

CALP CLASS 14

PERSONAL PROJECT SUMMARY



**Colorado Agricultural
Leadership Program**



CALP CLASS 14

Alisha Knapp - Rocky Fort, CO 2
Cade Kunugi - Blanca, CO3
Clancy Anderson - Longmont, CO4 & 5
Colton Hankins - Eaton, CO11 & 12
David Bower - Denver, CO6
Dusty Johnson - Fort Morgan, CO7 & 8
Harrison Topp - Hotchkiss, CO 9 & 10
Jacob Langlie - Eaton, CO11 & 12
Jason Crouch - LaJunta, CO 23
Joe Rasnic - Windsor, CO7 & 8
Julia Herman - Windsor, CO 13
Lisa Cooksey - Strasburg, CO 14
Mackenzie Stoaks - LaSalle, CO15 & 16
Melissa Bischoff - Denver, CO17
Sharon Kauffman - Fort Morgan, CO 18
Shelby Teague - Fort Morgan, CO 19
Vicki Lee - Fort Collins, CO 20
Virginia Till - Denver, CO 21 & 22

KNAPP'S FARM MARKET CANNING LINE



With the help of my sister and niece, we canned a few different items at a local canning facility. To get started, we canned my grandma's recipe of zucchini relish, watermelon jelly, blueberry jalapeno jam and pickled jalapenos.

I picked this for my project to find a value-added outlet for our excess produce during peak season on our farm. During parts of our short season, we have excess produce that I do not want to go to waste. Adding our own canning line is a way to use excess produce as well as create more seasonal jobs on our farm. I did not have any donations toward my project. By adding a canning line, I am decreasing the amount of wasted produce, creating a product to sell at our farm market that we would normally buy from someone else to sell, as well as create more seasonal job opportunities for local high school-age kids.

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

CALP has been an excellent way for me to grow as a leader and to get out of my comfort zone. Through our seminars, I have learned more about other areas of agriculture across the state that I am less or unexperienced in. I have made life-long friends through the CALP that I learned as much, if not more from than the seminars we attended.

02

ALISHA KNAPP, ROCKY FORD



WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

When I first began my time in the CALP program I thought to myself “This may not be for me”. I felt out of place. However, this program developed me into a leader. CALP helped me build my confidence and knowledge of my sector of agriculture and others around me. The most meaningful part of CALP to me though, are the friendships I’ve established over the past two years. I cherish the people with whom I’ve shared this program. After CALP, I feel more prepared to accomplish leadership tasks and be a better advocate for agriculture.

When I started this project, it was with one goal in mind; to educate young men and women regarding the benefits of a career in agriculture, and even persuade them that they could achieve this education on a budget in a small town. This hit home with me, because I used to be that kid wondering what I would need to do to make it work, and if I needed to leave my hometown to gain marketable skills.

I began preparing for my project by consulting with my former professor from Adams State University Dr. Zena Buser, about how to approach this endeavor. We both agreed it would be best to first approach San Luis Valley high schools to quantify interest in ag. However, with restrictions from COVID it became impossible to access schools that would allow me the privilege of speaking. I also did not have any volunteers or costs as I was donating my own time and travel to the project.

Recently, I was invited to speak to a class and spoke with several young men who I was able to engage. We discussed their potential in agriculture. My goal with this project was to start at the high school level and gain enough interest to be able to present to Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College a potential surge of students who were looking to have a hybrid degree of Ag business management and trade skills that would make them marketable without having to leave the San Luis Valley. I plan on continuing this project even after graduating from CALP. Hopefully, we will retain some of our valuable next generation farmers in the San Luis Valley.



The National Western Stock (NWSS) Catch-A-Calf Program began in 1935 with 10 boys who received 10 calves sponsored by folks who provided them with an opportunity to experience a practical beef management project. Now, the 85-year old program has allowed more than 3,000 boys and girls from Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming to raise a steer and make their own mark on NWSS history. Since the program caters to first-time beef project participants, the network and variety of people who have gone through the program reaches far and wide. Yet, until I started initiatives towards connecting alumni, there was no system or program set up to keep former participants in touch and in the loop.

