

AgriSummit 2019 Presenter Bios

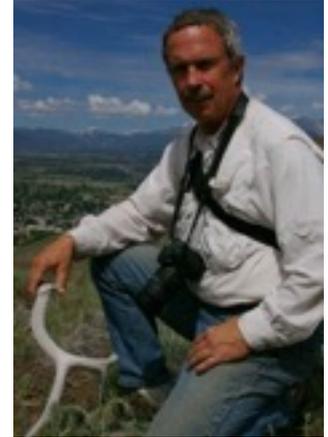
Natalie Allio, MA
Badger Creek Ranch

Natalie is an owner/managing member of Badger Creek Ranch, a working cattle and guest ranch. She holds a Master's degree in Ecopsychology, a certificate in Collaborative Solutions, and is a certified life and business coach. She has completed HMI's training in Whole Ranch/Farm Planning and Whole Ranch/Farm Land Management.



Ed Berg
Salida Hemp Co

Ed Berg is a recovering petroleum geologist, converting from extracted resources to regenerative resources. His passion is helping to facilitate the change land use practices from the extractive practices that have plagued the American West ever since Europeans arrived. His current focus is on developing the now-legal "industrial" hemp that was once a foundation stone of American textiles, food and medicine, proving its viability as a high-value crop adapted to our dry, windy climate.



Aaron Derwingson
The Nature Conservancy

Aaron Derwingson is the Agricultural Coordinator for The Nature Conservancy's Colorado River Program where he works in partnership with agricultural water users on pragmatic, solution-oriented approaches to meeting water needs for people and nature. Aaron works with agricultural producers and water managers to understand issues and opportunities to improve river health by adopting new water management and irrigation practices. Aaron holds a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Colorado and a Master's in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon. Before joining The Nature Conservancy, Aaron worked at the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust helping protect important working lands, wildlife habitat, and water resources in Colorado's San Luis Valley.



Kate Greenberg
CO Commissioner of Agriculture

Kate Greenberg was appointed the Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture by Governor Jared Polis in December 2018. As Commissioner, Greenberg leads the Department's daily operations, directs its 300 employees, and oversees the agency's eight divisions: Animal Health, Brand Inspection, Colorado State Fair, Conservation Services, Inspection and Consumer Services, Laboratory Services, Markets, and Plant Industry. Most recently, Greenberg was the Western Program Director for National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC) where she was involved in water issues. This includes working closely with Colorado's Basin Roundtables and being involved with the state's Water Plan and Colorado River Basin water policy. Over the last six years, she has worked with producers across Colorado to reshape policies and programs at the state and federal level that will enable more family producers to make a living for themselves and their families on the land. This has included working on issues of farmland affordability, agriculture education, access to capital and credit, and Food Safety Modernization Act compliance.



Kara Harders
Colorado State Univ Extension/USDA-NRCS

Kara consults with small acreage landowners on land stewardship practices such as crop and range management, as well as both large and small types of livestock. She enjoys helping Colorado land owners reach their property goals whether they be environmental, aesthetic, financial, or enjoyment based.



Kelli Hepler
Delta County

Kelli Hepler has a degree in Commercial Art from Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs and started Graphox Design and Advertising 33 years ago. Over the years her business has focused on marketing and advertising in small rural communities and along scenic byways. Through this time, Agritourism has emerged as a major focus. Kelli's philosophy is that by connecting farms, food and art in communities they can remain unique and tell their story to travelers in an engaging and creative manner. This creative edge allows communities to use the ag and arts as an economic development tool in rural areas. Kelli developed an award winning Agritourism program for Delta County 10 years ago and still works with other local Agritourism providers to keep it promoted. She sits on the Board of the Colorado Agritourism Association and was part of a four-person team that developed the Strategic Plan for Colorado Agritourism.

Dan Hobbs
RMFU/ Hobbs Family Farm

Dan is a fifth generation Coloradan and a first generation farmer. He also serves as lead cooperative development specialist with the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center. He has over twenty years agricultural and rural development experience in the United States and South America and formerly served as executive director of Organic Seed Alliance, NewFarms and Nuestras Raices. He is skilled in setting up producer cooperatives and other member-driven businesses. He and his wife, Nanna, own and operate two irrigated farms in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico where they grow varietal garlic, Pueblo chilé, open pollinated seeds, ancient grains, and fresh vegetables and herbs.



Abby Hutchinson
Hutchinson Ranch/ Hutchinson Ranch Weddings & Events

Becca Jablonski
Colorado State University

Becca Jablonski is an Assistant Professor and Food Systems Extension Economist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at Colorado State University. She facilitates the Colorado Governor's Food Systems Advisory Council and is a co-leader of Colorado State University's Food Systems Extension Team. Dr. Jablonski holds a PhD from Cornell University.



Jane Levene
Jefferson Farms

We began our farming/ranching life in 1995, when we bought a property that would allow 2 homes-one for us and one for my parents. It was zoned agricultural, so after a little bit of trying to hay 5.5 acres (not practical) and raising 2 calves for beef (not ideal on small acreage, and not our favorite "ending") we saw alpacas. Pretty much end of story. So nearly 25 years later, we are now up to 2 farms-one in Salida at 90 acres and one in Denver at 5.5 acres, over 500 animals, plus 2 farmstay vacation rentals in Salida and a Bunny Barn for raising meat rabbits, life has moved way past the norm for most people!



