

# Pueblo County Extension Agriculture Tribune



The Quarterly Pueblo County Extension Ag Newsletter



## Creamy Chicken Soup with Potatoes and Bacon

### Ingredients

- 4 slices bacon, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 leek (white and light green parts), halved and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- 1 tsp. fennel seeds, crushed
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 3/4 lb. red potatoes cubed
- 6 sprigs thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- Sliced fresh chives, for serving

### Directions

#### Step 1

Cook bacon in a large pot over medium heat until browned and crisp, 7 to 8 minutes; transfer to a paper towel-lined plate with a slotted spoon. Reserve pot.

#### Step 2

Add butter and leek to reserved pot. Cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and fennel. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute. Add flour and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Slowly whisk in milk and then stock. Add potatoes and thyme. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until potatoes are tender, 14 to 16 minutes.

#### Step 3

Add chicken and corn. Cook until soup is heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Discard thyme. Serve topped with crispy bacon and chives.



Recipe from: <https://www.countryliving.com/food-drinks/a26767670/rotisserie-chicken-potato-chowder-recipe/>

## Meet the Ag Team!

**Beth Hayes** - Agriculture & Natural  
Resource Specialist  
CSU Extension State Emergency  
Management Coordinator  
Email: [hayesb@pueblocounty.us](mailto:hayesb@pueblocounty.us)

Scan to access the digital  
version of this newsletter.



Look inside  
to view our  
highlighted  
community  
partners!





# Winter Livestock Nutrition: Myth vs. Fact

by Beth Hayes, Ag & Natural Resource Specialist  
CSU Extension State Emergency Management Coordinator

There are many myths out there about the best way to care for livestock animals during the winter time. The sensational ones that we tend to hear about in social media such as chicken sweaters, the fight over whether horses need to be blanketed or not and should you force animals to stay in a barn during winter storms are all common items we see. In this article we'd like to address some of these common misconceptions and explain the thought process behind them and the truth behind the concern.

### Myth 1: Poultry always need supplemental heat in the winter

Facts: Poultry do better with the cold than they do with the heat. They are some breed specifics that don't handle the cold well like Silke chickens for example but for the majority of poultry species they are uniquely set up to handle the cold. Heavy feathering provides insulation on their body and they have a special heat exchange system in their legs that warms returning blood with outgoing arterial blood. They can also restrict blood flow to sensitive areas that do hit the cold such as their feet, combs and wattles. If they can get to an enclosed space out of the wind that has nice bedding and they can cover their feet, most birds do just fine.

### Myth 2: Every equine needs a blanket.

Facts: This is not a "blanket" statement. Blanketing any equine (horse, mule, donkey, etc.) depends on a variety of factors such as age, nutrition, access to housing, coat thickness and others. If your horse is a young horse that has a thick heavy coat that maintains weight well in the winter, it is unlikely they will need a blanket outside of some severe storms. Your older horse that is struggling to keep weight on however might need a more constant blanket situation. Each equine is an individual so you need to look at the animal as a whole and decide from there.

### Myth 3: Cattle who don't have barn access during the winter won't do well for body conditioning or calving.

Facts: Again this goes back to nutrition and general health of the animal in question. Cows that are well fed, have constant access to fresh water and can bed down during storms even if they are out in the elements typically do just fine. Ones that are more on the stressed side of nutrition can have issues throughout the winter and into the spring time especially if they are pregnant. Knowing your animals and what they need for required nutrition and heat sources are vital for proper winter care.

When in doubt, it's better to provide all animals with extra feed, fresh access to water and a space to get out of the wind during the winter time. This allows them to generate internal heat that keeps them warm and content. Most livestock animals just need to get out of wind and stay dry to make it through the winter without too much complaint.

For more information on this topic you can check out other livestock information from CSU at <https://extension.colostate.edu/topics/livestock-and-animals/>





# Eating Seasonally During the Winter

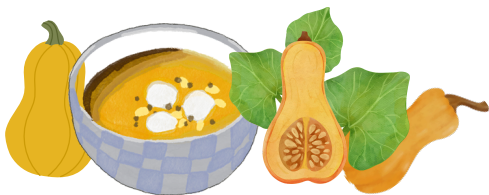
by Beth Hayes, Ag & Natural Resource Specialist  
CSU Extension State Emergency Management Coordinator

With colder temperatures it maybe difficult to eat seasonally but there are many benefits in doing so. It provides fresher produce to your meals, lowers the transmission of food travel from farm to table and is typically higher in nutrition as it's the most recent items grown around us. Great examples of items to eat during the colder months include: winter squash, tomatoes, spinach, kale, potatoes, mushrooms, cucumbers, dry beans, cabbage, beets, apples, lettuce, turnips, and asparagus. These food items plus others have higher concentrations of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants which is vital during the winter months when your body fights to stay warm and ward off various diseases that are common during these months.

