

# BLOG

## COLORADO GRAIN CHAIN PROJECT AWARD SUPPORTS EXPANDING MARKETS FOR COLORADO GRAIN GROWERS

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The University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) was awarded \$462,991.00 to support continued efforts on the project, The Colorado Grain Chain (CGC): Expanding Markets for Heritage and Whole Grain Growers and Makers of Value-Added Products. The goal of this project is to expand direct-to-consumer markets for farmers and makers of value-added heritage grain products throughout Colorado and in southern Colorado.

Human physiology & nutrition associate professor, [Nanna Meyer, PhD, RD, CSSD](#) and human physiology & nutrition instructor and RD DPD/ISPP Program Coordinator, [Sean Sevette, MSc, RD](#), will receive this prestigious three-year grant from the USDA through the Farmers Market Promotion Program.

“We partner with The Colorado Grain Chain, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, and The University of Colorado Boulder for this grant,” shared Dr. Meyer.

Locally grown grains are essential to successful and sustainable local food economies. And it's not just about the environmental impacts - the social, health and economical benefits to our communities are plentiful as well.

On the consumer end of the chain, there is heightened demand for grains as staples (e.g., flour, bread) but consumer acceptability of whole grains, local access, and basic baking and cooking skills remain low. On the producer end, supplies are limited and there is a low-level of producer skills and knowledge for entering direct-to-consumer, direct-to-retail, restaurant, and institutional markets.

This project will provide technical assistance to CGC members and others in an effort to address these opportunities and challenges. Specifically, the project focuses on marketing and a Colorado-Grown Heritage Grain co-branding strategy that will support and highlight Colorado's heritage grain farmers, millers, maltsters, bakers, brewers, distillers, and chefs.

Educational courses, such as [Grain School](#), that teach by hands-on, in the field or online opportunities, or courses that offer technical assistance for growers and makers providing robust regional and remote training and service opportunities.

The funding will also further the development of the Grain School Test Kitchen, used for the research and development of recipes, products and menus that utilize whole-grains and Colorado-Grown Heritage Grains.

“It’s quite exciting. We go-live in about a year,” shared Dr. Meyer.

Dr. Meyer said, “We will research and develop products and recipes in the sport nutrition kitchen at the William J. Hybl Sports Medicine and Performance Center for use among local artisans, makers, farmers, retailers, restaurants, or even hospitals. The idea is to work with the hospital, or community partner, to integrate whole-grain nutrition into their offerings in the cafeterias or patient menus.”

Finally, an enhanced grain literacy strategy, geared toward consumers of all income levels, delivered directly and through partnerships in food, agriculture, education, and health will ensure access to all Coloradans.



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