Working committee members, interns and superintendents were key in getting the alumni connections revved up. After surveying the crowd at the 2020 NWSS, we were able to collect more than 100 former participants current contact information who were in attendance at the show. Stated on the form in which we updated their information, were questions on how or if they'd like to stay involved or informed with the Catch-A-Calf program. An overwhelming number of them responded saying they'd love to support new and current participants with their projects by making farm visits and being hands-on mentors – which led our team to creating the CAC Alumni Mentor Program.

After the 2020 NWSS, we reached out to the folks who wanted to become mentors and matched each of them with a participant in the new class based on their experience level, location and feedback. Although Covid-19 threw a huge wrench in getting some folks connected in-person, many of them communicated via phone and email throughout the year.

Moving forward, the committee, superintendents and myself would like to provide more opportunities to connect the alumni of the CAC program. Once restrictions lift, we'd like to have an alumni dinner or reception during the NWSS in January and invite them to a few clinics we put on for kids throughout the year. Elevating and improving the framework of the Mentor Program is a priority of ours as well. I'd also like to incorporate the challenge coins, similar to what CALP has. I think it's a unique idea who can keep people connected and allow them a keepsake of memories for years to come.

04

CLANCY ANDERSON, LONGMONT

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO CLANCY?

Expanding my connections, network and perspectives on the agricultural industry are the three main things I gained from the CAL Program. It got me out of my square, expanded my boundaries and challenged my outlook on so many things - I don't regret a second of it. It was a true privilege to be part of this program and I hope to have the opportunity to give back to it in the hopes of elevating the careers and lives of other passionate Colorado agriculturalists.



Two participants of the 2020-2021 Catch-A-Calf program pose with their steers at the historic show in January. Despite many Covid-19 hurdles, the girls became friends and were very proud of the steers they raised.



Participants, instructors and alumni gather in Morgan County, CO for a cattle clinic in October, 2020



100-year-old sponsor and cattle feeding master mind, John Matsushima mentors participants every year in the Catch-A-Calf program. He's also written a book and keeps accurate record on the CAC program.

REVEGETATION COVENANT

I worked with the **Coaldale Alliance**, San Isabel Land Protection Trust and Palmer Land Conservancy to negotiate and adjudicate a revegetation covenant for a formerly irrigated pasture at the doorstep of the Town of Coaldale. As a result of the final revegetation covenant and landscape management plan, which was recognized and decreed by the District 2 Water Court, the subject property will be managed in such a way to prevent noxious weeds and to, ideally, bring the land back into native vegetation. The revegetation covenant will be held by a local land trust that will help enforce its terms and conditions on behalf of the community. The hope is that this will serve as a template for future change of irrigation water that reduces adverse impacts of buy-and-dry practices and protects agricultural interests.

DAVID BOWER, BROOMFIELD

06

There is a lack of education and communication between rural and urban communities, which leads to a lack of understanding about production agriculture. We pursued this project because we wanted to help solve this issue by becoming a trusted online resource for information about agriculture. AGvocate will continue to educate our viewers by providing information in the form of stories, updates, and interesting facts about agriculture.

We did not raise any money for this Facebook page phase of our project. As AGvocate progresses, we could see a need to raise funds to start a website. We have not had any volunteers yet, but plan to connect with farmers/ranchers to film virtual tours and participate in interviews. This project has improved the quality of life for not just the both of us in our careers, but for those who view our AGvocate page. For the both of us, it has pushed us to do more research on our passions (for Dusty this is agricultural policy and for Joey this is plant/animal science) and learn how to condense the information we find into easy-to-understand posts. For our viewers, it has helped to educate people on where their food comes from and updates those in the agricultural sector on resources.

We have come a long way since we first started AGvocate in 2019. This unique duo of the political side of agricultural policy and the boots on the ground side of agricultural production brings an amazing mix for all to enjoy.

