springs  
Boulder

**Total cost:** \$10.98

Toast with Jam or Honey and Fruit

Bread, 2.79/loaf  
Smuckers Jam, 0.79  
Kroger Honey, 0.27  
Dole strawberries, 2.99  
Land O'Lakes butter, 0.54/ ½ stick

Missouri  
Ohio  
Ohio  
California  
Minnesota

**Total cost:** 9.57

**COST DIFFERENCE:** \$1.41

**LUNCH/DINNERS – *For a Family of Four***

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LOCAL Hamburgers:

James Ranch beef, 4.99/lb  
Rudi's Bakery buns, 2.99  
Colorado lettuce, 1.99

Hermosa  
Boulder  
La Plata County

**Total cost:** \$9.97

Hamburgers:

Ground beef, 3.29/lb  
Kroger buns, 1.19  
Lettuce, 1.69

Ohio  
California

**Total cost:** \$6.47

**COST DIFFERENCE:** \$3.50

LOCAL Pasta with spinach, pesto, and bread

Enchanted Valley pesto, 4.69  
RAS Farm spinach, 1.99  
American Beauty pasta, 1.89  
Bread baguette, 2.49

Pagosa  
Durango  
Pennsylvania  
Durango

**Total cost:** \$11.06

*(This meal could be made with chopped local basil, instead of pre-made sauce from Enchanted Valley, to keep cost down)*

Pasta with spinach, pesto, and bread

Buitoni pesto, 4.99  
Spinach, 1.99  
American Beauty pasta, 1.89  
French bread, 2.59

Ohio  
Mexico  
Pennsylvania  
California

**Total cost:** \$11.46

**COST DIFFERENCE:** (-) \$0.50, in favor of local

## 4. RESTAURANTS

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### **Assessment Methodology:**

Surveys were delivered in person to nearly fifty restaurants in La Plata County, from fast food to fine dining, including coffee shops, ethnic restaurants, those with Southwest cuisine, breweries and diners. Of the fifty surveys, thirty-six were returned. Special effort was made to include restaurants known to carry local food. When possible, in-person interviews were conducted.

The restaurant survey was designed to gather information about the county food system through the eyes of local restaurant owners and their customers, to identify the obstacles and advantages of carrying local food, to determine interest and demand for local food, and to identify potential community food projects that could strengthen the local food system.

“The culinary scene in Durango is said to be one of the hottest in the country per capita. With the trend of fusion, we can combine flavors from around the world to the town’s southwest heritage; steaks to sushi, tacos to tabouli.” **Josh Rosenthal, President of the Durango Chapter of the Colorado Restaurant Association and Co-owner of Skinny’s Grill**

### **INTRODUCTION**

La Plata County’s restaurants range from fast food to fine dining. They carry an array of products, some of which are local, and work with a variety of purveyors. Because restaurants may have greater flexibility to incorporate smaller product amounts into nightly/weekly specials and in their seasonal menus, the possibility to pilot local food items in restaurants was seen as a way to strengthen the local food system. What was found, from interviews and surveys, was an interest from many restaurants to use more local products, but also legitimate concerns regarding the logistics of doing so.

The following is a summary of those interviews including comments about the local food supply, obstacles chefs and restaurant owners face when working with local distributors, their community food projects of interest, and thoughts about a Farm-to-Chef Program for La Plata County.

### **THE 36 RESTAURANTS SURVEYED:**

1. Cyprus Café
2. Gaucho’s Restaurant
3. Durango Bagel
4. Durango Doughworks
5. Mahogany Grille
6. P is for Peanut Café
7. Steamworks’ Brewery
8. Kat’s Frozen Custard
9. Scoot n’ Blues
10. Guido’s
11. Durango Coffee Company
12. Carver’s Brewery
13. Zia Taqueria
14. Pickle’s Restaurant
15. The Aspen Café
16. East by Southwest
17. Serious Texas BBQ
18. Skinny’s Restaurant
19. Durango Natural Foods – Deli
20. Homeslice Pizzeria
21. Farquart’s Restaurant
22. El Patio Restaurant – Ignacio
23. Smokin’ Moes – Ignacio
24. Francisco’s Restaurant
25. Raiders Ridge Café
26. Pizza Hut – Durango
27. Subway – Durango
28. Kentucky Fried Chicken – Durango
29. Taco Bell – Durango
30. Dairy Queen – Durango
31. McDonald’s – Durango
32. Burger King – Durango

