

For Immediate Release
Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum
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Sustainable Ag Conference Attendance Grows

The 5th anniversary of the Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum saw record attendance with sessions at the Montrose County Fairgrounds and the Pavilion at near capacity levels Jan 20-21. With close to 275 people in attendance from Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, the conference brought organic and conventional producers of crops and livestock together for two days of learning and networking. Keynote speaker Ray Archuleta commented that, “The energy, enthusiasm, diversity and high number of young people attending this conference is unique.”

Nearly twenty beginning farmers attended on scholarships provided by Montrose County. Michael McMillan of Cortez remarked, “From learning best agricultural practices from some of the nation's most successful agronomists, making connections with other local growers, and learning about funding opportunities for new producers, the conference was an all around great value. I feel more confident and encouraged moving forward to pursue my dreams of becoming an ecological farmer and inspiring educator.”

Brendon Rockey of Rockey Farms provided an advanced but very interactive session on soil health called Carbon to Cash in which participants enacted their learning via role-play. The Hemp Rising breakout session filled with people wanting the latest information industrial hemp production from a local grower, Colorado Department of Agriculture and CSU. Soil health, multi-species grazing, grant resources, food safety regulations, the pros and cons of organic certification, water law, berry farming, livestock marketing and many other topics provided a large field of options for attendees to pick among.

Organizer Carol Parker of the Valley Food Partnership noted that, “We wanted to deliver a special experience for our 5th anniversary and we met that goal with outstanding presenters and new additions to the conference such as the farmer-to- farmer Invention Convention. “

For more information and session postings in mid-February visit foodfarmforum.org.