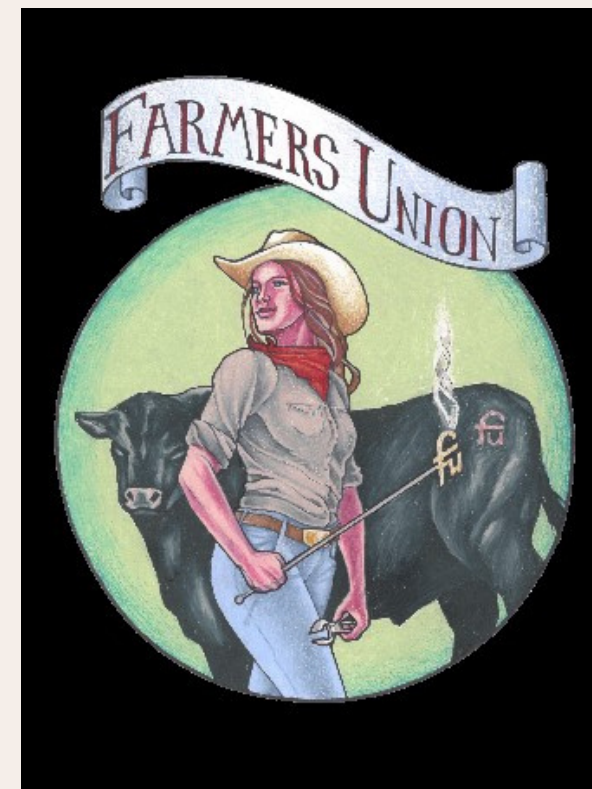
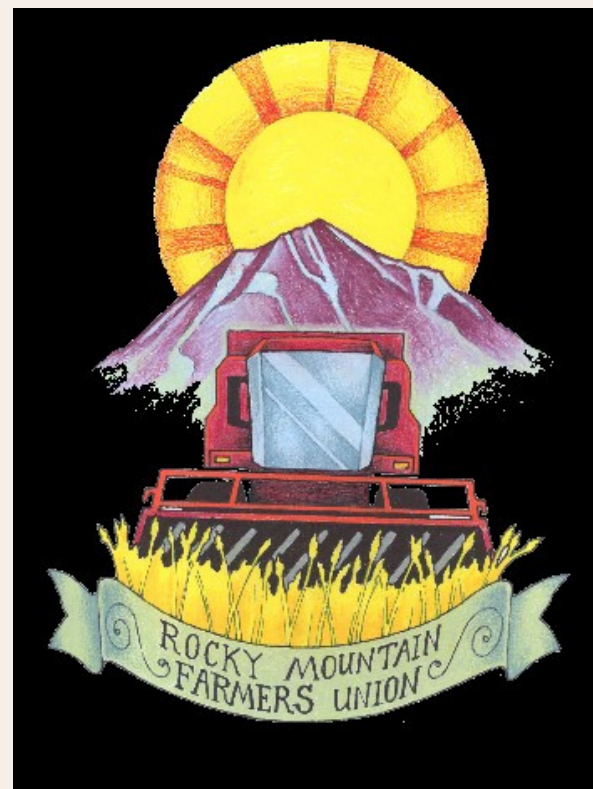
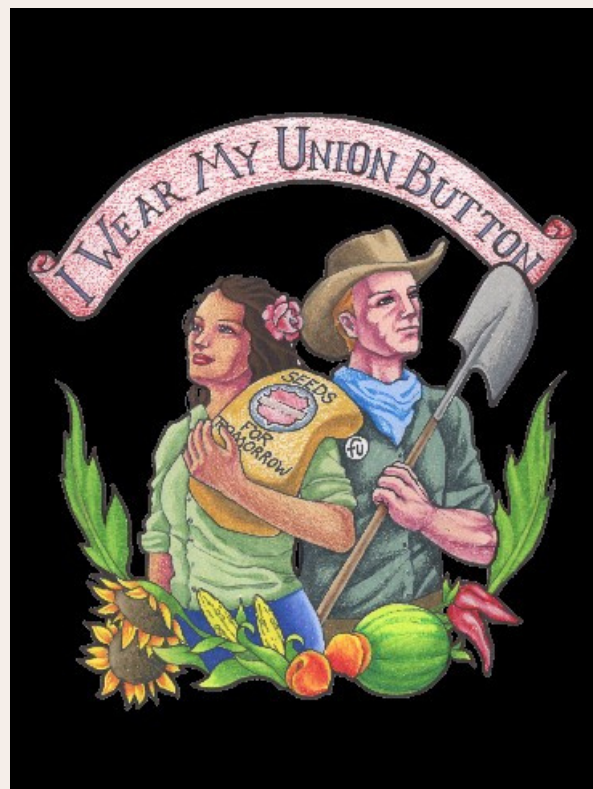
WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO DUSTY?