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|--|-----------------------|
| 33. Wendy's Old Fashioned Restaurant – Durango | 35. Diorio's Pizzeria |
| 34. Exxon Gas Station – Durango                | 36. Kachina Kitchen   |

**Some of the local products served in La Plata County restaurants:**

This list is an example of some of the products being used by restaurants in La Plata County that were interviewed. This by no means is a complete list, but can be used to demonstrate the diversity of crops available and restaurant interest in their use.

1. **Meat, Pork:** Sunnyside Meats, Durango and James Ranch, Durango
2. **Coffee:** Desert Sun Coffee, Durango
3. **Mixed Greens:** Regional Agricultural Supply (RAS) Farms & Clearwater Farms, Durango
4. **Mushrooms:** Mas Mushrooms, New Mexico
5. **Tea:** Hummingbird Herbals, Durango
6. **Lavender:** Dancing Willow Herbs, Durango
7. **Organic Lamb:** Foxfire Farms, Durango
8. **Select Produce:** Chimney Rock Farms, Chimney Rock
9. **Sprouts & Wheatgrass:** Turtle Lake Refuge, Durango
10. **Tortillas:** Tortillas Mas Finas, Bayfield
11. **Baked Goods:** Serious Delights, Durango
12. **Mustards:** San Juan Mustards, Durango

**THE SUPPLY & DEMAND OF LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS**

Restaurants, although they may have more flexibility than other food outlets, require a great amount of consistency in the product they receive. Providing a product as promised, in the quantity needed is a necessity when working with chefs. Regardless of apparent supply issues, chefs and restaurant staff seem to be interested in working with local producers to incorporate their products. The following are comments from interviews and surveys regarding the supply of and demand for local products from restaurants and their customers.

**SUPPLY**

The perception from restaurant owners regarding the supply of local products is there is not enough local product to supply consistent, reliable deliveries.

- *There is not enough availability and consistency of local products*
- *There is not enough local produce available to supply one restaurant alone*
- *“We would love to buy all of our eggs (15 dozen a day) locally, but we can’t find a local supplier to keep up with that demand. At times, we have spent over \$3/dozen buying organic eggs from City Market instead.” Durango Doughworks*
- *“I wish I could find a local dairy producer here. Instead, I have to go through Meadowgold and requested a specific Colorado producer to get my cream for the restaurant.” Kat’s Frozen Custard*

**DEMAND**

There is, however, a desire from chefs and restaurant staff to work with local producers. They are interested in the benefits of serving local food, and they feel their customers are as well.

- *There is a strong local community here that appreciates and supports quality food*
- *Serving local food appeals to locals and tourists*

- “We would like to use as much local food as possible. We would prefer to work directly with local farmers and then from New Mexico and Front Range ranchers.” Homeslice Pizzeria
- “I would buy local all day long if there was more infrastructure and consistency in product availability.” Aspen Café

## CONSUMER SURVEY

A consumer survey was administered to 94 respondents in a variety of venues<sup>32</sup> and indicated the demand for locally grown ingredients in restaurants.

To understand more about food access and the importance of locally grown ingredients when making food choices, participants were asked: “How often do you eat outside of the home?” and “What about the restaurants/establishments you most frequent keeps you coming back?” Of the 94 respondents, 44% responded “about every day” to “a few times a week,” signifying that people in the county eat outside of the home on a regular basis. Of the people surveyed, 12% responded “locally grown ingredients” on restaurant menus is what attracts them to the restaurants/establishments they most frequent. This response was fourth to taste (40%), price (19%), and convenience/location (18%).

“There needs to be more clientele education so that people understand what quality food really is.”  
**Local Restaurant Owner**

These surveys indicate that locally grown restaurant ingredients are important to a significant portion of La Plata County residents. It has also been noted that in order to increase this number, a consumer focused educational campaign is necessary. In

interviews and surveys, restaurants indicated the importance of a community-wide educational campaign to educate the public on the importance of eating local foods.

The Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, a group of health providers, nutritionists, educators, and community activists whose mission is to support healthy eating and active living, is currently applying for funding to initiate such a campaign. Activities would include creating two logos for restaurant menus, one that would indicate locally grown ingredients, the second healthy food options. The group is also aware of the Buy Fresh, Buy Local – Foodroutes’ Toolbox<sup>33</sup> to promote locally grown foods, and is looking into their software as part of their campaign.

## FARMERS AND RESTAURANT OWNERS WORKING TOGETHER: **A Farm-to-Chef Program in La Plata County?**

Restaurant owners interested and committed to supporting and serving local products had several justifications for the extra work currently needed to source local ingredients. Those included the inherent quality and freshness of the product, but most often the responsibility and desire to support local agriculture and the local economy.

“Food needs to have quality and responsibility.”  
**Area restaurant owner**

<sup>32</sup> For more information on Consumer Surveys, see Chapter 1 – Introduction, section on administration of Consumer Surveys.

<sup>33</sup> Foodroutes is dedicated to reintroducing Americans to their food – the seeds it grows from, the farmers who produce it, and the routes that carry it from the fields to their tables. Their “Buy Fresh, Buy Local” [Toolbox](http://www.foodroutes.org) features affordable, professional marketing and campaign materials. [www.foodroutes.org](http://www.foodroutes.org).

At the same time some restaurants are quite hesitant about the impact carrying more local ingredients could have on their current practices. One local restaurant said, although they currently sell burgers made from a local processor, they have hesitations about carrying more local products. “It would be great to offer more local food without having to gauge customers with menu prices and/or take hits to profitability.” For them, it appears local food menu items may mean their customers will be paying more for their meals.

There are also restaurant owners who feel carrying local food and supporting local farmers is more important than their bottom line. Of the restaurants surveyed that currently carry local products, few say they charge more for them even when the product can cost as much as two times the conventional price. Alison Dance, owner of Cyprus Café, in downtown Durango, said in an interview: “As restaurant owners, we should make the commitment (to carrying local food) because it is the right thing to do. It is not all about making money.” The owner of Durango Doughworks agrees. “We focus on using as many organic ingredients (as we can), and when possible, from local suppliers.” Apart from having consistency in the availability of supply, other logistics are necessary to make a farmer-chef relationship a success. Chefs mentioned things like better distribution and storage of local products, a greater number of patrons that support local food, better local product marketing, and the ability to source certain items as suggestions to help solidify these relationships.

“We use local food as an educational tool and encourage our regular customer base to support it.” **Alison Dance, owner, Cyprus Café**

There is explicit interest from farmers and chefs to begin a Farm-to-Chef Program in La Plata County. As one restaurant owner explained, a “Farm-to-Chef Program that could support itself would be helpful. It could help with the marketing, publishing, and printing costs to support this initiative and support clientele education.” Such a

program could support each of these things and allow food to travel a much shorter distance from farm to table.

One hundred percent of all restaurants surveyed said they experienced increases in delivery surcharges in the past year that were directly related to the increase in fuel prices. This means each restaurant experienced an increase in the cost they paid for food. Most of the restaurants, however, did not increase or only slightly increased their menu prices to compensate for the charges.

In addition to the creation of a Farm-to-Chef Program, restaurateurs made other suggestions that connect fresh, local produce and eating places. P is for Peanut, a children’s restaurant in downtown Durango, suggested a communal garden. “I have often thought that a communal, restaurant garden would be a wonderful project, and it would allow restaurants to grow exactly what they really need.” Other suggestions included a wholesale food market, acceptance and support of the health department, farms with a restaurant CSA option that would grow certain products for a chef, and a worm project to create good soil and reduce restaurant kitchen waste.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

There are already a number of restaurants in La Plata County working directly with farmers and ranchers to serve local products. Some of these items are advertised on menus and recognized by customers. In fact, at times they directly contribute to customer patronage. For chefs who utilize locally grown ingredients, freshness and quality of the product and social responsibility seem to outweigh some of the challenges they encounter in obtaining and using the ingredients.

