



For Immediate Release – Jan. 4, 2019 - Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum
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State's Foremost Water Authority to Anchor Water Workshop

If drought conditions last summer left you needing to understand your water rights more thoroughly, Kevin Rein, State Water Engineer and Director of Water Resources will present an in-depth workshop in Montrose January 25th, from 8-noon at the Montrose County Fairgrounds.

According to organizer, Aracely Tellez, "Attendees will leave with a clearer understanding of such issues as prior appropriation, or 'first in time, first in right,' and how water law impacts agricultural water use." The presentation will also describe the role of the Colorado River Compact and how the compact determines water supply delivery within and across state lines. The workshop will address what a water shortage declaration might mean for irrigators. Frank Kugel, Manager of Gunnison Basin River Conservancy will discuss ways to participate in leadership roles. Funding of water conservation projects will also be covered.

The Western Water Workshop is part of the Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum, a two-day sustainable agriculture conference. It is organized in collaboration with the National Young Farmers Coalition, CSU Extension, the Valley Food Partnership, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, Shavano Valley Conservation District and ENGAGE.

Afternoon Friday sessions include two additional workshops, one for crop farmers and one for livestock producers. Ben Hartman, author of *The Lean Farm* will present, "Lean Concepts Applied to Crop Production." This half day workshop will take you on a deep dive tour of Hartman's Claybottom Farm and show you how to earn a comfortable living on ½ acre of cultivated land. The "lean thinking" concepts they employ – such as 5S organizing, heijunka (load-leveling), and VSM (visual system management) – will be covered.

For livestock producers, Bill Parker of Parker Pastures in Gunnison will present "Performance Based Planned Grazing." This half-day workshop examines how to determine stocking rates, create drought reserves, and maximize livestock performance using regenerative planned grazing techniques. Producers will be able to tailor a plan to better understand how planned grazing is your Profit Center.

On Saturday January 26th, the conference continues at the Montrose Pavilion and includes 18 breakout sessions presented by nationally known and local experts. "The theme is Healthy Fields, Farmers, Futures and attendees will find sessions on soil health, marketing trends, personnel management, future weather patterns, season extension, livestock production, and other innovative agricultural practices being deployed within our region," says conference chair, Carol Parker. Joel Salatin is the keynote and provides a community presentation available via separate registration. Full details and registration at www.foodfarmforum.org or call (970) 765-6170.