I joined CALP to learn more about the production of agriculture in Colorado and become a better spokesperson for the rural communities as I move forward in my political aspirations. Little did I know two years ago, my experience in the CALP program would expand beyond gaining more knowledge about agriculture and the development of professional skills, but it would also include gaining lifetime friendships with my classmates, creating memories by learning to go with the flow and have fun, and accepting that even leaders need to accept help from time to time. I could go on and on about what CALP means to me, but to be brief: CALP is a program that offers the soil for emerging agricultural spokespeople to plant their roots/goals and introduces the water/opportunities that makes those goals bloom!

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO JOEY?

My time with the CAL program was an amazing experience that opened my eyes to the diversity of Ag in Colorado and the United States. The classmates, leaders, politicians, and growers will forever be amazing contacts and friends as I go forward in my career. The friendships and contacts made while traveling with this group have helped me in my career beyond any other program or meeting I have ever attended in my professional career.

AGRICULTURE AND THE ARTS



My CALP experience, though challenging at times, also left an invaluable impression on me. I'm very excited to continue nurturing the relationships that I formed in the program and continue practicing many of the leadership skills that I gained.

**HARRISON TOPP,
HOTCHKISS**

The intersection of Art and Agriculture is a story telling nexus that's central to the way agriculture is viewed publicly and integrates with culture. I wanted to explore that intersection to push projects forward that would represent Agriculture proudly and expound on the importance of that intersection for others in our industry and within the arts community.

While COVID hampered many of the results of my project, I was still able to lay the groundwork in some important ways.

- .
 - I developed relationships with five artists and commissioned 5 pieces to support and represent my employer, Farmers Union.
- .
 - I participated as a panelist in a public forum about art and agriculture which attracted over 100 participants, to raise awareness about the dynamic relationship art has to culture and storytelling for our industry.
- .
 - I worked closely with the coordinators of the National Western Complex redevelopment authority to capture voices of over 50 Western Slope farmers and ranchers and advocated for the inclusion of art representing our products, our way of life, and our future in the redevelopment.

Through the above activities, I made foundational relationships that will help to progress projects in the future. I also created inroads into both the ag. and arts communities for further conversation.

ACCELERATE



11 COLTON HANKINS, EATON & JACOB LANGLIE, EATON

COLTON HANKINS

Our project was to reach out to urban and rural communities and try to bridge the divide about the agricultural industries with the younger generation. I did this project to because I want Colorado's youth to continue to have conversations about agriculture. As kids and adults become more removed from our industry I wanted the younger generation to be able to turn and look to someone who could answer questions without being embarrassed. Jacob and I started by talking to kids in rural schools with great success, we noticed that we could help educate a lot more kids in urban settings then just in small classrooms. We decided to think outside the box and reach out to social fraternities and sororities at Colorado's Land Grant University. We thought we could educate and train these college kids a fun curriculum and then use them as the peers to train the local schools. This way we could hit two different age groups at once. It was amazing to see kids and college students light up and show genuine interest in where there food, clothes and energy come from. I have had those college students reach out to ask questions because of social debates they were having with their friends. That is exactly what I wanted to happen. I hope they continue to show interest and have those conversation

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

The CALP experience has meant so much to me. I have met many new people that I will keep in contact for a very long time. I have learned so much about my industry that I don't get to spend much time thinking about. I would do this program 100 times over again.

JACOB LANGLIE

Agricultural advocacy has been increasingly top-of-mind for many in the industry. It has become common for harmful preconceptions drawn from misinformation to dictate much of the conversation around what we do. The need for education around the topic of agriculture is what brought "AGcelerate" to fruition.

Despite the catchy name, the idea behind this project is much more complex. My project partner Colton and I have both talked to classrooms of young individuals before around the importance of agriculture; though, it was always hard to find others to join.