There are, however, issues that exist when making farmer-chef connections. Obstacles such as availability of supply, delivery and distribution logistics, and price barriers make the idea of working with local suppliers prohibitive to some restaurateurs. Hopefully, some of the projects mentioned in this section, such as an organized Farm-to-Chef Program, restaurant gardens, and restaurant CSAs, could begin to remove some of the barriers chefs and farmers associate with working together. And a consumer educational campaign to increase widespread support for the availability of locally-grown ingredients is also important to make this connection more of a reality.

## **5. HARVEST CALENDAR**

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***Assessment Methodology:*** This guide was created using input from La Plata County Cooperative Extension, the Durango and Southern Ute Divisions of Wildlife, and the knowledge of Growing Partner staff.

It is used to demonstrate the availability of food that can either be cultivated, or which is found wild in the region. Due to variations in elevation, solar gain, and microclimates, La Plata County is home to a wide range of climatic zones, therefore, the guide must be used with the understanding that not all areas of the county will support each and every species listed.






A tri-fold brochure of the Harvest Calendar was printed by Cooperative Extension in November 2006, and is being distributed throughout the community. It is being used as educational material for the La Plata County Food Assessment and to promote the local food system. The brochure is listed as an Appendix to this report.

# La Plata County Harvest Calendar

Product	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Arugula	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Asparagus	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Beets	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Carrots	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Cauliflower	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Chard	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Choy	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Collard Greens	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Eggplant	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Garlic	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Kale	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Lettuce	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Mustard Greens	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Onions/Scallions*	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Peas	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Radishes	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Spinach	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Squash	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Turnips	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Beans	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Corn	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Peppers*	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Potatoes	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Tomatoes*	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Apples	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Grapes	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Apricots	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Cherries	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Peaches	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Pears	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Plums	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Raspberries	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Strawberries	Light Green	Light Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Dark Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green

Please keep in mind this is a general guideline for La Plata County and Southwest Colorado. For your specific area, please contact your local County Extension Office. Conditions will vary with specific locations.

\*Must be started inside, 6-8 weeks before the last frost, and then transplanted outside 1-2 weeks after the last frost.

	Months available to be harvested using season extension		Fruit		Cool Season Crops
	Months available to be harvested under normal growing conditions				Warm Season Crops

## Wild Game Availability

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The following list was compiled with help from The Durango Division of The Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Southern Ute Division of Wildlife. Below are the most common edible wild game species found in the San Juan Basin of Colorado.

<b>Big Game</b>	Elk, Deer
<b>Small Game</b>	Blue (Dusky) Grouse, Chukar Mourning Dove, Duck (teal), Gambel Quail, Turkey, Geese, Cottontail
<b>Fish</b>	Rainbow, Cutthroat, Brown & Brook Trout, Kokanee Salmon, Northern Pike, Yellow Perch, Channel Catfish, Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Black Crappie, Bluegill
<b>Invertebrates</b>	Crayfish

*“I think people often underestimate the value of wild foods in the diet. Also, as we look for ways to save energy - wild foods (a product of solar energy vs. fossil fuel dependent) are an energy bargain.”* Patt Dorsey, Area Wildlife Manager, Colorado Division of Wildlife

## Wild Foods Harvest Calendar

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The following was compiled by Turtle Lake Refuge. For more information on identification and appropriate use contact Turtle Lake at [www.turtlelakerefuge.org](http://www.turtlelakerefuge.org).

<b>January</b>	Juniper Berry
<b>February</b>	Chicory Root, Licorice Root, Thistle Root
<b>March</b>	Mallow Weed, Wild Mustard, Wild Grasses
<b>April</b>	Wild Asparagus, Dandelion
<b>May</b>	Wild Rose Blossoms, Lambs Quarters, Plantain, Nettles
<b>June</b>	Pie Cherries, Apricots, Serviceberries, Town Strawberries, Amaranth leaves
<b>July</b>	Alpine Strawberry, Oregon Grape, Serviceberries, Apricots, Hermosa Cherries
<b>August</b>	Acorns, Chokecherry, Raspberries, Peaches, Plums, Barberries, Thimbleberries, Bilberries
<b>September</b>	Yucca Fruits, Elderberries, Acorns, Amaranth Seeds, Pears
<b>October</b>	Hawthorn Berries, Apples, Rosehips, Osha Root, Buffalo Berries
<b>November</b>	Skunkbrush Berries, Sumac Berries, Piñon Nuts, Burdock Root, Town Walnuts
<b>December</b>	Ponderosa Pine Needles

*\*Wild foods grow naturally without cultivation. This schedule is for Durango, Colorado and the surrounding area at an approximate elevation of 6,000-8,000 feet.*

## Culinary Herbs of Southwest Colorado

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The following was compiled by The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado. It is a list of culinary herbs suitable for growing conditions in Southwest Colorado, including the edible part of the plant. Specific harvest times and practices should be used when harvesting herbs. Contact your local nursery or the County Extension Office for more information.

