

Pueblo County Extension Agriculture Tribune



The Quarterly Pueblo County Extension Ag Newsletter



Cheesy Potato Chowder

Quick and Easy Crock-pot meal!

Ingredients:

- 1lb ground beef
- 8 C diced potatoes, fresh or canned (no need to remove skins)
- 1/8 C diced onion
- 2 C corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned all work)
- 29 oz. chicken broth
- 1 10.75 oz. can of cream of mushroom soup
- 1 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp basil
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 10 oz. processed cheese (like Velveeta), cubed

Prep Time:

Prep 15 min.
Cook 6-8 hrs.

Procedure

1 Brown hamburger in a skillet on the stove and drain any excess fat.

2 Add browned hamburger and all other ingredients to crock-pot.

3 Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours.

*If using canned potatoes it will be closer to 6 hours cook time.

Recipe source: Colorado State University Extension, <https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2021/03/Cheesy-Potato-Chowder.pdf>

Meet the Ag Team!

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Scan to access the digital version of this newsletter.



Look inside to view our highlighted community partners!



What will you plant for the 2023 growing season?

By: Kristi Bartolo, Agronomy Agent, Pueblo County

Though it is winter and crop fields lay bare, cows amble through left over corn stocks and tractors wait quietly in barns, farmers are still bustling about in preparation for the next growing season. Winter is a great time to recap last season; what went well, what did not and what crops sold best at the market. A great deal of thought and effort must be given to determining what crops to grow and what should be planted next year. Factors that can help farmers make this decision include, listing what was planted last year and where on the farm it was planted, how much irrigation water will be available this growing season and how much fertilizer and pesticide will be needed for successful crops. Keeping an eye on commodity crop and vegetable prices through the winter may also help a farmer decide if they will include any new varieties or continue with the perennial crops already in the ground.



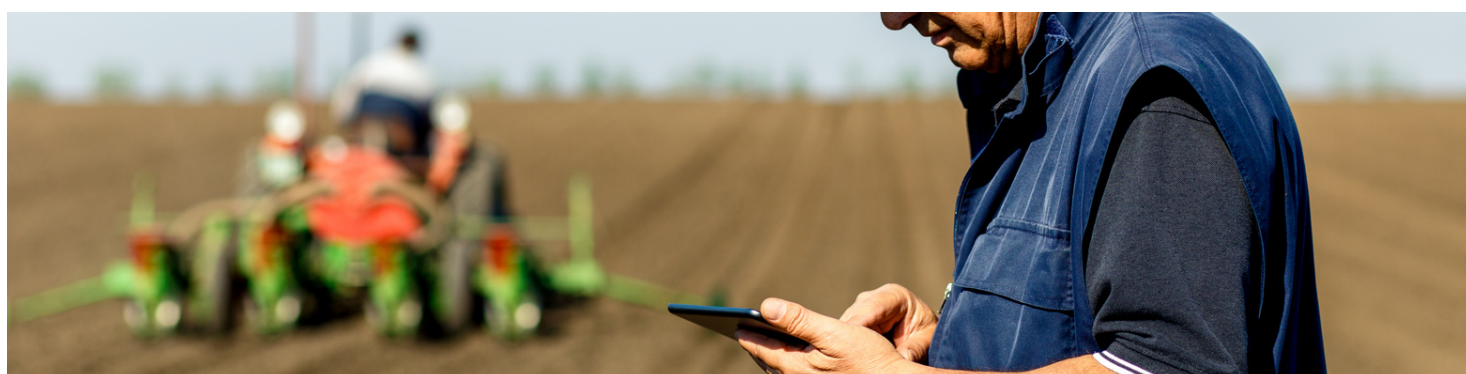
There are myriads of varieties to choose from for commodity and forage crops like alfalfa, corn and grains. Colorado State University's Crops Testing Department provides annual reports on what varieties perform the best under certain conditions. The report includes amounts and types of fertilizer and pesticide used for the crops grown. Some crops are trialed under both dryland and irrigated conditions which can give farmers another option even if irrigation water is limited. More information and trial data for all of the crops tested can be found at csucrops.com. Be sure to know what kind of equipment is needed to plant and harvest any new crops being planted. Equipment can be costly and may also be an important aspect to consider when deciding on whether a new crop will be planted or not.