The idea behind our project was to "accelerate" the number of agricultural advocates. We tasked ourselves with encouraging others from different walks of life to help us spread the word in hopes they would encourage others. In one example we spoke to a group of fraternity students, most of which were not in agriculture, about what actually happens in the industry. We let them ask any questions they want and tried to clarify any reservations they had. The general outcome in our opinion was very positive. We followed that up with asking them to accompany us to educate others with similar views. Our hope is that through more experiences of the like, we can help increase advocacy around what it is we really do.

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

I am extremely grateful for the experiences I've had during my time in CALP. This program has opened my eyes to facets of the industry that I had never seen before. More importantly, the relationships I have developed throughout my time in the program are truly invaluable.



Growing up in rural Colorado, I have always appreciated the many diverse roles that agriculturalists hold. CALP has demonstrated the multi-dimensional influence that various industries have on our overall economy. I am truly in awe when I can watch and feel the pride that the ag industry has in their work and communities. This is expressed through their faces, actions, and is evident in their hands. Cracks, cuts, broken nails, all of those features demonstrate the dedication to their trade.

As a photographer, I initially sought to photograph workers in agriculture in several different industries to highlight the details of their hands and convey their story. The duality between strength and vulnerability has always fascinated me. Due to public health restrictions, I was unable to visit the operations as I would have liked.

This sample is of my late mentor, which gave me the idea for the project. I hope to finish the project eventually as a tribute to all of those in agriculture that inspire me and to challenge myself artistically.

FARM.E.R

Long term, the goal of farmER is to have a readily available training resource for Farmers and Ranchers in basic first response skills. This program will ideally be available at conferences, grange/community meetings, and virtually.

I have not raised money yet. I received my EMT certificate in November of 2020. I am now in the process of being trained with Southeast Weld Fire Protection District to be a reserve EMT for their team. As my skills and contacts grow, I plan to apply for a grant to form the non-profit.

I hope to be a developing resource for folks in rural communities. Farmers and Ranchers are the real first response when accidents happen far from town. Having the knowledge to respond correctly could save a life.

My EMT instructor, Deb, has agreed to be an educator for our first “class”. I was wanting to try this out at our last Ag Forum but am on hold. I also have contacted my local Basic Life Support training office and Stop the Bleed non-profit. They have agreed that once Covid restrictions are lifted to help put some programming together.

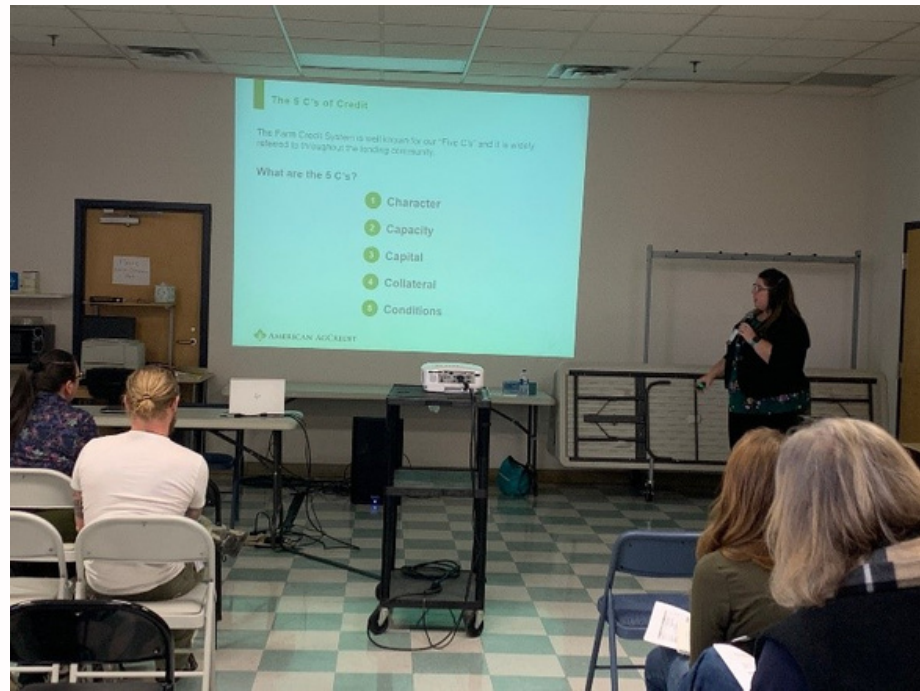
While the potential for a Non-Profit organization seems like the path I am currently pursuing, I’m hoping to let my project continue to develop organically. I have not lost sight of the importance of getting first response information out into the farming community

LISA COOKSEY, STRASBURG



WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

My CALP experience is something I will always hold near and dear. I have had the privilege of meeting some of the most unique and passionate agricultural advocates around. I will continue to fiercely support this incredible industry. Because of CALP, I am able to do so in an educated and well-rounded way.