<b>Angelica</b>	all parts, perennial
<b>Basil</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Bee Balm</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Blessed Milk Thistle</b>	leaves, biennial
<b>Borage</b>	edible flowers, annual
<b>Calendula</b>	edible flowers, annual
<b>Caraway</b>	roots, dried seeds, biennial
<b>Catnip</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Chicory</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Chives</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Cilantro</b>	leaves, seed (coriander), annual
<b>Common Juniper</b>	perennial
<b>Dame's Rocket</b>	leaves, biennial
<b>Dandelion</b>	leaves, flowers, perennial
<b>Dill</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Fennel</b>	seed, perennial
<b>Flax</b>	seeds, perennial and annual varieties
<b>French Marigolds</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Garlic</b>	root, annual bulb
<b>Hops</b>	cones on female, shoots, perennial
<b>Johnny Jump Ups (violets)</b>	edible flowers
<b>Lavender</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Lemon Balm</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Lemon Verbena</b>	annual
<b>Licorice</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Lovage</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Mallow</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Mint</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Mustard</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Nasturtium</b>	leaves, seed (pickled) and flower, annual
<b>Oregano</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Parsley</b>	leaves, biennial
<b>Plantain</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Poppy</b>	seeds, hardy annual
<b>Purslane</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Red Valerian</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Rosemary</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Roses</b>	flower, perennial
<b>Rue</b>	perennial
<b>Saffron</b>	
<b>Sage</b>	leaves, annual and perennial
<b>Savory</b>	leaves, annual
<b>Sunflower</b>	seeds, annual
<b>Sweet Marjoram</b>	leaves, annual/tender perennial
<b>Tangerine or Lemon Gem Marigolds</b>	flowers, annual
<b>Tarragon</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Thyme</b>	leaves, perennial
<b>Wild Celery</b>	root, annu

## **Southwest Colorado Medicinal Herbs**

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This list was compiled by The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado. It is a list of common medicinal herbs that are suitable for growing in Southwest Colorado. Please contact your local nursery for more information on suitable growing and harvesting conditions.

**Amaranth**  
**Chamomile**  
**Clover**  
**Comfrey**  
**Cornflower**  
**Echinacea**  
**Evening primrose**  
**Feverfew**  
**Field holly**  
**Horehound**  
**Hyssop**  
**Mullein**  
**Nettle**  
**Oxeye daisy**  
**Pennyroyal**  
**Sorrel**  
**St. John's Wort**  
**Vervain**  
**Woodruff**  
**Wormwood**  
**Yarrow**

## **6. COMMUNITY GARDENS**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Community gardens are planned garden plots designed to provide local produce for neighborhood communities, residential use, or otherwise. Community gardens provide opportunities to bring diverse personalities together to plan, problem solve, cooperate, work and share responsibilities, and produce food. They can be designed in several formats including dividing parcels into individualized or family plots, or by sharing the harvest, and thus the responsibility, among all members of the garden.

Community gardens give local businesses and residents an opportunity to actively participate in their community and feel part of the development of underserved populations. By gathering support from many facets of the community, gardens bridge gaps and build ties between youth organizations, local businesses, public schools, and other community organizations by providing a venue for greater community interaction.

In addition, they provide a way for community members to share with others through the giving of vegetables, recipes, and garden and farm stories. In addition they are an inspirational display of community support.

## **TWO EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY GARDENS IN LA PLATA COUNTY: *The Garden Project of Southwest Colorado & Shared Harvest Community Garden***

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### **THE GARDEN PROJECT OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO**

The Garden Project is dedicated to building a healthier community through the promotion of a sustainable local food system and the facilitation of year-round garden and educational programs. They focus their goals around education, horticultural therapy, and food security.

