

## San Juan College Harvest Food Hub

In an effort to grow opportunities for food production and distribution, Farmington partnered with *Local Food, Local Places*, an EPA program which brings in technical assistance to help develop a strategic plan for growth of the local food system. The Local Food Summit was held in June of 2018, and brought together a number of key stakeholders in the community—including NMSU Extension, Four Corners Economic Development, the City of Farmington, San Juan County Partnership, and Farm Farmington. Through this planning process, a food hub was identified as a need in the community. In response, the Enterprise Center at San Juan College applied for a five-year grant through the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA)—and won. In October 2018, San Juan College was awarded \$564,000 to establish a food hub in San Juan County.

### Benefits:

- There is one Application process to access any distribution site on contract with this group – farmers markets, schools, hospitals. One Safety Training Session and form access all distribution sites.
- Aggregates food from small producers to sell in bigger lots.
- Several funding streams and steady interest by consumers, seems to signal longevity.
- They work with Farmers and Ranchers in San Juan County first, but indicated that they had the need for additional food and welcomed Navajo producers.
- Selling to them is best explored for next spring. Special interest in unique or specialty products – leafy greens, herbs, etc.
- They aggregate produce from various providers and sell thru the following avenues.
  - Local Farmers Market
  - Local Subscription Boxes – 30-50 subscribers get a weekly box. CSA model.
  - On-line
  - Thru contracts with Schools, other institutions. Working on Hospitals.
- They can provide access to commercial kitchen, food dehydrator, dry freezer, wholesale produce packaging. Storage options are also available, but need to be explored.

### SUPPORT

Support completing intake procedure for selling to them– One application provides access to

all outlets.

3-4 Hour – Food Safety Training – Followed by a site visit to determine what else is needed in order to accept produce or meat and how else they can assist.

- Providing services such as cold storage and transportation
- Training on food safety and business development
- Branding and promotion for farms
- Additional services (bulk purchasing, processing, etc.)

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Their initial five year funding is winding down, but contracts and interest in produce/meat provided through their services is increasing. They anticipate continuing.

## **ACCESS TO SUPPORT**

Meet with the leadership team from the Hub with the goal of understanding their operation better. They were supportive of engaging with Navajo producers. Offered to provide information or potentially a Food Safety training session for Producers on Navajo.

## **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM:**

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