Montrose, Colo. - Western CO
Food & Farm Forum,
January 2020

Below: Rocky Mountain Farmers Union -
Ag Innovation Far, November 2019
The bottom left picture is my CALP
presentation; right is a Business Health
panel I was asked to sit on.



Positioning Your Operation for Financial Success

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

CALP has been a wonderful and very unique experience. The ability to improve my leadership, speaking, and Ag policy skills these past two years has not only improved my personal skills, but has also made an impact in my professional career. I was blessed with a promotion halfway through the program and due to the CALP project, I am able to spend time helping others in my community.

The reason I picked this project was to help educate young, beginning, and small farmers on the impacts of finances and the importance of knowing how to create financial statements. I also chose to educate farmers how to understand what their financial statements are reflecting and how to be prepared when talking to a bank for financing. This included understanding what makes up a credit score and how to avoid credit mistakes, balance sheet structure and ratios, how financial decisions affect the ability to repay debt, and building confidence in preparing their own financial statements. My company has been extremely supportive of my project and helped coordinate a few seminars for me to teach across the state. Although COVID19 had a major impact on my project and the ability to present additional seminars in 2020, I feel like I was able to make an impact on those seminars I was able to do before the shutdowns. I have had several attendees' email me with gratitude of thanks, as well as reach out for more in-depth help on their finances. I look forward to getting to do additional seminars in the future.

I feel like my project is unique because basic finance skills are becoming less important in school curriculums. Financing is important in the Agricultural industry and I feel like I am able to help young producers get a basic understanding of how to be prepared when working with their banker. With the support of my company, we are looking forward to expanding this project after my CALP graduation.

16

MACKENZIE STOAKS, LASALLE

CONNECTING DAIRY FARMS TO CHEESE CONSUMERS



Melissa holds a copy of Leprino Foods Company's 2019 Global Responsibility Report, highlighting the farmer's stories she brought to life.

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

CALP has been a great experience for me in deepening my knowledge around agriculture in Colorado and more broadly. I have forged strong relationships with my ag colleagues and created lifelong friendships.

In my role as Director of Milk Procurement at Leprino Foods Company, I lead Leprino's farm level programs around animal care and sustainability. I frequently field questions from our cheese and nutrition customers about dairy farm level practices and have come to realize there is a large disconnect in understanding between the farmer and the consumer. While both are usually well intended, this gap in connection breeds frustration.

For my CALP personal project, I aimed to harness the benefits of storytelling to share a couple of farmers experiences with sustainability and animal care. Storytelling is one of the most effective ways to influence, teach and inspire. It forges connections between people by creating an emotional attachment that is more powerful than facts. The listener is able to become a part of the story, thus making it more personal for themselves.

I was able to incorporate two farm stories that were highlighted in Leprino's 2019 Global Responsibility Report. This report was published in October 2020 and is available in print and online (https://leprinofoods.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/LF19-_GR-Report_10Sept2020web.pdf).

This project may be a small step forward in bridging the gap of farm to consumer, but the impact could be significant because this Global Responsibility report is delivered to a large influential audience, including key cheese customers. This project allowed for increased customer understanding of the high level of animal care and sustainability practices dairy farmers are delivering today.