The Garden Project has three primary goals:

- 1) *To promote individual and community health and wellness,*
  - The Garden Project promotes individual and community health and wellness through the use of Horticultural Therapy, nutritional education and community participation.
- 2) *To increase environmental education,*
  - Gardens provide an excellent means for celebrating and honoring present day and past cultures. The Garden Project's educational programs include organic gardening, local food issues, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, ecosystems, cultural differences, pest management and other related topics.
- 3) *And to promote sustainable local food systems.*
  - The implementation of community garden programs, year-round greenhouses, and the support of local food initiatives and community food networks will assist The Garden Project to support sustainable local food systems, thus promoting community food security.

The Garden Project is unique in that it targets a wide range of community needs and interest groups, and brings gardens literally to peoples' backyards. Some programs include youth and school gardens, demonstration community gardens, horticultural therapy programs and farm tours. Since its inception in 1998, The Garden Project has facilitated the development and creation of eight community and youth gardens in the Durango area. The Garden Project also serves as resource to other groups, agencies and schools interested in offering educational or therapeutic gardening programs.

### **SHARED HARVEST COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Bob Kauer has developed a community garden in the truest sense of the word. Located on County Road 234 east of Durango, Shared Harvest is a one-acre garden where over 60 individuals raise food and flowers. When there is excess, food is donated to agencies such as the Manna Soup Kitchen in Durango.

The acre is divided amongst teams who tend to an assigned row and are responsible for the planting, weeding, and maintenance of that row. When it's time to harvest, all members can do so from any area of the garden, taking their share of the bounty. This system allows Bob to farm his land, which he wanted to do but not on his own, and gives individuals an opportunity to access land for production that they may not otherwise have.

Bob hosts potlucks to celebrate community and food, and is commonly found in the garden sharing tips or indicating certain items ready to be harvested. The cost to participate in 2006 was \$50 per family, which helps Bob cover what he pays for seed, tools and the water he provides all season.

Shared Harvest is seen as an important food resource in the community. When asked to identify community food resources in the Consumer Survey, many people identified the garden as an asset. Because Shared Harvest is not accessible by public transportation and can only serve 60 families, however, there is a need for an in-town community garden that could cater to youth, seniors and others who may not have access to personal vehicles.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear community gardens are a priority to La Plata County residents. In the Consumer Survey, 17% of all respondents indicated the desire to have more garden space allocated with affordable growing plots for all community members. It is also important to note that as more people learn and have space to grow their own food, the result will be better food security.

## **7. COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE IN LA PLATA COUNTY: A Profile of Three Active CSAs**

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### ***Assessment Methodology:***

Information to support this piece came from farmer interviews, local CSA brochures, consumer surveys, and literary research.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Community Supported Agriculture, better known by its acronym CSA, is the term for a subscription service for farm products. There are many variations of CSA's in the world, and the most popular model involves a consumer paying up front to receive one share of a farm's harvest throughout the upcoming season. This situation has many benefits for the farmer, for the consumer and for the community. Using this model, 100 percent of a consumers' food dollar is in the hands of the person who produces the food, rather than in the hands of the truck drivers, packing and processing warehouses or the grocery stores that typically connect consumers to their food supply.

At a time of year when growers need cash flow, a CSA program provides capital from community members for them to invest in seeds, equipment, and preparation for the upcoming season. Farmers are also guaranteed a market for their crops once they begin to produce. This means farmers do not have to worry as much about where and to whom they are going to sell their products.

Consumers who pay in advance for their food from a local farm have a direct connection to where their food is coming from. Farm fresh produce is just that, fresh. It is typically delivered within 24 hours from when it is harvested; therefore it lasts longer, tastes better, and is more nutritious.

CSA participants also have the opportunity to spend time on the farm and with the farmer producing their food. Some farms host workdays, where consumers can spend a day

experiencing life on the farm, and have the option to learn how to harvest some of their own food.

Some CSA's require that participants travel to the farm to pick up their share, others deliver it, and some bring shares to the farmers' market. Some choose to pre-pack shares, so they are waiting in bags for members. And some use a buffet-style pick up where members create their own share from a menu board that tells them what is available.