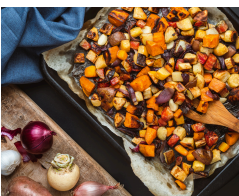
Research shows that nutrients that are sensitive to degradation over time and distance like Vitamin C are higher in seasonal produce. This helps your nutritional intake. Changing and adding variety your diet with the seasons encourages you and your family to receive a diverse spectrum of nutrients that support overall health through every season. You also tend to save money by following this practice as the cost of in season fruits and vegetables at a store is typically lower because they aren't coming as far away as items that are not in season such as corn or watermelon.

Complex carbs in squash have been shown to increase body temperature during the cold months and support mood health during the darker months as well, which assists in warding off issues like seasonal depression, dry skin, and fatigue. Winter squash is typically a highly valued product this time of year as you can roast it, steam it, or boil it and then transform that into a mash, puree or cube it for soups, stuffs, sides or baked goods like breads or pies. A really great winter squash recipe is from the Colorado Proud division of the Colorado Department of Agriculture and is one we encourage you to try the next time you go out for your groceries. By eating seasonally, you can help your local farms, save money and have better nutrition.

To get the Colorado roasted butternut squash soup recipe click here:  
<https://ag.colorado.gov/press-release/get-cozy-roasted-butternut-squash-soup-december-colorado-proud-recipe-of-the-month>



CO Proud  
Butternut Squash  
soup recipe



# Pueblo Ag History

by Beth Hayes, Ag & Natural Resource Specialist  
CSU Extension State Emergency Management Coordinator



Pueblo has a long-standing agricultural history that dates way back before we were even a state. It was of such importance that at one time, Pueblo was going to be the capital of the state but, unfortunately, history did not go that way. Many people say Pueblo was not chosen because our agriculture took a nose dive when we needed it the most.

Pueblo was a major agricultural hub before Colorado became a state in 1876, and prospered as such for quite some time after statehood. In 1883, Pueblo had more irrigated land than most other counties in the state. The irrigated land equaled to more than 92,000 acres or nearly a quarter of the state's total. Today only about 13,392 acres of Pueblo land from the 2022 USDA census is irrigated, making up only about 2% of Colorado's total farmable land. Commercial agriculture arrived here after the gold rush in the Pikes Peak Region in 1858, but many people soon realized it was hard to get gold out of our mountains and turned to farming and ranching instead. In 1913, a man named George Paul even had a plan to develop an area he dubbed "Appleton" on 16,000 acres along the Arkansas for a massive apple orchard. Unfortunately, due to the 1920 flood and the creation of the reservoir this orchard now sits at the bottom of Lake Pueblo.



Pueblo was the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading producer of cauliflower by the 1920's, grew as many acres of watermelons as Otero County did at the time, and was among the top state producers for string beans. However, our luck changed when the railroads moved, the 1920 flood happened, and water rights became stricter in our county. That movement caused many ranches, farms, and dairies to close permanently and discouraged any new businesses from coming to our ag industry. Those factors along with a lower population than Denver caused the vote for Denver to be named the capital of Colorado instead of Pueblo. That was the final straw for Pueblo in our agricultural downfall from greatness. The Pueblo County Extension office offers agriculture history tours that take you to many of these historic sites to explore our community, our history and our people. If you'd like to stay in the loop on our dates for the next tour cycle be sure to follow us on social sites like Facebook or Eventbrite by looking at CSU Extension Pueblo County.