17

MELISSA BISCHOFF, DENVER

COUNTRY ROAD VINES AND WINES

The personal project component of the Colorado Ag Leadership program was of interest to me from the very beginning and I knew I wanted to focus on highlighting agriculture in our area. After contemplating a couple of different ideas, the decision was made to open a winery. Fortunately, my husband was a hobby wine maker which made the product somewhat easier to obtain. After months of research, filing numerous applications, preparing a business plan Country Road Vines and Wines came to be. The sales room was a very important piece to the project, it was where “people and wine meet.” A place where locals as well as tourists would visit. The social distancing of 2020 altered the business plan, but in a good way. The distribution of wine started in April of 2020 which was months ahead of the scheduled date. Wine can be purchased at the winery & consumed off site and is also available at one of the restaurants in town as well as one of the local liquor stores. Country Road Vines and Wines has partnered with over 20 business’s in our community to offer promote “stay, eat, and play local.” Country Road Vines and Wines is looking forward to new opportunities to share the diversification and importance of agriculture of our area. Post social distancing will be the start of a new chapter and a revisited business plan. Add Country Road Vines and Wines to your list of things to do in Northeast Colorado, cheers!



SHARON KAUFFMAN, FORT MORGAN

18

BELLE PRAIRIE FARMS SWEET
CORN HARVEST

Annually, my husband Trevor and I plant and harvest

approximately 3 acres of sweet corn to be donated to the Food Bank of the Rockies. This project was initially started by Mike Kosman, who was a beloved father, friend, and member of the Morgan County community. Mike was a person who would give the shirt off his back to anyone, and we are honored to be able to continue this legacy.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, we still powered through and held the event this year. Around 100 volunteers from across Colorado harvested, sorted, and bagged around 150,000 ears of sweet corn in one morning.

This event has been a great way for not only our farm, but so many others in the community to give back and provide a delicious product for those who have faced so many challenges this year.

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

CALP has been a truly worthwhile experience that I would recommend to anyone. Not only do you learn about and see first-hand the diversity of Colorado Agriculture, but the friendships I've developed through the program are unmatched. Additionally, I now have an arsenal of leadership tools that will equip me to face the challenges we are faced with in Agriculture today.

SHELBY TEAGUE, FORT MORGAN

CLEAN "CULTURES" TO CRAFT CROPS



- There is a need for clean plants in high value crops, so I pursued an opportunity to utilize my expertise & passion partnering with a diversified hop farm in Idaho, setting up an on-farm plant propagation nursery and to also grow potatoes and other specialty crops
- Advantages for craft growers and importance of clean plants:
 - The cost of propagating your own is lower than buying commercial. Have control over scale and planning with on-farm limited generation foundation stocks from start laboratory/greenhouse) to finish (nursery/field). "Start Clean - Stay Clean"
 - Outside clients appreciate a clean, closed system and appreciate the complexity required to produce tissue cultured transplants at the microlevel, creating an understanding of production costs producing disease-indexed (virus-free) field transplants
 - Operate within plant quarantine, streamlining regulatory compliance
- Economic value of clean plant starts:
 - Produce higher crop yields
 - Increase crop quality
 - Reduce harmful environmental impacts via fewer chemical additives.
 - Crop uniformity
 - True to type genetics
- Tested for commodity relevant viruses and virus like organisms to be used for disease management which is the industry's most efficient and effective best practice

WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

Through my CALP experience I branched away from conflicts & barriers that held me back from ownership & leadership roles in the Ag industries I love to serve and my project is now an on-going business. I have my Ag voice back

The visits to Ag operations, educational training and new connections were also refreshing.

EPA COLLABORATION WITH AGRICULTURE

Events

Watch the Virtual Symposium

“Iconic Times for Colorado Agriculture: 2020 Learnings and 2021 Futureproofing”

A mix of U.S. and Colorado government leaders and agriculture experts will lead a keynote, panel discussion, Q&A and complex conversation, sharing learnings from an unprecedented 2020 year of disruption, while revealing predictions and trends for 2021 and beyond. The symposium will include clear strategies to futureproof for agricultural success in every type of economic, environmental and cultural situation.