Regardless of details, the basic principles of the CSA are the same, and the concept is growing. Since 1990, when the number of CSA's in the United States was estimated at 50, their number has grown to over 1000.<sup>34</sup>

### LOCAL CSA'S

If CSA's are such a good idea, then why isn't every farmer doing it? According to Greg Vlaming, former Horticulture Agent in La Plata County and small farm owner, "As an extension agent, I feel there's opportunity for local CSA's. But as a grower, I am not interested. The CSA potential is here, but I would rather sell through direct markets." Greg's response as a farmer to the lack of interest in starting a CSA is not uncommon. CSA's bring with them an expectation for the farmer to provide a certain quantity, quality, and variety of foods, which for some, adds a lot of pressure to an already difficult line of work. Some producers try to address these issues by talking with community members up-front about what can happen to a farms' production if an early frost hits, or hail destroys a crop. Farmers must also plan for the unpredictability by doing things like diversifying their crops, planting in succession and even over-planting.

In 2006 there were three active CSA's in the Durango area. They are profiled below.



#### La Britt Farm

La Britt Farm is located on County Road 225 next to Riverhouse School outside of Durango. Dave Banga is the owner of the farm, which is "small-scale, locally based, and dedicated to using agricultural methods that steward the land and community." Dave started a CSA in 2006.

**Season.** June 3<sup>rd</sup> – October 18<sup>th</sup> (20 weeks), 15 shares available

**Payment.** \$500 – full share, \$300 – half share

**Delivery.** Home delivery

**Products available.** Arugula, basil, beets, bell peppers, bok choy, broccoli, brussel sprouts, green beans, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, cilantro, chard, corn, chives, claytonia, celery, dill, eggplant, garlic, hot peppers, kale, leeks, lettuce, melon, onions, green onions, pumpkins, potatoes, squash, snap peas, radishes, & tomatoes.

Dave includes a 'disclaimer' on his CSA sign up sheet stating: "*I (your name) am making a financial commitment for the season. I understand my investment is non-refundable. Furthermore, I*

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<sup>34</sup> This information is from Local Harvest, a web service to locate farms and farm products by zip code. They also allow you to search CSA's: <http://www.localharvest.org/csa/>.

*appreciate that the nature of agriculture is unpredictable and though I am guaranteed fresh produce for the season, there are no absolute guarantees on the availability of certain items.”*

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### **PeaceTree Organix**

PeaceTree Organix is located on County Road 222 outside of Durango. Dave Travieso is the owner of the farm. PeaceTree's goal is "to provide the public with naturally holistic food, free of any chemicals, gene manipulation, or bad energy." Dave started PeaceTree's CSA in 2006.

**Season.** Second week of June – second week of October

**Payment.** \$450 – full share, \$100 – per monthly share; Dave offers two CSA options, a full-season membership, and a monthly membership. The monthly membership runs from the beginning of each month to the last week of the same month. He suggests this as a good option for people who have plans to be away for part of the season, people who have their own back-yard gardens, and for those who cannot afford a full-season membership. They also offer a payment plan.

**Delivery.** Pick up at the Durango Farmers Market on Saturdays, 8-12 PM. They also offer home delivery at a small additional fee.

**Products available.** Salad mix, braising greens, carrots, beets, peas, broccoli, garlic, garlic scapes, radishes, herbs, spinach, green beans, onions, leeks, tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, squash, eggplant, potatoes, & sweet potatoes.

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### **Regional Agricultural Supply (R.A.S.)**

RAS Family Farm is located on County Road 216 in the south Animas Valley. Tom and Sarah Buscaglia are the owners of the farm. They farm using bio-intensive methods from the Eliot Coleman School. They are not certified organic, but use a traditional organic approach to farming. This is their second year running a CSA Program.

**Season.** Two Seasons: June – 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September (18 weeks) & fall CSA: 4<sup>th</sup> week of September – November (8 weeks), 15 shares available

**Payment.** \$400 – full share, \$225 – half share (pick up every other week), \$175 – fall CSA

**Delivery.** Pick up at the Durango Farmers Market on Saturdays, 7:30-12PM.

**Products available.** Salad mix, spinach, radishes, beets, carrots, garlic, potatoes, kale, chard, onions, zucchini, peas, tomatoes, corn, cucumber, broccoli, beans, & winter squash.