Pueblo County is especially known for the abundance and large selection of vegetable crops. No matter if they will be grown in a backyard garden or planted on multiple acres, vegetables require extra care especially deciding what to plant. It is helpful to determine if cold hardy crops, like broccoli and carrots, can be planted first before more tender crops, like chile peppers and sweet corn. Some farmers may choose to plant varieties that are more resistant to disease and pests to reduce the need for spraying pesticides making the produce of higher quality to community members. Farmers must also choose whether they will plant the vegetables by seed or transplant. Often transplants can give the farmer a head start on the growing season so that produce is available sooner than if seed were to be planted. Tomatoes, peppers and melons are often grown from transplants. Conversely, some produce grows quickly, and transplants are not necessary, like summer squashes and herbs. Planting by seed often reduces cost of planting and requires less equipment. There are many local and commercial seed and transplant companies that farmers can partner with to grow successful crops.



The spring will be here soon, and farmers will be back out in their tractors and all the preparations of the winter will be of benefit as they begin preparing the fields, planting and watching the first leaves emerge from the soil or break dormancy and fields become vibrant and green again.



Ag Homeschooling Education

By: Beth De Lair, Ag & Natural Resources Coordinator



The fall of 2022 was a special time for the Pueblo County Ag team. We were able to share educational experiences with a wonderful group of homeschool students and their families. The learning opportunities we provided focused on agricultural topics geared toward non-traditional ag youth ranging in age from 2 years all the way to 19 years old. Topics taught included local farm to table production, the importance of dairy products, the use of grains in everyday food, the importance of healthy soil and worms, and finally an overall view of insects and their role in our ecosystem. All the topics included various hands-on activities that engaged the students and allowed them to make critical connections to larger topics. The youth were able to make their own ice cream in a bag, grind up grain, make fresh tortillas from both corn and flour, handle real worms, and build bugs out of pipe cleaners.



Some of the younger children who attended the soil and worm class were able to relate the information they learned to the insect class the following week. Children as young as four were able to understand how different insects could act as decomposers and help bring nutrients to plants. The way the lessons were modified for each age group made them very impactful. We strive to teach these topics to all youth at their individual levels of understanding; we hope they take this knowledge and apply it to concepts they interact with daily.



The Pueblo County Extension Ag team was thrilled to have the opportunity to work with such a vast group of youth. The future for agriculture rests with the younger generations and to see their eyes light up with excitement when they learned each new topic was truly amazing. We look forward to continuing these educational opportunities and appreciate the community support from organizations such as Nola Naturals that have made these teaching sessions possible.



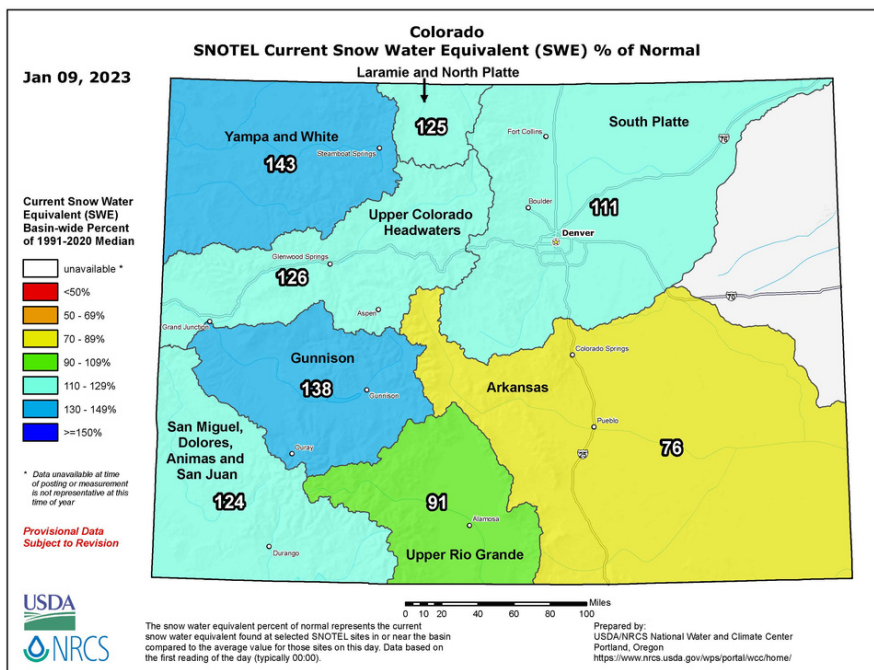
For more information regarding this opportunity, or if you would like to be added to our homeschooling email list please feel free to give us a call at 719-583-6566.

