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**local food
& agriculture**





INTRODUCTION

Agricultural lands not only preserve the rural character and quality of life that are important to Boulder County residents, but local food markets are important economic drivers for the county.

In addition, supporting sustainable farming practices and local agriculture is a critical step in reducing our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which ultimately makes for a healthier place to live. Boulder County promotes a locally based food and agricultural system that advances Boulder County's economic, environmental, and social well-being. The vision seeks to improve the social sustainability, including health and nutrition, of all Boulder County residents, and to improve the viability of current and future agricultural producers within the county, while protecting and restoring the environment. Boulder County also encourages and supports practices and food markets that improve the availability and accessibility of local, healthy, and safe foods.

The county participates in regional agricultural efforts and strives to support sustainable practices on agricultural lands.

Ultimately, Boulder County encourages the preservation and sustainable use of agricultural lands for their contribution to cultural, environmental, and economic diversity.





local food & agriculture goal

Ensure a sustainable, local, safe, and healthy food supply that is accessible to all and supported by our community.



COUNTY OPERATION STRATEGIES

Maintain and enhance agricultural viability and sustainability on Boulder County Parks & Open Space agricultural properties through management planning, infrastructure improvements, and agricultural stewardship practices

- Meet with tenants to identify mutual goals that address the long-term management and resilience of the property, including potential infrastructure needs (e.g., storage facilities) that are important to achieving viable crop production and sustainable farming and ranching operations.
- Based on the above information, hold annual staff meetings to identify potential infrastructure projects and create an operating plan for each agricultural property owned by the county.
- Promote long-term agricultural stewardship and sustainability practices that enhance soil health and regeneration, reduce erosion, and conserve water. For example,
 - Incentivize and encourage water-efficient production systems.
 - Work with local universities and other agencies to understand and pilot carbon sequestration practices on Boulder County lands.
- Continue to promote dialog between farm operators and local beekeepers to evaluate bee health, and develop dedicated pollinator habitat on county agricultural properties.
- Continue implementing a strategic integrated pest management program.

**COUNTY OPERATION STRATEGIES****Support Boulder County's farm and ranch economy**

- Explore local and regional markets with producers and buyers to maximize economic returns to local farmers and ranchers.
- Evaluate local policy and regulatory barriers to farm and ranch profitability, and explore challenges and opportunities to removing those barriers.
- Maximize the amount of food, fiber, and forage that is available locally by investing in farm and ranch infrastructure, food processing facilities, and food distribution channels.
- Work to nurture relationships among local producers, distributors, and potential buyers for the purpose of supporting business relationships and initiatives.





COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Offer education and outreach on local food and agriculture

- Provide presentations about Boulder County agricultural resources to interested classes, agencies, and organizations.
 - Provide tours of agricultural land.
 - Maintain a social, web, and print media presence.
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Increase accessibility of local food for vulnerable populations

- Support donation of locally grown food when feasible.
 - Support charitable groups producing and creating access to food for vulnerable populations.
 - Invest in programs such as Double Up Food Bucks that make low-cost, locally grown fruits and vegetables available to vulnerable populations.
 - Explore local markets with producers and buyers.
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Boulder County is committed to working with tenants, private landowners, educators, researchers, and other organizations to find the best strategies for local agricultural land stewardship.

**COMMUNITY STRATEGIES**

Support access to safe and healthy agricultural products produced on lands in Boulder County

- Prevent foodborne illnesses by continuing to partner with retail food establishments to implement Active Managerial Control Practices and become Partners in Food Safety.
- Educate at least 200 food safety workers on five key foodborne illness risk factors per year.
- Continue to implement the Food and Drug Administration's voluntary national retail food program standards and the Food Safety Modernization Act for produce growers and processors.
- Explore opportunities to assist local producers in complying with the Food Safety Modernization Act and develop partnerships with Colorado State University (CSU) to provide education for compliance assistance.





COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Develop a suite of resources for producers that supports an economically sustainable and thriving agricultural community

- Work with the agricultural community and update the Boulder County Land-Use Code to help producers optimize and diversify economic opportunities that support Boulder County's policy vision for a thriving, diverse agricultural economy.
 - Foster experiential learning opportunities for beginning farmers and encourage mentorship and training among experienced and new farmers.
 - Coordinate farmer training through Colorado State University Extension and other applicable educational providers.
 - Provide opportunities for succession planning assistance for farm and ranch business owners.
 - Work with private tenants, educators, researchers, and other organizations to find the best strategies for agricultural land stewardship that optimize farm income and are environmentally sustainable.
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Prioritize opportunities for organic operations and support expansion of certified organic production on public, county agriculture lands

- Provide incentives to county agricultural tenants pursuing organic certification through rent reductions during the three-year transition period to organic production and for the two years following that transition.
 - Share local and regional in-person and self-guided education opportunities on organic production strategies through local information distribution channels.
 - Convert at least 25% of Boulder County-owned agricultural lands to organic practices by 2020.
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**POLICY PRIORITIES**

The following are environmental sustainability policy priorities adopted through Boulder County's legislative agenda:

POLICY**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Boulder County supports requiring mandatory labeling of the use of genetically engineered organisms in food products

Consumers have the right to know what is in their food, so that they can make informed choices about whether or not to purchase genetically engineered food. Therefore, Boulder County

supports state and/or federal legislation to require the mandatory labeling of food and food products derived from or containing genetically engineered organisms prior to sale to consumers.





DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

The Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) Program provides customers who rely on federal nutrition assistance programs with an incentive to purchase locally grown, healthy foods from farmers' markets. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) recipients can now double their benefits when buying fruits and vegetables at the farmers' markets held in Longmont, Boulder, and Lafayette.

The DUFB program increases low-income residents' access to healthy, local produce, and it supports our local economy and farmers. This program exemplifies an equitable, three-tiered approach to sustainability: socially, by providing underserved residents with the opportunity to take part in the local food culture; environmentally, by increasing the viability of small acreage fruit and vegetable farms; and financially, by increasing the purchasing

power of underserved residents so that they can access locally grown produce.

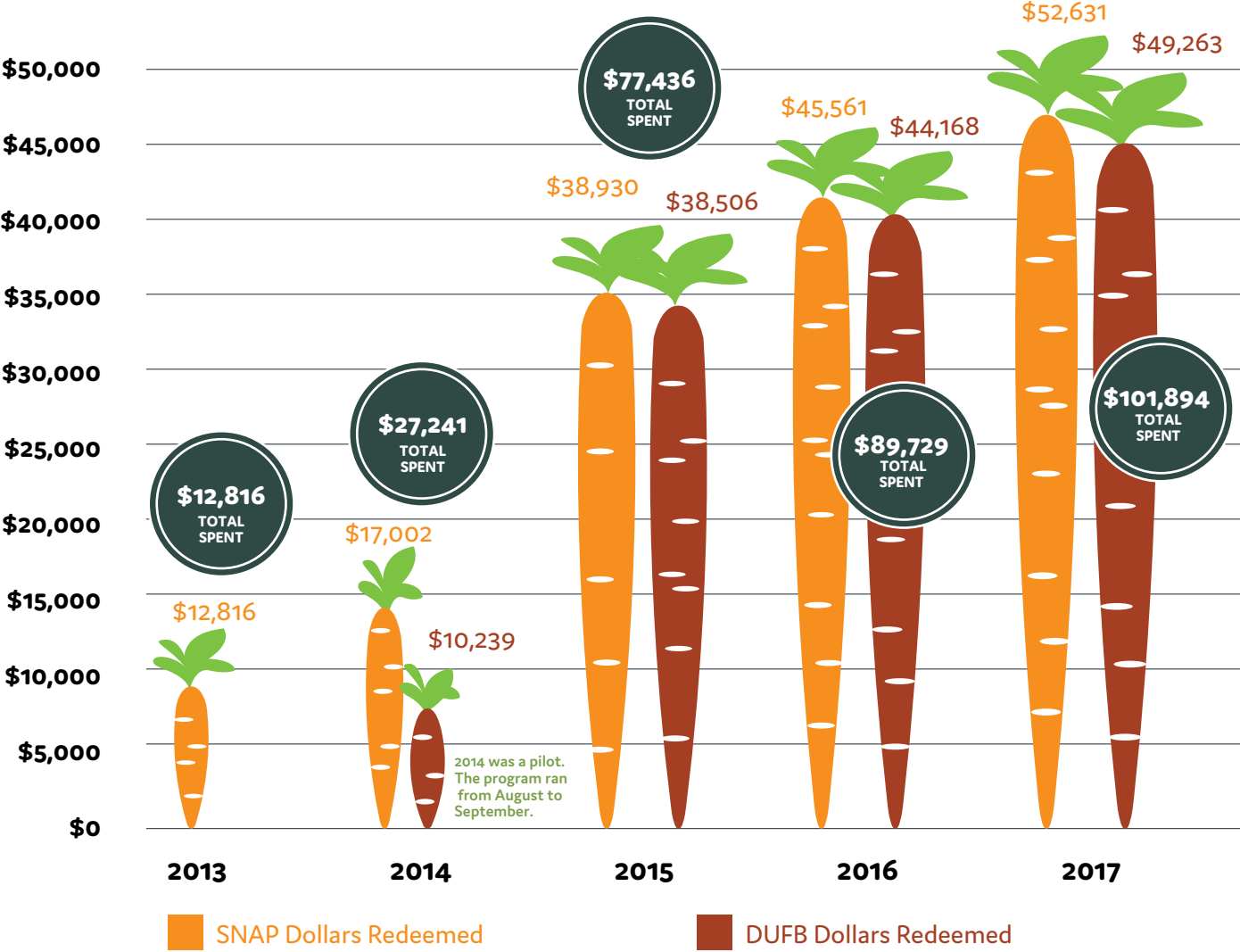
In 2013, the Boulder County farmers' markets sold a total of \$12,816 worth of local foods to SNAP recipients. In 2016, sales increased to nearly \$90,000. As a result of the DUFB Program, SNAP sales have increased by over 600% at the Boulder County farmers' markets, and thousands of low-income residents are able to access healthy, locally grown produce.

When surveyed, 89% of participants reported increasing their consumption of fruits and vegetables, 92% agreed that it was easier to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, and 84% of participants said that they would not have come to the market without the incentives (compared to 70% nationally).

As a result, 89% of DUFB participants are increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.



DUFB and SNAP Program Dollars Redeemed





TAKE ACTION

Be a Boulder County Locavore

The concept of eating local is an old idea that is suddenly very new again. To assist you, we offer our guide on how to eat locally in Boulder County:

Partake in the local food economy

- Join a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and shop at your local farmers' market. Buy your meat from a local producer. Ask for and buy local food products at your grocery store. Learn about the food loops happening in Boulder County.

Learn more about farmers and ranchers in Boulder County

- When they're not in their fields, you can find them at the farmers' markets, hanging out at their farm stands, or attending the Boulder County Fair or other outreach events. Stop to say hello. In the summer, Boulder County may offer farm tours, where you can meet the many farmers and ranchers who lease county properties and hear from them firsthand what it is like to be a Boulder County producer.
- Learn about the farming activities happening around you. From small, quarter-acre vegetable farms

to medium-sized cattle operations to large-scale wheat producers, Boulder County farmers produce a variety of foods for you to enjoy year-round.

Grow and preserve your own food

- Plant basil in a window box, turn over a patch of grass for a small garden, or buy a few chickens. Don't have the skills for growing and preserving all that food? Talk to Boulder County's Colorado State University Extension Office to learn about classes they offer in all things self-reliant.

Loc•a•vore: A person who strives to eat only locally produced food.



RESOURCES

More Information

**Educational Services
and Tours**

[bouldercounty.org/
open-space/education](http://bouldercounty.org/open-space/education)

Food Assistance

[bouldercounty.org/
families/food/
food-assistance](http://bouldercounty.org/families/food/food-assistance)

