



PUEBLO COUNTY

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Pueblo County PATHWAYS

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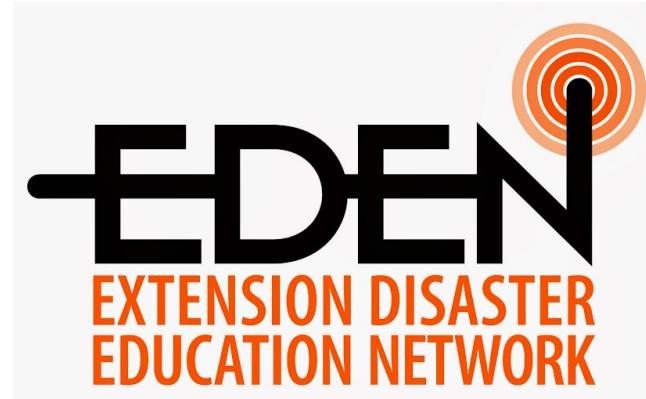
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Colorado's Impact on National Level

In October of 2025, Beth Hayes the Pueblo County Agriculture and Natural Resource Specialist and the new Statewide Emergency Management Coordinator for CSU Extension was selected to present at the National Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Annual Conference about using a novel digital app for community donations for agriculture producers during disasters. Paired up with the creator of the app called "Hungree" John Akinboyewa and Beth created a novel algorithm of his app that allows for people to donate non-human related items such as fencing supplies, hay, animal medical supplies, water tanks and more for agriculture producers in need. This was put into action during the August Western Slope fires in Colorado where over 200,000 acres ended up burning. This new technology was then again piloted for further testing in Pueblo County with the Pueblo C.A.R.T (community animal response team) to test out its use for people under a variety of conditions, equipment and real time feedback for user errors. This pilot test was largely successfully and more are planned for the new year.

In Maine, Beth and John were able to present to every land-grant university that is a part of the EDEN network and were able to make partnerships with other universities in the west specifically Texas A&M and Nebraska. This valuable experience also allowed for an opportunity to show off the strength of Pueblo's CART team to the point where Beth has been asked by the national committee to lead a webinar on how to build and maintain a successful volunteer emergency program. This goes to show that though Pueblo may be a smaller dot on the Colorado dot, the reach of the impacts done here by the CSU Extension specialists is felt on a very large scale. Beth looks forward to working with John and other related agencies in this topic area to provide better emergency resources for Pueblo County and the rest of our beautiful state. The pictures provided show the amazing uniqueness of Maine that was observed during the conference on many of the provided tours that were a part of the conference.



Seeding Another Great Growing Season for 2026

This fall saw the Master Gardeners and Horticulture Specialist, Amanda Weidner really digging into the beginning of the seed library year. It may seem strange to begin much of anything in the fall, especially as most things horticulture are winding down, but fall is the perfect time to start organizing and packing seeds. Using funds from a grant Weidner secured through the Colorado Garden Foundation, she was able to order over \$1000 in seeds that will eventually end up in the hands of folks all across the county. These vegetable, flower, herb, and native plant seeds are headed for the All Pueblo Grows seed libraries located in Pueblo's 6 library branches. Anyone with a library card will be able to 'check out' up to 5 packets per visit to plant and share.

Last year, the library reported over 6,100 checkouts. She'd like to see even more this year and they're getting off to a great start. Through the efforts of many dedicated Master Gardeners, over 4000 seed packets have already been packed and there's still plenty more to go. The packets will be split up to cover this year, next year, and part of the following year depending on seed viability, cost, and availability.

In addition to packing the actual seed packets, the Master Gardeners have been working on the label, inventory, and workshop teams for All Pueblo Grows, helping to manage the backend work and the necessary planning for a successful workshop season. This year they will be hosting 4 workshops at the Rawlings Library: starting seeds indoors, garden tool cleaning and sharpening, pollinator gardens, and saving seeds which will be spread out across the growing season.