Current Pueblo County Water Outlook for 2023

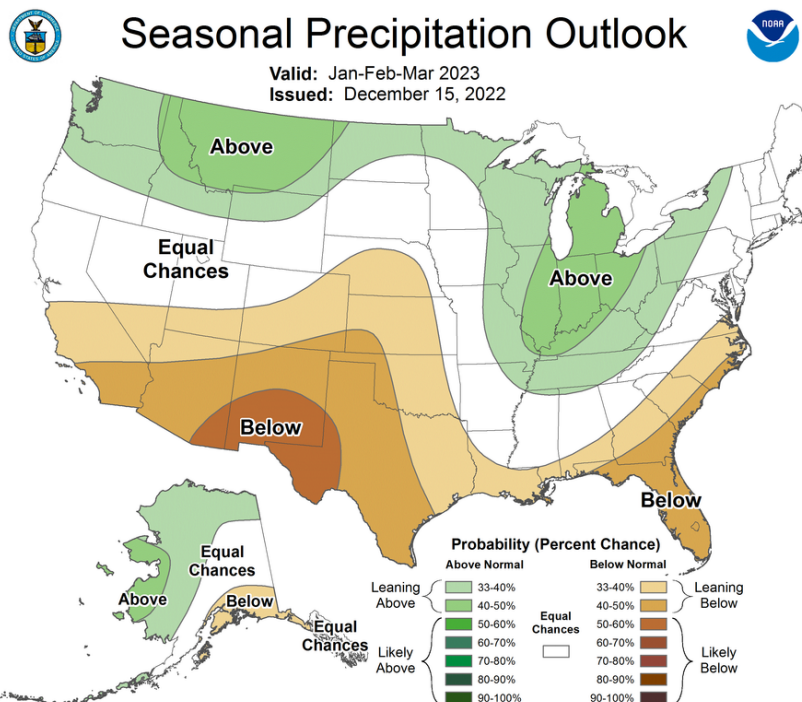


By: Kristi Bartolo, Agronomy Agent, Pueblo County

Water is one of the most important and uncontrollable characteristics of agriculture. It can stir the emotion of many people, especially agricultural producers who rely on water not only to drink but for their livelihood. In the winter, farmers look towards the mountains anticipating large amounts of accumulation and snowpack. Ranchers look towards the sky, hoping spring storms will replenish the soil and the range will turn vibrantly green. Weather plays a critical role in the lives of these farmers and ranchers. From experience, they know that one storm can be the saving grace or the complete decimation of all the hard work and effort they have put into their farms and ranches. Though weather conditions and changing climates are fairly unpredictable, meteorologists and scientists do their best to make short and long-term weather forecasts. There are a variety of maps and graphs to look through and these resources can help farmers and ranchers plan ahead, just enough to know whether they will be able to run at full capacity or if they will need to cut back, destocking, fallowing fields and employing other water saving and capturing methods. Organizations like the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the National Weather Service, and the Colorado Climate Center all provide weather and climate predictions, data, and information. prepare for the coming growing season.



Precipitation is one of the most important weather aspects a farmer or rancher can track to improve production. The 2022 growing season in Pueblo County was variable with some corners receiving more precipitation than others. With a very late first snow in 2021, snow totals struggled to meet average totals falling a bit short and resulting in irrigation water cutbacks for farmers in the area. According to the Colorado Climate Center, swift and early run off and dry soils were major contributing factors to the limited water. Fall and early winter of 2022 have not been as dry, relatively speaking, with almost a half an inch of precipitation to date (October through December). The National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center's long-term predictions show precipitation in the coming spring to be leaning towards below average values this coming year as well. If the current La Nina pattern dissipates and a more neutral flow follows, more precipitation may come in the spring. Snowpack is currently quite low for the start of the season. Current data from USDA NRCS SNOTEL site, shows the Arkansas River Basin holding at 76% of the median snow-water equivalent. As more winter storms are predicted to hit the mountains, this value will rise but there is concern that it will be below average again as springtime comes and snowmelt begins. Farmers and ranchers will most likely see limited water again this coming growing season and can begin to plan for this situation. There is still the hope that more precipitation will fall enhancing agricultural production. The end of winter precipitation totals will provide more information on how to prepare for the coming growing season.





The elimination of livestock over the counter antibiotics – Federal Drug Administration Guidance #263

By: Beth De Lair, Ag & Natural Resources Coordinator



This year, on June 13th, 2023, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) will enact guidance #263. This ruling will stop all sales of over the counter (OTC) livestock antibiotics in the United States. This is a big change for any sized livestock operation and is something every producer and animal owner needs to prepare for. The official guidance reads as, "medically important antimicrobial drugs that are available OTC and approved for use in animals (companion and food producing), regardless of delivery mechanism, be voluntarily brought under veterinary oversight or prescription marketing status." The word voluntarily and guidance in this ruling does not apply to consumers but to the drug companies that are making these antibiotics. This language allows the FDA to work with the drug companies to help them voluntarily change the marketing status of their medically important livestock antibiotics to a prescription required item. The ruling is attempting to decrease antibiotic resistance in bacteria due to misuse of antibiotics. To read the full report from the FDA you can click [here](#).

What does this mean for livestock owners?

On June 13th, 2023, all current over the counter livestock antibiotics, regardless of method of injection, will be pulled from every feed store in the United States. You will be required to consult a large animal veterinarian to get a prescription for the medications you are requesting. Further follow up will be at the discretion of each veterinarian.

What can do producers do now?

Establish a veterinary client patient relationship (VCPR) which is the basis for veterinary care. This means you need to chat with your large animal vet about what diseases you know come up in your operation and what medications you will need as the year continues forward. Your vet will then need to prescribe you the necessary medications. Also be sure to talk to your friends and neighbors about these new rules so they can prepare their management decisions appropriately. This is not meant to blindside any producer but without communities sharing this information it could easily create that feeling.

What should someone **not** do?

Do not panic or stock up on any currently available medications as they can expire and lose their effectiveness in treating diseases.

Where will I be able to purchase the antibiotics?

There is no one answer to this question. The ruling states that any recognized farm store such as a co-op, Tractor Supply, or other similar store has the option of being a pharmacy where livestock owners could bring in their prescription from a veterinarian and purchase the required drugs. However, the liability of being a pharmacy could greatly impact any feed store whether they are a national brand or a community owned business. It will be up to each store to decide how they would like to proceed, and at this time, no stores have made it public knowledge what their status will be regarding this new guidance. Online stores are also subject to complying with federal rulings and you will not be able to purchase these items online unless the retailer is in coordination with the veterinarian, or their office, that wrote the prescription.

Will these changes lead to additional expenses?

At this time, it is unknown if the changes will affect antibiotic prices. However, there are veterinary expenses associated with establishing and maintaining a VCPR. If you are currently in good standing with a local vet, then your odds of having additional expenses due to this federal change are expected to be minimal.

What information is available from Colorado State University Extension?

Colorado State University Extension is planning to host a free educational webinar with Veterinary Extension Specialist, Ragan Adams on Monday, February 6th at noon mountain time that will cover this topic in more detail. This webinar will be open to everyone to attend. You will be able to send in questions regarding this topic to Beth De Lair the Pueblo County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Coordinator at delairb@pueblounty.us.

To register for this event you can go to: <https://OTCLivestockantibioticslaws23.eventbrite.com> or call 719-583-6566.

For additional information on this ruling here are some helpful sites you can go to:

Texas Farm Bureau – Ranchers Should Prepare Now

<https://texasfarmbureau.org/ranchers-should-prepare-now-for-2023-animal-antibiotic-guidelines/>

Guidance for Industry No. 263 Missouri Extension

<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g2112>

Complete List of antibiotics affected by GFI #263

<https://extension.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pub/docs/g02112-Antibiotics-impacted-by-GFI263.pdf>

FDA's Frequently Asked Questions for Farmers & Ranchers

<https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/unpublished-judicious-use-antimicrobials/gfi-263-frequently-asked-questions-farmers-and-ranchers>

FDA Guidance for Industry #263

<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/cvm-gfi-263-recommendations-sponsors-medically-important-antimicrobial-drugs-approved-use-animals>





Spring Production Resources



By: Beth De Lair, Ag & Natural Resources Coordinator

As we start to look forward to this year's spring season be sure to check out these great local resources for all your outdoor needs. They have a variety of items related to gardening, livestock care, rangeland management and other tools that will help you make your land be the best it can be.

Fox's Garden Supply

This local garden shop that's been around since 1952 is a great Pueblo shop that features a variety of live plants and seeds that can help you get your plants growing the correct way. They are located at 329 South Santa Fe Ave. Unsure if they have what you are looking for? Give them a call at 719-542-1872 or check out their website <https://www.foxsgardensupply.com/> They are closed on Mondays until April 1st and are open Tuesday-Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

D & K Feed and Ranch Supply

This feed and ranch shop just down the road towards the west side of Pueblo in Penrose is another spot to look for items you need to keep your farm or ranch running. They are located at 14575 CO-115 in Penrose. They are open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Saturday from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. closed on Sunday. Follow them on Facebook or call them directly at 719-372-6205.

Arkansas Valley Co-op

If you are located on the eastern side of Pueblo you can always check out the Arkansas Valley Co-op store in Fowler for your agricultural needs, located at 215 West Santa Fe Ave. in Fowler. They are currently open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Saturday from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and are closed on Sunday. Check out their store website <http://fowlercoop.com/contact-us.shtml> or give them a call at 719-263-4266.

Pawnee Butte Seed Company

Pawnee Butte is a Colorado seed company that has a variety of dryland range mixes that do extremely well in our area. They are a great resource for our community and has helped many landowners put plant matter back onto damaged areas from overgrazing and erosion. Check out their website here to browse their products: <https://pawneebutteseed.com>

SoCo Organics Garden Center

This shop is a great spot for anyone interested in growing plants and food hydroponically. The owners of this shop are extremely knowledgeable about how to set up your own DIY hydroponic system and has a knowledge base of aquaponics as well. Be sure to stop into this cool shop next time you are downtown! They are located at 215 South Union Ave in Pueblo, Colorado. They are currently open Monday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sunday's 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. You can give their shop a call at 719-205-0449 or check out their website <https://socoorganics.com/>

Big R

Big R has two ranch store locations in Pueblo that offer a variety of farm and ranch items. One store is located in the Belmont area at 1020 Bonforte Boulevard and is open Monday-Saturday from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. To contact the Belmont Big R store you can call them at 719-542-1835. The other Big R location is in Pueblo West located at 115 West Industrial Boulevard. They operate the same hours as the Belmont location. Their store phone number is 719-766-9160.

Tractor Supply

Tractor Supply is another Pueblo centered store that offers additional farm, ranch, and general outdoor supplies. They are located at 5075 North Elizabeth Street and are open Monday-Saturday from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. To reach this store you can give them a call at 719-544-1700.



Community Partner Highlights

El Pueblo History Museum

El Pueblo History Museum showcases the region's many cultural and ethnic groups through innovative exhibits including the Borderlands of Southern Colorado and Steel City. The property includes a re-created 1840s adobe trading post and plaza, and the archaeological excavation site of the original 1842 El Pueblo trading post. The museum has partnered with the Pueblo County Extension Office offering conference and event space for the Pueblo Beekeepers Association conference and other events. The museum is an important place to learn about the beginning of modern Agriculture in the area. Through historically educational activities and events the museum helps to inform the Pueblo and broader community of this aspect of Pueblo.

Website:

<https://www.historycolorado.org/el-pueblo-history-museum>



Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region

Founded in 1949, Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region is the largest animal welfare group for homeless and abused animals in Southern Colorado. HSPPR is a local, independent nonprofit not affiliated with national organizations such as ASPCA or Humane Society of the United States and relies on donations to fund its work. As an open admission shelter, no animal is ever turned away. Passionate and dedicated staff care for animals in distress, provide medical care for abused and injured animals, reunite lost pets with their owners, find loving homes for homeless animals, and investigate animal cruelty and enforce animal ordinances. HSPPR has partnered with the Pueblo County Extension Office in support of the Community Animal Response Team that the office is responsible for. They have participated in drills and have very generously donated supplies for the Pueblo Team.

Website:

<https://www.hsppr.org/>



Local Happenings:

Registration Open Now!

3rd Annual

SUN SOIL 2023 WATER AG SUMMIT



PUEBLO COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



PUEBLO
FOOD
PROJECT

at Pueblo Community College

March 17th & 18th

JOIN US FOR

Friday Sun Soil Water Ag Pitch
Competition

Friday 2nd Annual Pueblo Food
System Leadership Awards

Saturday Community Led Summit

Saturday Makers' Market and Idea Fair



Mark your Calendar!

Register at : 23SunSoilWaterAg.eventbrite.com

PUEBLO BEEKEEPER SCHOOL & SPEAKER EVENT

Save the Date

- **Bee Curious School Dates:** February 25 & 26, 2023
- **Bee Speaker & Vendor Date:** Saturday, March 4, 2023
- **Where:** Bee School - Pueblo West Library
Bee Speaker - El Pueblo History Museum

Are you a current beekeeper or thinking about becoming one? The 2023 Pueblo County Beekeeper Association invites you to save the date for the upcoming February & March events! Come learn all about beekeeping from industry professionals. Additional details will be released soon!



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CSU's Office of Engagement and Extension ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English.
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Office of Engagement and Extension de CSU garantiza acceso significativo e igualdad de oportunidades para participar a las personas quienes su primer idioma no es el inglés.
Full statements are available at: <https://colostate.edu/eo>



Upcoming Events

January Dates

- **January 7-22, 2023**
 - National Western Stock Show
- **January 24-26, 2023**
 - Colorado Farm Show
- **January 27-29, 2023**
 - Wester Soil Health Food and Farm Forum

February Dates

- **February 6, 2023**
 - OTC Livestock Webinar
- **February 7-9, 2023**
 - Southern Rocky Mountain Ag Conference
- **February 21-22, 2023**
 - Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference
- **February 25-26 2023**
 - PBA Bee School

March Dates

- **March 4, 2023**
 - PBA Bee Speaker Event
- **March 11, 2023**
 - C.A.R.T. Drill
- **March 17-18, 2023**
 - Sun Soil Water Ag Summit
- **March 24, 2023**
 - Water Round Table

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



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi0dsYcfX1gIbHQWPit8WDQ>



<https://pueblo.extension.colostate.edu/>



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Full statements are available at: <https://col.st/110t3>