



**PUEBLO COUNTY**  
**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**EXTENSION**

# Pueblo County PATHWAYS

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## Goodbye, MJ

On July 1, the Extension office in Pueblo County said goodbye to our revered Director, Michael (MJ) Fisher. MJ accepted a position as the Central District Director for University of Idaho Extension.

During MJ's time at Pueblo County Extension, he made great strides in increasing the volume of programming and staff and boosting morale to create an optimally functioning Extension office. MJ was a champion at telling our story and letting stakeholders know about the impact we make on our community.

With his departure, Sherie Shaffer will be taking on the role as Interim Director for the Pueblo County Extension office. MJ has provided her with valuable guidance and mentoring over the years that she will use to keep this office running smoothly until a permanent Director is appointed.

We wish MJ the best in his new position and will look forward to continuing to meet the standard of excellence he set forth.



*Michael (MJ) Fisher*



# Drought Meeting



Colorado weather often is unpredictable and can seem like a roller coaster with extreme weather highs and lows. This wild ride can highly impact farmers and agricultural producers. To gain a better understanding of weather and drought and its current and future impacts on agriculture in the Arkansas River Valley Area, the Pueblo County Extension Office partnered with the South Pueblo County and Turkey Creek Conservation Districts to hold a Drought Informational Meeting. Speakers from the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), the Colorado Climate Center, the local National Weather Service Office and the local Pueblo County Farm Service Agency (FSA) delivered talks to a mixed room of community members, county professionals and local farmers and ranchers.

Each speaker spoke to a different aspect of drought and how these various factors are affecting agriculture and how they will mold the future. Pueblo County has been moving between actual drought status and abnormally dry status since the beginning of the year and according to the information received, this will likely be a common trend with more time spent in a drought category.

The speaker from NIDIS was able to tell participants how they can be involved in monitoring drought which will give agricultural producers a more in-depth advantage to looking at weather conditions and long-term drought. With this information they will be able to plan better so their farms and ranches are not as severely affected by the weather extremes and lack of precipitation. Approximately 26 people attended the program which included a Barbeque dinner at the historic Alpha Beta Meat Packing plant (Water Tower Place). The Conservation Districts generously funded the Drought Information Meeting, and they were also able to complete their

Work Group Meeting in conjunction.

The evaluations that the Conservation District collected will help them better understand what conservation programs agricultural producers would like more access too. This information was also shared with Extension personnel. Through this information, more collaborations and education will be able to be provided for the agricultural community of Pueblo County furthering conservation in agriculture and allowing farmers to make well-rounded decisions and choices, keeping farming here for years to come.



# Yeehaw! 4-H Camp Is Here!

Howdy Partners! With great excitement and much hullabaloo, Pueblo County 4-H Camp is Back—and we've gone Western! After 2 years of inactivity due to COVID restrictions, 4-H Camp came back with a hoot and a holler this year as nearly 40 4-H members and 6 4-H Camp Counselors met at the Nature and Wildlife Discovery Center in Beulah, Colorado for 3 days filled with learning, laughing and fun.

4-H members spent time learning new skills like leathercrafting and line dancing, exploring the creek and spending time in the great outdoors. Some of our skilled 4-H Volunteers led an Air Rifle Workshop and helped 4-H members learn how to lasso a roping dummy. The three camp teams (the Deputies, Wranglers and Bandits) competed for Flag Ribbons in each activity during their stay—ribbons which would then adorn their Team's flag with pride and for "bragging rights". Ribbons could be won in feats of athleticism like in the Counselor Hunt or Wild Horse Roundup, or in cooperative ways, such as Best Camp Skit or "Most Spirited" team. Between hikes, group games and tug-of-war, our 4-H members were happy to "hit the hay" each night in the bunkhouse.

Pueblo County 4-H Camp provides members aged 8 to 13 the chance to experience a sleep-away camp in the beautiful Colorado wilderness; and provides our Youth Counselors the opportunity to try out leading, planning and coordinating a full camp experience with their peers. Under the careful eye of their Senior Counselors, Campers engage in cooperative games, teambuilding activities, and a community service project throughout their time at camp, practicing civic engagement and environmental stewardship while having fun with their friends and mentors. For their community service project this year, campers donated canned food for the "Chuck Wagon Cowboy Dinner," items which went on to benefit the Care and Share Food Bank here in Pueblo.

Pueblo County 4-H Camp is a beloved staple of the 4-H program in Pueblo County, and we're so glad it's "On the Road Again!"





# PUEBLO COUNTY

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## Upcoming Events

For details, call 583-6566 or visit  
<http://pueblo.extension.colostate.edu>

### Family and Consumer Programs

- Foods Safety Training for Cottage Foods Producers, 3-year certification, fee \$50.00. Various online webinar dates are available Register at Eventbrite.com
- Follow the FCS program on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloFCS/>

### Horticulture Programs

- Planting for Fall Harvest, August 19, 2022, 1PM-2PM, \$5 per person, register at [fallplant.eventbrite.com](http://fallplant.eventbrite.com)
- Compost Workshop, October 14, 2022, 10AM-12PM, \$20.00 per person, register at [compost22.eventbrite.com](http://compost22.eventbrite.com)
- All Pueblo Grows Seed Library, collecting and packaging seeds. Look for neighborhood seed boxes. Visit: [allpueblogrows.org](http://allpueblogrows.org)
- <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloCountyHorticulture>

### 4-H/Youth Development

- Ongoing Club and County Programs
- Follow us on Facebook and YouTube

### Agronomy/Ag/Range/Natural Resources

- <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloAg>

Pueblo County Fair– July 22-31, 2022 on the CO State Fairgrounds Visit: [pueblountyfair.com](http://pueblountyfair.com)

Follow Pueblo County Extension on Social Media  
Instagram page at: <https://www.instagram.com/pueblountyextension/> If you are using the app, you can find us at: @PuebloCountyExtension

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## Recognition

Family & Consumer Science Agent, Laura Griffin was awarded the 2022 Extending Excellence Award for Outstanding Educator/Communicator for the CSU Extension Southern Region. This was awarded for her continued education and support for the Colorado Cottage Foods Certification program. Laura has taught over 30 courses in the past six years, certifying hundreds of individuals across the state. She is also the moderator, administrator and “group expert” for the Colorado Cottage Food Peeps Facebook group, which provides a dedicated platform for CF producers to ask questions and brainstorm ideas on all things related to Cottage Foods.



Laura Griffin

## Cottage Foods Certification

Colorado Senate Bill 12-048 allows individuals to produce, sell and store certain types of “cottage food” products in an unlicensed home kitchen that are non-potentially hazardous and that do not require refrigeration. The Colorado Cottage Foods Act allows individuals to make and sell a limited range of foods, including spices, teas, dehydrated produce, nuts, seeds, honey, jams, jellies, preserves, fruit butter, flour, and baked goods, including candies, fruit empanadas, and tortillas.

Offered by Colorado State University Extension, the Food Safety Training for Colorado Cottage Foods Producers class is a nationally-recognized training program that covers the specifics of the Colorado Cottage Food Act and how to safely operate a food business from a home kitchen and provides producers with a 3-year certification.