

The GROWING PARTNERS  
of SW COLORADO *present*

# THE LA PLATA COUNTY FOOD ASSESSMENT



**Growing Partners:** *La Boca Center for Sustainability, The Garden Project of SW Colorado, Turtle Lake Refuge, The Southwest Marketing Network and The Southern Ute Community Action Program*

**Sponsored by:** *USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service*  
**CSREES**





# GROWING PARTNERS of Southwest Colorado



- Southern Ute Community Action Program
- The Garden Project
- Turtle Lake Refuge
- La Boca Center for Sustainability
- The Southwest Marketing Network

# The La Plata *County* Food Assessment





# THE PROCESS

- *Community Food Forums* in Ignacio and Hesperus - over 100 total participants
- 12 different *community surveys & personal interviews*
  - Restaurant owners
  - Farmers & ranchers
  - School personnel
  - Youth
  - Seniors
  - Consumer
  - Service agencies
- Attending *community coalition meetings and forums*
  - FTS, HLC, OHC, SASCO, FT Lewis Mesa Planning Meetings



# OVERVIEW

- **The Community: *La Plata County***
  - 46,239 in 2002
  - Durango, Bayfield, Ignacio & many rural communities
  - Cultural & economic diversity
  - Unique environmental profile
- **The Local Food System**
  - Production, processing, marketing & distribution
  - Consumption/access - youth, seniors, Latino. low-income, Native American
  - Food security



# THE REPORT

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- A PROFILE OF LA PLATA COUNTY
- A PROFILE OF FOOD RESOURCES & FOOD PROJECTS
- A PROFILE OF THE LOCAL SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEM: *The Case for Farm-to-School*
- HEALTH & NUTRITION IN LA PLATA COUNTY
- A REGIONAL PROFILE OF AGRICULTURE
- FOOD SECURITY IN LA PLATA COUNTY
- CONCLUSIONS OF A YEAR-LONG COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENT



# FINDINGS





# FOOD RESOURCES & PROJECTS

- Farmers' markets
  - *Diversity, supply*
- Charitable food programs
  - *Directory*
- Grocery & retail food outlets
  - *Culturally-appropriate, organic. local food options*
- Restaurants
  - *Locally-sourced ingredients, off-campus school lunch*
- Community Gardens
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Gleaning
- The Mesa Verde Guide



# THE SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEM:

## *The Case for Farm-to-School*



*“When the lunch period is recognized as part of the learning day, new opportunities and responsibilities emerge for students, food services and the district as a whole. The lunch period is a window for critical learning and modeling of attitudes toward food.”*

- Janet Brown, Program Officer for Food Systems at The Center for Ecoliteracy

# FOOD SERVICES

- School Meal Programs
  - What Determines School Lunch

- Storage capacity
- Facility capabilities
- Cafeteria atmosphere
- Time allotted for school meals
- Nutritional guidelines
- Distribution
- Budget

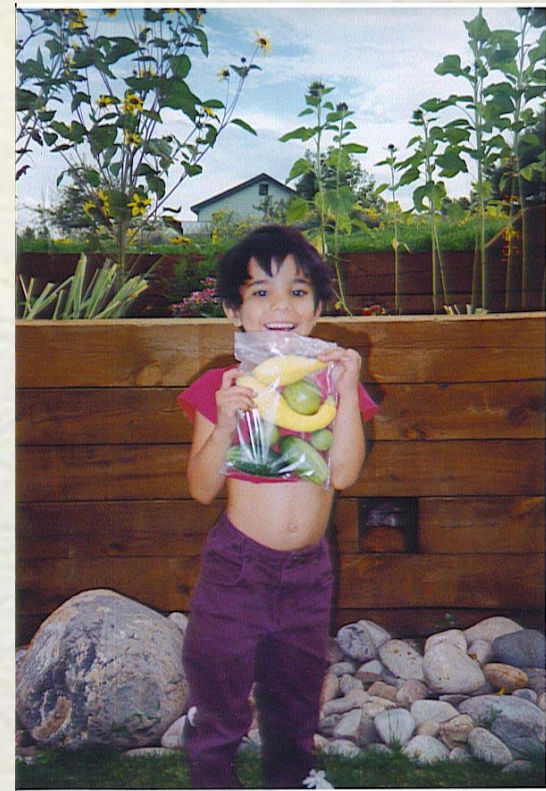


- Using Local Ingredients
- Off-Campus Lunch?

