

Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum

January 22 -23, 2016



For Immediate Release

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Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum Addresses the Future of Farming

Montrose, CO – December 2, 2015 - The 4th annual Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum, the state's premier gathering of farmers and ranchers, and others involved in the sustainable farm community, announced its line-up of workshops and speakers. The conference on January 23 at the Montrose Pavilion has a wide array of breakout sessions, which convey vital, regionally specific agricultural information in areas including maximizing crop and livestock production, innovative agricultural marketing and management strategies, and specialty crops.

The conference theme is *Farming the Future: Tools, Tips, Talent*. Workshops will focus on using innovative practices and technologies to manage people, land, and finances. Among other topics, the latest techniques in drip irrigation, cover cropping, electric fencing, minimum till, integrating livestock and cover cropping, marketing, financial planning and advocating for policy that supports the next generation of farmer will be addressed.

Keynote speaker Owen Hablutzel, will present *Farming Futures – Human Landscape Transformations for the 21st Century*. He will address how to transform agriculture to meet the challenges of rapid change by combining a mixture of older and newer practices to support an economically, socially, and ecologically regenerative future. Owen states that, “the way we humans practice agriculture has the highest ‘leverage’ of any other sector in terms of both local and global outcomes for ecosystem and human health.”

Brendon Rockey, recipient of the 2014 National Environmental Steward award will present on Rockey Farms practices in developing soil health using cover crops and other innovative techniques. Marc Caitlin, well know Colorado water expert will clarify ramifications of the newly adopted Colorado Water Plan. Additionally, attendees can choose from among 18 breakout sessions such as: *Integrating Cover Crops with Livestock, Scaling Up Row Crop Production, Marketing Your Values, Planning for Profit, Garlic and Compost Tea Production, Innovations in Drop Irrigation, New Electric Fencing Options of Friends or Foes, Livestock Health Management, Advocating for the Next Generation of Farmer*, and more.

On January 22 the Forum offers two preconference options: *No Till/Minimum Till Equipment and Management Options and Sustaining or Regenerating Our Agricultural Lands? Principals, Practices, and Complementary Methods in Regenerative Agriculture*.

The educational conference offers registration discounts to those registering by December 20th. Attendees also receive discounts when they attend both the preconference workshop and the Forum. Scholarships are available by application to FFA, 4H, and beginning farmers or ranchers.

The Valley Food Partnership, CSU Extension, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, National Young Farmers Coalition and Shavano Conservation District organize the Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum collaboratively. For a complete list of topics or to register for the conference and pre-conference workshop please visit:

www.foodfarmforum.org or call 249-3935.

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