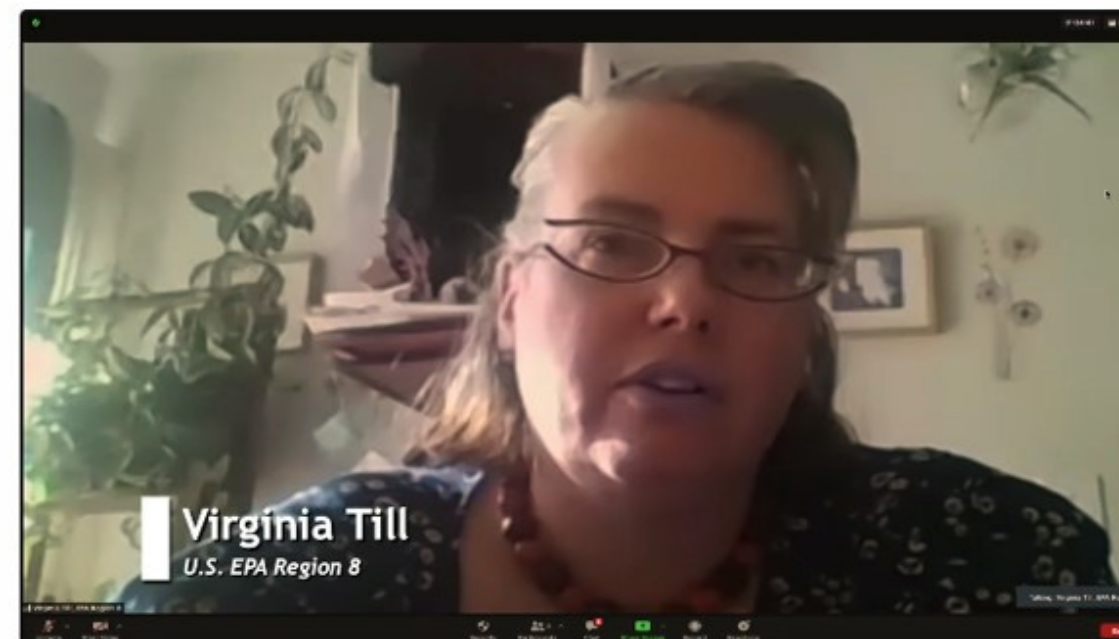
December 3, 2020



LEARNING ABOUT
SHRIMP INDUSTRY
AND RESEARCH IN
GEORGIA



LAVENDAR FARM,
PALISADE



WHAT HAS THE CALP EXPERIENCE MEANT TO ME?

The CALP experience has been very meaningful to me. I've learned a great deal about agriculture and how policies and communication affect the industry across various commodities and regions. I know it has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience to D.C., Georgia, and around Colorado. For the rest of my life, I will value the connections, friendships, and knowledge I've gained. Thank you CALP

VIRGINIA TILL, DENVER

I adjusted my original project in light of the COVID-19 situation and the limitations it put on my travel to visit agricultural operations. My ongoing project emphasizes EPA collaboration with agriculture. I hope for positive communication between government and agriculturalists towards a resilient future ensuring continuation of agriculture livelihoods, collaborative communities, and a healthy environment. As a federal employee, I could not do any fundraising for this project due to ethics rules.

The following activities were specific outcomes of the project:

- EPA grant to Utah Agriculture in the Classroom for development of classroom materials related to food waste (grant period 2020-2021).
- Connected (external-to-EPA) sustainability expert with agriculture expert interested in learning more about animal safety in beef industry (2020).
- Acceptance of presentation at National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference 2020 and 2021: Taste It, Don't Waste It: EPA Tools for Teaching the Value of Food
- Invitation to speak on Colorado Department of Agriculture's Colorado Proud Virtual Symposium: Iconic Times for Colorado Agriculture: 2020 Learnings and 2021 Futureproofing. Panelist for this live symposium moderated by CDA Commissioner Greenberg.
- Project reviewer for State of Wyoming Agriscience Fair (Wyoming FFA) student papers (2021).
- Selected as USDA Farm to School national grant proposal reviewer (2021).

THANK YOU CLASS 14 SPONSORS



**Colorado
State**
University



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

Nutrien[™]
Feeding the Future[™]

colorado**Corn**
Administrative
Committee



COLORADO
DAIRY FARMERS

PINNACOL
ASSURANCE

Aims
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES &
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Agfinity
The Cooperative Difference




**AMERICAN
AGCREDIT**
MONEY FOR AGRICULTURE


Colorado
SAN LUIS VALLEY
POTATOES