

## *The Northern Colorado Food and Agriculture Policy Council*

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Over the past year, representatives of Colorado's government, producer associations, Universities, rural development stakeholders and Cooperative Extension have explored the potential need, role and design of a policy organization that bridges the gap between agriculture and food issues. In 2005, a number of regions in Colorado will be introduced to a wide range of policies, asked to choose the issues and approaches that would engage them, and cooperate at the state level to increase the visibility and grassroots activity focused on food and agricultural policies that influence our producers, consumers and communities.

According to the national State and Local Food Policy Council website at Drake University, a Food Policy Council (FPC) convenes citizens and government officials for the purpose of providing a comprehensive examination of a state or local food system. FPC's are innovative collaborations between citizens and government officials which give voice to the concerns and interests of the food system beyond traditional agricultural institutions, including those concerned about nutrition, hunger, environmental aspects of food production and marketing, as well as communities that are reliant on agriculture as a driver of their economies and culture. The primary goal of most Food Policy Councils is to examine the operation of a local food system and provide ideas and recommendations for policy or program initiatives that may have a positive impact locally on a wide range of food and agricultural issues, however some FPC's choose to focus on solutions to a specific topic, such as hunger and food insecurity.

If interacting with a broader group of community members interested in the interactions between nutrition and public health, consumer trends, environmental stewardship, land use, local agricultural systems and community economies seems like an interesting way to get involved, consider joining the Northern Colorado chapter of the Colorado Food and Agriculture Policy Council.

As this group begins to organize in 2005, there is a need for thoughtful, engaged members who can assist the group in developing relevant programs and initiatives that will have the greatest impact on Larimer, Weld, Adams and Boulder counties.

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Policy Council website at:  
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