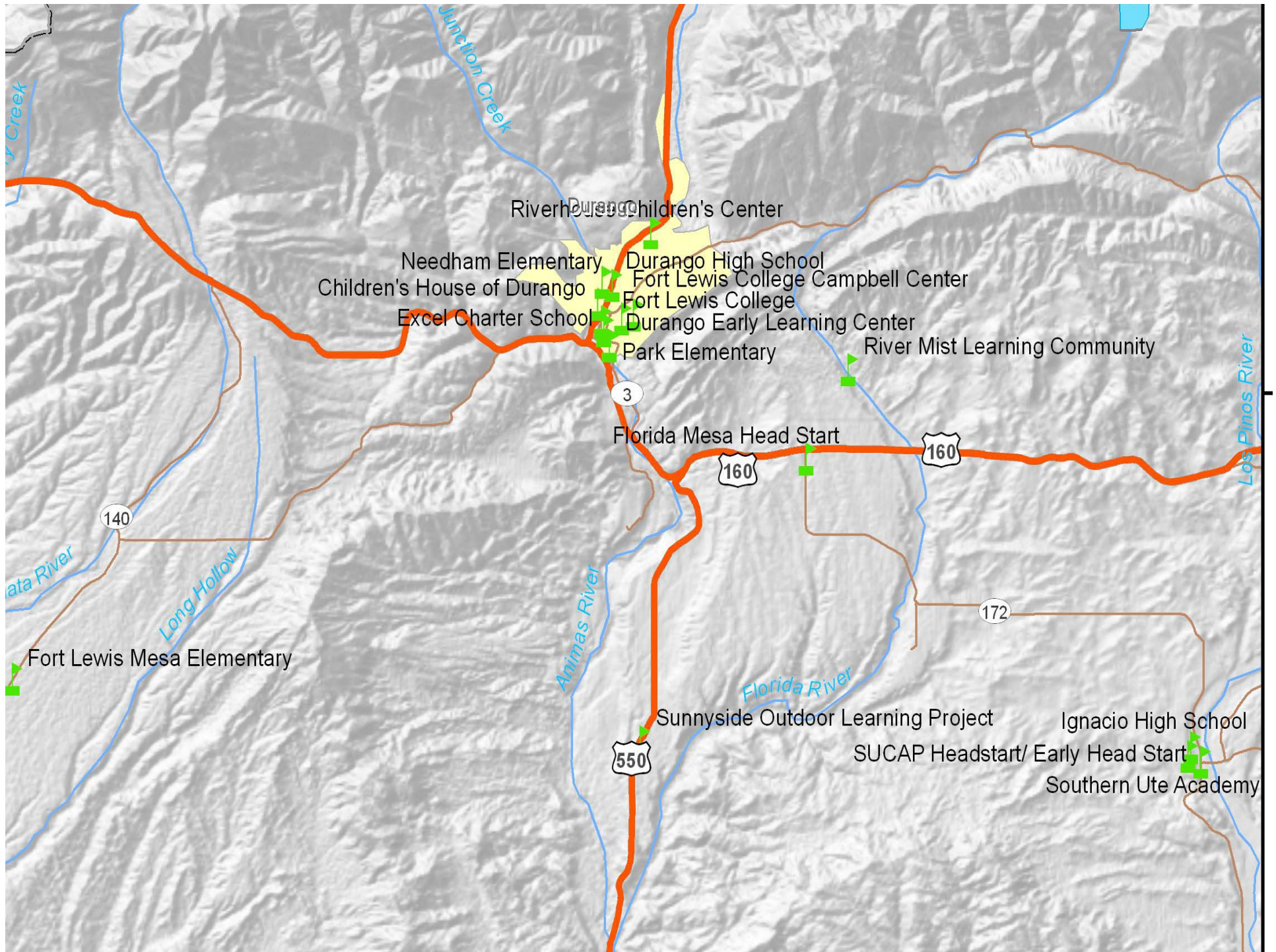


# FOOD-RELATED PROGRAMS

- Farm Tours
- A Profile of School Gardens









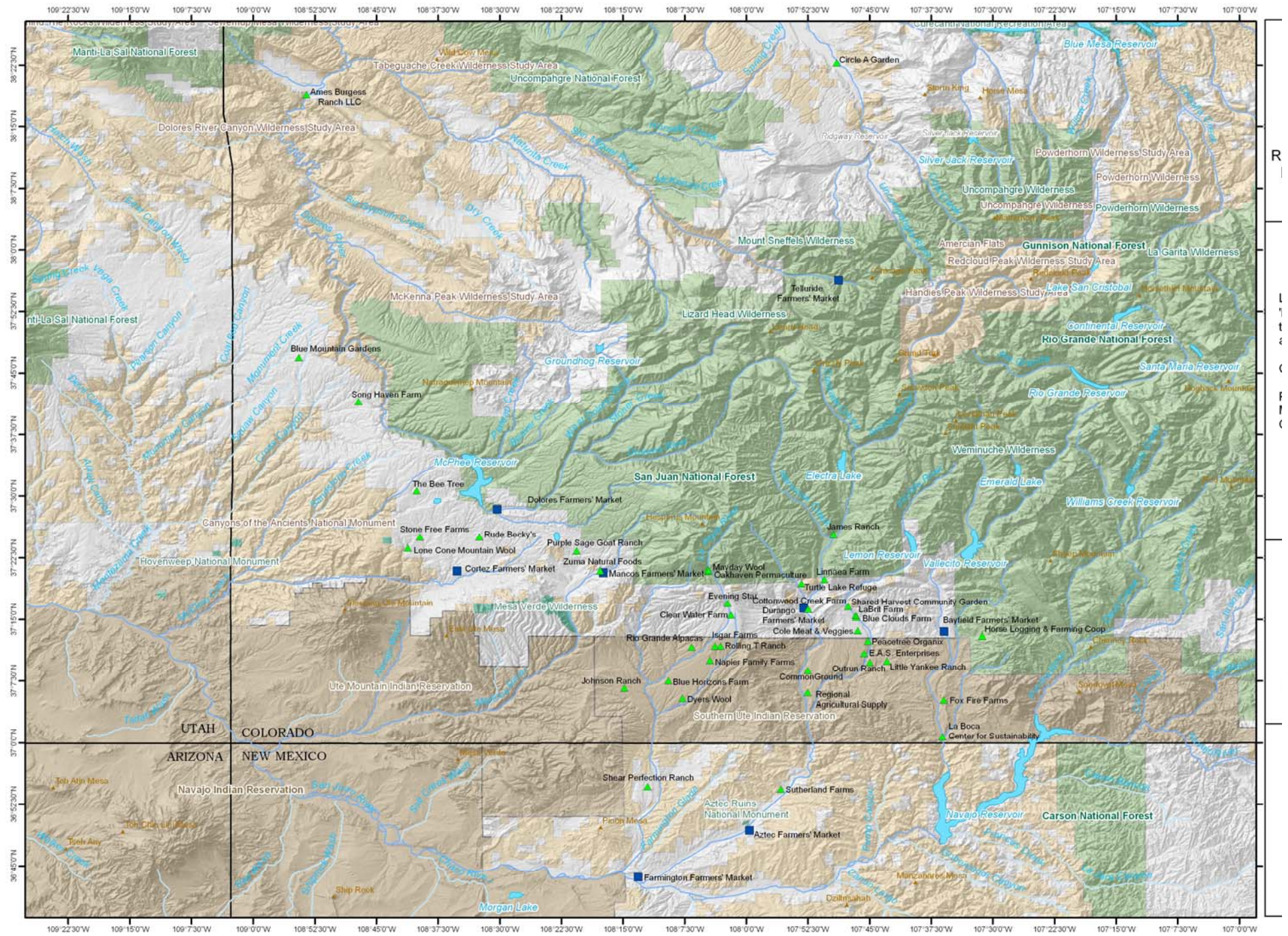
# Health & Nutrition

- Health disparities in our region
- Better education doesn't always translate into better food choices
- Quality and quantity issues
- An ayurvedic approach?

Colorado Data: Between 1990 and 2001, obesity in Colorado more than doubled. The estimated cost of obesity-related medical expenses in Colorado in 2003 was \$874 million or \$1710 per person.

*Statistics were presented by the COPAN (Colorado Physical Activity and Nutrition Program), Comprehensive Community Project, Planning Workshop in Durango Colorado on 8/23/2006.*







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# A Look at the US Census of Agriculture

Year		1945	2002
Number of Farms:		936	923
Farm size:			
<i>Acres</i>	1-9 acres	87	53
	10-49	324	304
	50-199 (179)	388	262
	>200 (180)	45	304
Crop:			
<i>Farm number</i>	Apples	336	-
	Irish potatoes	168	-
	Milk cows	730	55
	Chickens	757	58
	Vegetables	684	-
	Cattle	778	363

The number of farms that raise chicken, beef, milk, potatoes, apples and vegetables for household use has decreased since 1945.