Dawn Thilmany McFadden
Colorado State University

Dawn Thilmany McFadden is a Professor with Colorado State University, serving in that role since 1997, and specializes in economic development related to local, organic and other value-added food market segments, as well as food market analysis and consumer behavior. She is co-Director for CSU's Regional Economic Development Institute, is on the leadership team for CSU Extension Food Systems program and has been a visiting scholar at both the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture and Economic Research Service. She has Chaired the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council and served on several USDA boards and national agriculture and food research organization leadership teams.



Wendy Peters Moschetti
LiveWell Colorado

Wendy (BASW, MCP) leads the development and implementation of LiveWell's strategies related to food systems and food access. She has worked for over 12 years with local, state, and national organizations on a variety of projects aimed at leveraging our food system to improve equitable access to healthy foods.



Nanna Meyers
Univ. Colorado Colo Spgs/ Hobbs Family Farm

Nanna is originally from Switzerland, where she spent her young adult years in the mountains ski racing before she was recruited to join a university ski team. Charged with the mandate to develop the UCCS Sport Nutrition graduate program in 2008, Nanna's nutritional work gradually expanded to include topics such as sustainability, local food and farming, and culinary applications using seasonally and regionally adapted crop varieties. Compelled to change UCCS' food system, she is pursuing the development of new courses, such as Grain School, and research projects, linking in Sustainability, Wellness, and Learning (SWELL) to bridge the gap between academics and general SWELL-related services on campus. In her spare time, she dedicates her life to local food at home both in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico, where she lives, farms, and cooks with her partner Dan.



Blake Osborn
Colorado Water Center

Blake Osborn was born and raised in southern Colorado, and still a resident of southern Colorado, Blake serves as the southern Colorado Regional Water Specialist for the Colorado Water Center. His research and outreach activities are centered on better understanding post-wildfire hydrologic processes, helping farmers/ranchers make efficient uses of water, and creating coalitions to improve water quality. Blake has a BS in Natural Resources Management from Colorado State University and a MS in Hydrology and Watershed Management from the University of Wyoming.



Penn and Cord Parmenter
Penn& Cord's Garden

Penn and Cord Parmenter are mountain food and seed growers and high altitude gardening teachers located in Westcliffe. They grow at 8,120 ft. and use bio-intensive practices, growing on just 1/5 acre. They design and build sustainable greenhouses and have mastered growing tomatoes, pumpkins, corn and melons at high altitude!



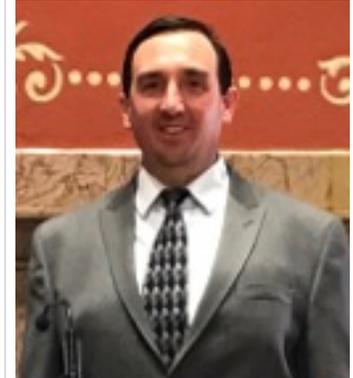
Monica Pless
Guidestone Colorado

Monica Pless has worked on education and production farms, dairies and bakeries producing organic produce, tree fruit, meat chickens, eggs, pork, beef, maple syrup, raw milk and pie. As Guidestone's Farm to School Director, she manages the production and education on the Community and School Farm and the school gardens. With a degree from Princeton in Ecology and from Antioch University New England in Environmental Studies, she brings an ecological mindset to farming practices, working to build soil health and incorporate permaculture principles into production agriculture.



Sheldon Rockey
Rockey Farms

Sheldon along with his brother, Brendon, are the owner-operators of Rockey Farms LLC in the San Luis Valley. Rockey Farms is in its third generation producing potatoes and recently added quinoa to their production. The potatoes produced on the farm are specialty types for both the fresh and seed markets. The farm believes in growing everything under a biotic farming practice.



Jill Sobel
Fetchin Farms

Jill is the owner of Fetchin Farms and has been teaching goat husbandry classes since 2007. Fetchin Farms is a small goat dairy near Denver that also provides grazing and weed mitigation services. Jill received her training at Haystack Dairy Farms when it was located in Boulder.



Jennifer Visitacion
Moonstone Farm

Robbie Vitrano
Help Good Spread

Robbie grew up in the backroom of his Sicilian grandparents corner grocery in New Orleans, picking blue crabs and plucking chickens. He spent his 20's learning how to be useful on a 17,000 acre cattle ranch—Rancho San Julian--in Lompoc, California. More recently he's developed several food brands, built to engage customers to help improve the food system, address malnutrition, and support supply chains that respect farmers, communities, and the environment. He leads Good Spread, a nationally distributed food brand that provides lifesaving treatments to children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM, globally, the leading cause of death among kids under 5). Prior to Good Spread, he founded Naked Pizza, a healthy fast casual restaurant using ancient and heirloom grains, with over 100 locations worldwide. Robbie is on the board of Tulane's Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine, Uncanny water-soluble CBD, Porchjam Distilling, and the New Orleans Culinary & Hospitality Institute. He and his wife of 31 years, Patricia have lived in Boulder since 2016.



Jessica Wright
LiveWell Colorado

As the Procurement and Culinary Programs Manager, Jess (BCM) leads LiveWell's local procurement work. She brings a "chef-mentality" to food services, training and supporting staff on culinary skills, kitchen operations, and community engagement. Her goal is to create sustainable farm-to-institution programs where nourishing, from-scratch meals become the standard.