Nick Zimmer, Program Coordinator (horticulture), just joined The CSU Extension office in October and has jumped in to become an essential partner in working to organize, format, prepare, and print the thousands of labels needed to finish off each packet. A lot of time, attention to detail, and effort goes into this and they're so grateful to have Nick to handle this big piece of the puzzle.

Their library partners have also been invaluable in helping to bring all of these free seeds to community members. Once the seeds are packed, they will be dropped off at the Rawlings Library where the team over there will catalogue, barcode, separate them for distribution, and transport them to the different library locations.

It's shaping up to be a record year of seed sharing and hopefully food growing. Now we just need to keep our fingers crossed for a low grasshopper season!



Sparking Change Together - Highlights from the 2026 Colorado Leadership Conference

Three Pueblo County 4-H members had an unforgettable experience this November as they traveled to Glenwood Springs for the 2025 Colorado Leadership Conference. The annual event brought together youth from across the state for a weekend centered on the theme *Sparking Change Together*, encouraging participants to explore what it means to lead with purpose and collaborate for positive impact. For the Pueblo County delegates, the conference offered a chance not only to build new skills but also to connect with peers who share their passion for learning and service.

Throughout the weekend, the members took part in a wide variety of workshops focused on leadership, teamwork, and communication. These sessions challenged them to think creatively, communicate clearly, and work effectively with others, skills that will serve them well in their clubs, schools, and communities. Hands-on activities helped them discover their personal leadership strengths, while group discussions encouraged them to reflect on how they can spark meaningful change back home. The energy and enthusiasm of the conference environment made each workshop both engaging and memorable.

The journey to Glenwood Springs added its own special touch to the experience. Traveling through Colorado's mountain corridors in late fall, the group enjoyed breathtaking views of snow-dusted peaks, winding rivers, and dramatic canyon walls. The scenic drive became a highlight in itself, offering plenty of opportunities for conversation, laughter, and appreciation of the state's natural beauty. It set the tone for a weekend filled with discovery and connection.

Another standout moment was County Night Out, where the Pueblo County members gathered for an evening of pizza and ice skating. The relaxed atmosphere gave everyone a chance to unwind after a full day of workshops and enjoy time together as a group. Whether confidently gliding across the ice or taking a few cautious steps, each member contributed to an evening full of fun, encouragement, and shared memories.

By the end of the conference, the three delegates returned home inspired and energized. They left Glenwood Springs with new friendships, strengthened leadership skills, and a deeper understanding of how teamwork and communication can drive positive change. Most importantly, they returned ready to bring that spark back to Pueblo County and continue growing as leaders within the 4-H community.





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Upcoming Events

For details, call 719-583-6566 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](https://www.eventbrite.com)
- Free pressure gauge testing. Call 719-583-6566 for appointment.
- Follow the FCS program on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloFCS/>

Horticulture Programs

- All Pueblo Grows Seed Library, collecting, and packaging seeds, and gardening classes throughout the growing season. Visit: allpueblogo.org
- Follow the Horticulture program on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloCountyHorticulture>

4-H/Youth Development

- Ongoing Club and County Programs
- Follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloCounty4H/>

Agronomy/Ag/Range/Natural Resources

- Pesticide testing proctoring. Sign-up through CDA: <https://ag.colorado.gov/plants/pesticides/pesticide-applicator-certification-and-licensing-program>
- Ongoing County Programs
- Follow the Ag, Natural Resource and Agronomy Program on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloAg>

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Holiday Cookie Fun!

As a fun way to end the year with some holiday cheer, Family & Consumer Science Specialist Laura Griffin offered a cookie decorating class! This class was a partnership with one of our local Colorado Cottage Food entrepreneurs, who had the opportunity to share her skills with enthusiastic newcomers. Royal icing cookies are an allowable item to sell through the Colorado Cottage Food Act. Laura also provided training and Cottage Foods certification to over 200 individuals in 2025, who are now able to make and sell iced cookies or a variety of other products to the public from their home kitchen. Keep an eye out for additional classes in 2026!