## Pueblo Water History- The Bessemer Ditch

by Beth Hayes, Ag & Natural Resource Specialist  
CSU Extension State Emergency Management Coordinator

Did you know that the water that now resides in the Bessemer Ditch that brings the Arkansas River to the producers to the east was at one time a wooden siphon that was under the St. Charles River and was at the time the longest wooden siphon in use in the United States? This was used until 1976 when the redwood structure was replaced with the 66 inch reinforced concrete pipe that is used to this day. The original structure was designed in 1889. The ditch was originally 43 miles but was devastated by flooding from the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek in 1921. Many of the records including the engineering sketches, plans and relevant documents to shareholders were lost in this event. However less than a week after the flood the board met to authorize the hiring of a new crew to rebuild. The flood happened between June 3-5 1921, the board met on June 9<sup>th</sup> to hire a new crew and the goal was to turn the ditch back on by July 15<sup>th</sup>.



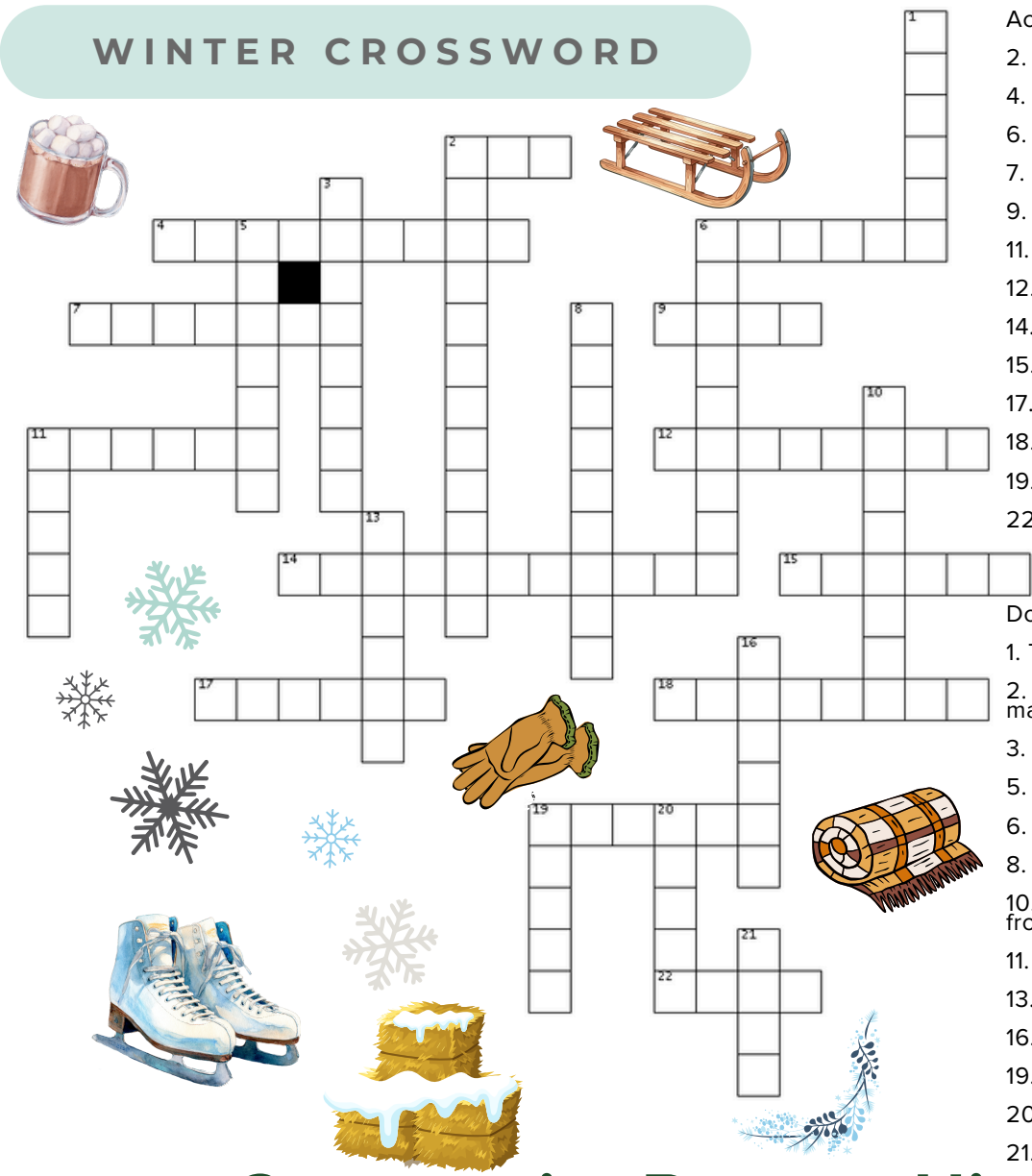
By 1960 the ditch was crossed by 32 bridges in Pueblo and was used not only for agricultural purposes but was also used to irrigate yards and gardens in the West Park area west of City park, City Park itself, and the Elmwood Golf course. It still irrigates about 20,000 acres at the rate of an 1 acre per share and has about 900 shareholders. This is also the principal source of water for the St. Charles Mesa Water district that owns four farms and supplies water to over 11,000 people who live out on the Mesa in Pueblo County. The marvel of this waterway is nothing short of extraordinary and so are the people who have kept it moving forward since day one. Want to learn more about the Bessemer Ditch?