# *The* LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY

- Large-scale farming and ranching is declining
  - Children returning to the family farm
- There is an overall lack of local food production
  - Potential for what can be grown
- The rising cost of land makes large-scale farming operations difficult to cash-flow
  - Purchasing small parcels of land (1-4 acres) & Land-Link
- Water availability is an issues for farmers and ranches
  - Allocation & preservation
- The local climate creates a marginal growing season
  - Season extension
- Local agriculture is affected by the oil and gas industry
  - Identifying low-maintenance crops

# FOOD SECURITY

La Plata County has defined food security as a situation “***in which all people at all times have access to enough nutritious, local, safe, affordable, culturally-appropriate food, produced in ways that are sustainable.***”





# ISOLATION AND A LACK OF LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION

- Food supply?
  - Denver
  - Albuquerque (NM)
  - Los Angeles (CA)
  - Texas
  - Arizona
- Crop diversity
- Self-sufficiency



# FOOD SECURITY issues within specific populations

- Latino/a
  - *Culturally-appropriate food choices?*
- Native American
  - *Access to affordable fresh, local foods & preparation?*
- Older Adults
  - *Affordability, access, transportation, information*
- Low-income
  - *Availability of fresh, local foods; nutrition education (cooking classes); transportation; growing spaces*
- Rural residents
  - *Access to programs/resources??*



# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

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*Key Themes and  
Recommendations for Future  
Food Projects*

- SUPPLY
- ACCESS



# LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION:

## *Supply*

*To increase the amount of local food available greater support is needed for those interested in growing food. Such support should address the following obstacles and needs:*

- IMPROVE ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL LAND AND GROWING SPACES
- SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVE AND EXISTING PRODUCTION SYSTEMS
- SUPPORT FOR THE PROCESSING, MARKETING, STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL FARM PRODUCTS
- PROVIDE CONSUMER EDUCATION TO SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



# LOCAL FOOD CONSUMPTION: **Access**

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*Fundamental differences exist in La Plata County. These differences must be considered to effectively and equitably improve our local food system:*

- RURAL VERSUS URBAN FOOD NEEDS AND RESOURCES
- INCOME AND FINANCIAL ASSET DISPARITIES
- CULTURAL DIFFERENCES
- SIZE AND RESOURCES OF SCHOOLS

# WHAT'S NEXT?

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- Sharing the information
- Mobilizing the community
  - Homegrown: *A Local Foods Conference*
- Community Food Projects Program
  - *proposal due April 13*





# Networking for Change

- Southern Ute Community Action Program
- The Garden Project
- Turtle Lake Refuge
- La Boca Center for Sustainability
- The Southwest Marketing Network

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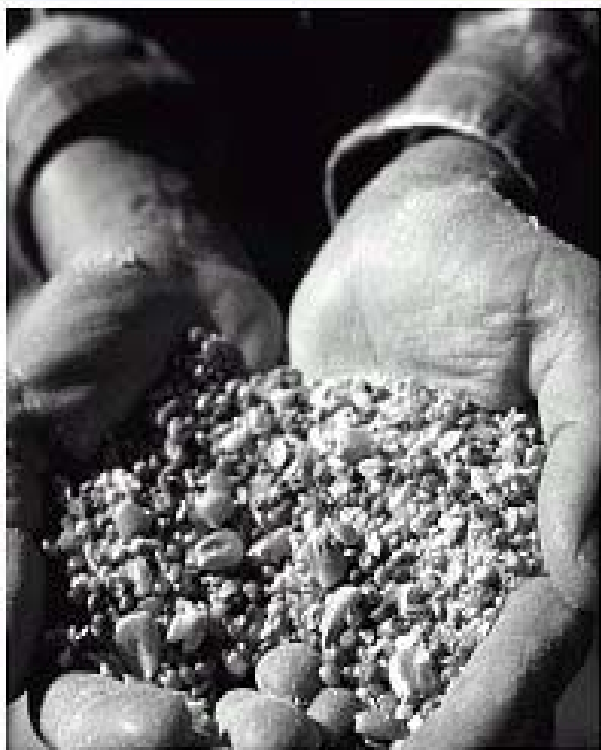
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Schools include Henry Durrant High School, Hiram High School, Jermoland Middle School, Bayfield Elementary Middle School, Birchwood Heights Elementary, Kirtland-Roosevelt Family Academy of Southfield, Grand Haven, Michigan.

Modul Pakhan dan Pendidikan Ases, Sains, Bah, Tindakan, Suci, Komunikasi, Interview, With Ethics  
Promotion, dan Sains, Bah, Tindakan, Suci, Komunikasi, Interview, With Ethics  
Practical, dan Sains, Bah, Tindakan, Suci, Komunikasi, Interview, With Ethics

And the many countries who shared the thoughts!



*Thank you!*