## 8. GLEANING

*A Contribution from Katrina Blair*

### INTRODUCTION

Gleaning can be defined as the practice of harvesting and utilizing within the community where the local foods would otherwise go to waste. Local foods commonly gleaned are from fruit trees such as apples, pears, apricots, plums, cherries, crabapples and walnuts.

Gleaning requires connecting with neighbors or businesses that may have fruit trees or other local foods on their property they do not harvest. It is a common practice to harvest some of the food for the owner or to bring them some finished product made with the food, such as fresh pressed apple juice from their apples. It is often a benefit for all involved because the food may not have been harvested due to lack of time or to limited physical ability, as can be the case with elderly landowners. Gleaning has the potential to create lasting friendships that may not exist without the fruit trees providing an incentive to bring the relationship into being.

The Durango area is fortunate to be abundant in fruit trees. Many of the fruit from these trees, however, is left unused. As a community, we can create more local reliance and increase food security within our region by encouraging the gleaning of our local abundance. The quality of the fruits collected locally is often higher than much of what is bought in supermarkets.

### TURTLE LAKE REFUGE

Turtle Lake Refuge has incorporated gleaning into local educational programs by partnering with school systems. Various school groups have helped Turtle Lake glean apples from un-harvested orchards. Some of the kids took home apples for their families, and others helped press them into apple juice for their school snacks the following day. Some kids glean apples and cherries, which were made into cobbler for several 9-R School District public schools and for other events, including a school family fundraiser.

Gleaning is a win-win endeavor that benefits many different members of the community from its practice. Gleaning creates more integrated relationships with the foods people eat and the land, greater health for both the individual and the environment and lasting relationships based on the joy of harvesting good local food.

## 9. THE MESA VERDE GUIDE TO FOOD & FIBER

*A Contribution from Jim Dyer*

### **Current participating farms are:**

Ames – Burgess Ranch LLC  
Battlerock Ranch & Sutcliffe Vineyards  
Blue Horizons Farm Inc.  
Blue Clouds Farm  
Blue Mountain Gardens  
Circle A Garden  
Clear Water Farm  
Cole Meat & Veggies  
Common Ground Farm  
Cottonwood Creek Farm  
Dyers Wool  
E.A.S. Enterprises  
Evening Star Farm  
Fox Fire Organic Grass-Fed Lamb  
Horse Logging & Farming Coop  
Isgar Farms  
James Ranch  
Johnson Ranch  
Labrit Farm  
Linnaea Farm  
Little Yankee Ranch  
Lone Cone Mountain Wool, LLC.  
Mayday Wool  
Napier Family Farms  
Oakhaven Permaculture Center  
Outrun Ranch  
Peacetree Organix  
Purple Sage Goat Ranch  
Regional Agriculture Supply, Certified  
Ital Farms  
Rio Grande Alpacas and Icelandic  
Sheep  
Rolling T Ranch and King Club Lambs  
Rude Becky's Flower Farm  
Saddle K Ranch  
Santa Rita Ranch  
Shear Perfection Ranch  
Song Haven Farm  
Stone Free Farm  
Sutherland Farms  
The Bee Tree  
Turtle Lake Refuge  
Zuma Natural Foods

### **INTRODUCTION**

The “Mesa Verde Guide” is a listing of producers in the region who are willing to sell directly to consumers or to local food stores, restaurants and other local institutions. Each producer’s listing tells where and when their products are available, their contact information, and provides a description of what is unique and sustainable about the products and the way they were produced.<sup>35</sup>

### **WHY THE DIRECTORY WAS PRODUCED**

- To bring attention and increased income to those local farmers and ranchers who are willing to sell their sustainable products directly to local consumers.
- To help consumers find food and fiber that is both local and of high quality.
- To promote sustainable production methods.
- To encourage more farmers and ranchers, existing and new, to sell locally.
- To increase communication between producers and consumers about sustainable agricultural practices and products.

<sup>35</sup> For producers who may wish to be listed in the MVG, a registration form can be found as an appendix in this report.