Check out more local history by clicking here:  
<https://bessemerditchcompany.org/index.php/about-bidc>



WINTER CROSSWORD



- Across
- 2. This comes in bales
  - 4. Be dormant in the winter
  - 6. Tremble due to cold temps
  - 7. Retention of goods or supplies
  - 9. An animal's covering of fur or hair
  - 11. Search for food
  - 12. Winter storm
  - 14. Preventative care
  - 15. Spike of frozen water
  - 17. The water in a trough during winter
  - 18. A sudden, brief spell of cold weather
  - 19. A building to shelter horses
  - 22. Structure that can store grain
- Down
- 1. The coldest season
  - 2. Can be made with milk or water and marshmallows
  - 3. Producing animal offspring
  - 5. Bed covering
  - 6. Each one that falls is unique
  - 8. A cozy place to burn wood
  - 10. A type of sweater that closes in the front
  - 11. White covering on cold mornings
  - 13. Sharp cold, or the taste of a grapefruit
  - 16. Protection for your hands
  - 19. You can do this on blades or wheels
  - 20. Sturdy footwear
  - 21. You can slide downhill on one of these

Community Partner Highlights

Pueblo County Beekeepers Association

Pueblo County Beekeepers Association is a wonderful partner with the Pueblo CSU Extension. We host many programs together to benefit Pueblo and the surrounding areas on beekeeping knowledge, swarm removal and relevant beekeeper education. We co-host the biannual Bee Curious School and speaker event along with assisting for educational requirements at the monthly club meetings. This association is a great non-profit organization that is open to anyone in our community who is wanting to get into bees or wants to refresh their knowledge as an experienced keeper. Club meetings are held every month on the third Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Lamb Branch library in Pueblo. You can also join via zoom which is sent out to the membership. If you'd like to join the membership you can email the President Dru Spinuzzi at:

Website:  
[president@pueblountybeekeepersassociation.com](mailto:president@pueblountybeekeepersassociation.com)



Pueblo County Stockman's Association

Pueblo County Stockmen's Association is the local chapter division of Colorado Cattlemen's Association that serves all livestock owners and producers in Pueblo. The Pueblo County Stockmen's Association strives to advocate and promote good stewardship for all agricultural producers in Pueblo County regardless of animal species or operational size to strengthen the community through education, youth empowerment, advocacy and community value programs. Our office and PCSA often work together to host a variety of livestock focused educational events with speaker panels, clinics and family fun events that take place during the Pueblo County Fair. Membership is open to anyone in Pueblo County and allows you to have a 10% off discount at Big R.

Website:  
<https://www.pueblostockmens.com/>



# Upcoming Events

## January Dates

- Jan 14, 2026
  - Arkansas Basin Roundtable
- Jan 10-25, 2026
  - National Western Stock Show
- Jan 27-29, 2026
  - Colorado Farm Show

## February Dates

- Feb 7, 2026
  - Pueblo County Stockmen's Annual Meeting
- Feb 9, 2026
  - Foot and Mouth Disease Cattle Training
- Feb 3-5, 2026
  - Southern CO Agricultural Expo
- Feb 11, 2026
  - Arkansas Basin Roundtable

## March Dates

- Mar 14, 2026
  - Equine Education Summit – Southern CO Edition
- Mar 20-22, 2026
  - SSW Summit
- Mar 28-29, 2026
  - Bee Curious Bee School

**For an up-to-date list of local classes and events visit our webpage at:**

<https://pueblo.extension.colostate.edu/programs/agriculture-natural-resources/ag-classes/>



# Connect with Us!



**SUBSCRIBE**



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



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



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



**Office Address: 701 Court St., Pueblo, CO 81003**  
**Phone: 719-583-6566**



**PUEBLO COUNTY**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION