LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

Our Vision:
Revolutionizing how we nurture people and our planet.

Our Purpose:
Together, we promise future generations a vibrant agriculture, a healthy environment and thriving communities.

Our Values:
Actions manifest our essence. With CSU’s Principles of Community as a guide, we serve with excellence, intention, rigor, optimism, empathy, creativity and wisdom.

Our Mission:
In the context of a changing climate, we meet global challenges in food safety, food security, wellness and economic prosperity through the sustainable use of natural resources. We excel in our 21st century land-grant mission by integrating intentional discovery, inclusive learning and collaborative engagement.

INTENTIONAL DISCOVERY
Agriculture is a fulcrum for discovery at principles and practice.
We draw on diverse scientific disciplines and perspectives to solve real-world problems of agriculture, the environment and community well-being. We practice innovation by spanning boundaries, challenging convention and viewing obstacles as opportunities. We achieve lasting impact through collaboration and mentoring the next generation of industry leaders and scientists.

INCLUSIVE LEARNING
Lived experience is the best teacher.
We empower learners and citizens to serve and succeed. Our curriculum is deeply connected to our scientific discovery and active stakeholder engagement. We challenge our students to grow, while surrounding them with support. We prioritize hands-on learning to catalyze student motivation, while building confidence and competency in critical thinking, decision-making and communication.

COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT
Engaged scholarship is our promise and way of being.
We learn from and actively engage diverse stakeholders across a continuum of shared experiences that spans conversation to co-creation. We apply science with collective wisdom for the betterment of society, ask important questions, and value all voices.

Our Vision:
Revolutionizing how we nurture people and our planet.

Our Purpose:
Together, we promise future generations a vibrant agriculture, a healthy environment and thriving communities.

Our Values:
Actions manifest our essence. With CSU’s Principles of Community as a guide, we serve with excellence, intention, rigor, optimism, empathy, creativity and wisdom.

Our Mission:
In the context of a changing climate, we meet global challenges in food safety, food security, wellness and economic prosperity through the sustainable use of natural resources. We excel in our 21st century land-grant mission by integrating intentional discovery, inclusive learning and collaborative engagement.
OUR AREAS OF IMPACT

Our future work will build on a proud tradition of innovation in agricultural sciences at CSU. Guided by our shared vision, we are mobilizing around and investing in eight strategic focus areas for leadership and impact – regionally, nationally and globally. Our strategic planning process is one of continual improvement — we will measure, evaluate, communicate and rigorously examine our progress against our goals and objectives. When adjustments need to be made, we will do so systematically, decisively and with purpose.

Advancing the science of regenerative agricultural systems
Excellence in our 21st century land-grant mission
Accelerating agriculture’s climate resiliency
Nurturing human wellness and housing sustainability
Innovating local and global food systems
Promoting agricultural literacy with awareness, knowledge, discovery and decision-making
Convening and supporting critical conversations to address wicked problems
Cultivating and growing an inclusive, respectful and equitable community
Preparing tomorrow’s leaders for global challenges

Advancing the science of regenerative agricultural systems
Excellence in our 21st century land-grant mission
Accelerating agriculture’s climate resiliency
Nurturing human wellness and housing sustainability
Innovating local and global food systems
Promoting agricultural literacy with awareness, knowledge, discovery and decision-making
Convening and supporting critical conversations to address wicked problems
Cultivating and growing an inclusive, respectful and equitable community
Preparing tomorrow’s leaders for global challenges
OUR THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Innovating local and global food systems
We are modernizing the safety, quality, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of food systems to achieve healthy communities, economies and individuals. We utilize cutting edge research, education and community engagement to advance science, inform policy and improve access to nutritious food in Colorado and worldwide.

Advancing the science of regenerative agricultural systems
We are a leader in applying a rigorous scientific framework to the analysis, development and implementation of diverse regenerative agricultural systems. We adopt a collaborative community-driven approach to help increase the availability of affordable, fresh, nutritious food while restoring the health of our communities, soils, water and air.

Accelerating agriculture’s climate resiliency
We empower and accelerate breakthrough discovery in the adaptation of plants, animals and ecosystems through an unprecedented convergence of disciplines and integration of basic and applied research. We cultivate critical partnerships and provide world-class facilities that will spur talent development and inspire groundbreaking innovation.

Nurturing human wellness and thriving communities
We foster resilient communities by nurturing the health and well-being of humans, animals, plants and the environment through the experience of agriculture, landscape and natural resources. We improve the societal well-being of people and communities by creating and sharing tools and information aimed to solve economic, managerial, educational and policy-related problems within agri-food and resource systems.
How we think about Regenerative Agriculture

At Colorado State University, we have always been invested in having a safe, secure and sustainable food supply. We are now taking this work a step further by adopting a systems approach that extends beyond sustainability to leaving things better than we found them.

We are thinking about regenerative as more than just the biological aspects of agricultural and natural resource systems – our work must deliver value for all stakeholders across the supply chain, while building the capacity of people and communities to become healthier and more just in the process.

How will we accomplish this? We will:
✓ Partner with CSU colleagues, peer institutions and leading organizations in this field to advance definitions and discovery in the science of regenerative agriculture
✓ Make strategic investments in research and engagement to support the collaborative development and testing of novel solutions
✓ Develop curriculum and co-curriculum that is well integrated with research and engagement activities, with an emphasis on water-limited, semi-arid systems
✓ Advance stakeholder performance and longevity through cutting-edge research, practice and adoption
✓ Support the growth of existing enterprises and new startups that enable regenerative agriculture

How will we know we’re successful? We will have:
✓ Established a variety of strategic partnerships to continually advance scientific discovery
✓ Grown our research presence, productivity and performance across diverse contributing disciplines
✓ Placed an increasing number of graduates who contribute to the field of regenerative agriculture
✓ Accelerated enterprise development and the adoption of technology and practices at scale, with positive impacts to diverse stakeholders and communities
✓ Achieved public and industry recognition of our research and teaching leadership in this area

How will we accomplish this? We will:
✓ Minimize soil disturbance
✓ No-till Conservation tillage
✓ Plants in the ground year-round
✓ Cover crops Multi-season rotation
✓ Cover crop grazing Residue grazing Managed intensive grazing
✓ Integrate livestock

How will we know we’re successful? We will have:
✓ Established a variety of strategic partnerships to continually advance scientific discovery
✓ Grown our research presence, productivity and performance across diverse contributing disciplines
✓ Placed an increasing number of graduates who contribute to the field of regenerative agriculture
✓ Accelerated enterprise development and the adoption of technology and practices at scale, with positive impacts to diverse stakeholders and communities
✓ Achieved public and industry recognition of our research and teaching leadership in this area
Cultivating and growing an inclusive, respectful and equitable community

We are committed to inclusive excellence in which all perspectives are welcomed, valued and affirmed.

We encourage our team and our stakeholders to “Come to the Table” with their passion and pursuit of excellence to cultivate a diverse community that co-creates knowledge to address key agricultural challenges.

Preparing tomorrow’s leaders for global challenges

We are committed to preparing successful leaders, innovators, and global citizens by developing the professional skills, technical expertise and cultural competencies needed to advance the college and agricultural community in Colorado and beyond.

How will we accomplish this? We will:

✓ Define and embed key student learning and success outcomes in curricular and extra-curricular program design, with an emphasis on experiential and service learning, decision-making and global perspective
✓ Develop the next generation of scientists for careers in academia and industry with experiences in research design, professional scientific communication and real-world problem solving
✓ Grow the professional capital and relevance of students through regular and deliberate engagement with agricultural stakeholders
✓ Inspire and implement a culture of curricular innovation that results in greater access by diverse learners, successful career pathways and lifelong learning
✓ Provide a continuum of care that fosters whole student development while improving student retention, persistence, graduation and placement rates

How will we know we’re successful? We will have:

✓ Become the institution of choice for agricultural sciences among high school graduates from Colorado
✓ Observed year-over-year growth in the share of undergraduate students with demonstrated competency in College of Agricultural Sciences core dimensions
✓ Increased the number of graduate students and post-doctoral professionals who become recognized leaders within peer institutions and industry
✓ Developed agile and accessible curricular solutions to support diverse learners, accelerate careers and address critical workforce development gaps
✓ Observed continual improvement in student success metrics including first-year retention, four- and six-year graduation rate, and placement in preferred career pathway
WHERE WE WILL INVEST

While a wide range of ongoing efforts at Colorado State University will amplify impact in our strategic focus areas, the following investments in people, programs and places serve as points of collaboration for guiding us forward.

People

IDEAS IN ACTION:

AgriBiome Science

The microbiome is the community of microorganisms that live everywhere — on our skin, in our bodies, and within the soil, plants and animals within agriculture.

We have invested in a world-class team of scientists spanning diverse disciplines who apply biological experimentation, informatics and decision science in a systems approach to improve understanding of the agricultural microbiome (agribiome). This work has exciting implications for addressing stakeholder concerns of food security, food safety and the sustainability of food systems.

AgCARES Hub

CSU and the USDA-ARS Center for Agricultural Resources Research are committed to providing the science and engineering necessary to develop resilient agriculture. The world’s only Climate Agricultural Resiliency with Engineering & Science (AgCARES) Hub will assemble researchers, students and staff from a diverse complement of disciplines needed to achieve climate resilience, coupled with shared spaces and unique, state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities to foster innovation and inspiration.

These bold commitments, built on the tremendous expertise that resides across ARS and CSU, acknowledges the realization that only together can we succeed.

Inclusion, Diversity and Equity in Agriculture (IDEA)

Building upon CSU’s strong leadership in inclusive excellence, there is an opportunity within the College of Agricultural Sciences to formalize and elevate existing efforts toward nurturing a diverse, inclusive and equitable environment for our faculty, staff, students and external constituents.

A critical next investment will be the hire of an experienced director to work in close collaboration with university and industry partners to develop strategies, policies and programming that will position the college as a model for its peers and the greater agricultural community.

IDEAS ON THE GROW:

Innovative Undergraduate Curriculum – Minor in Agricultural Data Science

Agricultural data analysts are among the most highly sought-after employees by agribusiness. Training students to make data-based decisions is essential to equipping our future leaders to reduce the impact of global climate change, improve ecosystem resiliency, and ensure food safety and security.

Students from this minor will be able to provide data-informed technical advice on trends related to crop or animal production, serving as a necessary bridge between biologists or animal scientists and data scientists. They will gain practical experience with complex agricultural data through an internship with an industry client, living our land-grant mission of teaching in service of Colorado agriculture.

Innovative Undergraduate Curriculum – Capstone Program: Farming for a Better World

To address the urgent sustainability challenges facing agriculture, we will create an innovative capstone program that immerses future leaders in real-world, problem-based learning experiences in which they can work to test and advance solutions to local, regional and global challenges. This program will provide students with an immersive, immersive education that equips them to be leaders in addressing the agricultural challenges of the future.

IDEAS ON ACTION:

CSU AgNext

At CSU, we believe animal agriculture is an important part of our global food system. This first-of-its-kind collaborative brings together livestock and animal health experts from across the university with industry and government partners to innovate sustainable and profitable solutions for feeding the world. Success is defined as not only answering the questions of today but building a nimble and adaptive collection of talent to meet tomorrow’s challenges.

Upskilling Academy

In Colorado and beyond, a shortage of skilled workers is hindering the growth of agricultural and food sectors and placing critical strains on local and regional food systems. Traditional post-secondary education pathways are not currently meeting the needs of employers nor the potential agricultural workforce.

Through the creation of an online, accessible, experimental and cutting-edge Upskilling Academy, we will support the development of technical, applied and professional skills to aid learners in their pursuit of successful careers and entrepreneurial businesses related to food, agriculture, natural resources, and the environment. This effort will provide new career pathways while strengthening local communities, enhancing food system resiliency and promoting regenerative agriculture, including enhancing soil health and water conservation.
IDEAS IN ACTION:
CSU Spur

Opening in early 2022, the CSU Spur Campus at Denver’s National Western Center will bring together research, teaching and engagement activities from the three campuses of the CSU System in a modern-day approach to the university’s land-grant mission. The public-facing campus will celebrate the proud tradition of Colorado agriculture while inspiring innovation with global impact. Diverse research, demonstration and education programs at Spur will promote agricultural literacy and lifelong learning, foster agribusiness entrepreneurship, enhance the health and well-being of individuals and communities, and advance the sustainability of urban and rural food systems.

Regenerative Agricultural Management Systems (RAMS)

RAMS bridges the agricultural tradition of producer-led innovation with the development and application of cutting-edge tools, leveraging the broad scientific expertise at CSU and the creative spirit of our producers and ranchers to co-create new knowledge and practice. RAMS will be a network of collaborative hubs across Colorado that work with local communities to co-create regenerative approaches unique to each region of the state. Frontier Projects stationed at CSU’s research centers will pilot groundbreaking research, education and extension programming designed to encourage and facilitate adoption by small-scale operations, while creating experiential learning opportunities for students. CSU’s new Metropolitan Agricultural Research Center at Spur will strengthen this network, acting as an important bridge between urban and rural interests.

IDEAS ON THE GROW:
Ag Campus @ ARDEC

Located just 4 miles north of CSU’s Fort Collins campus, the Agricultural Research, Development and Education Center (ARDEC) has been a valued part of the university’s research center network since 1993. Our vision for the future of this center is the creation of a world-class campus where teaching, research and industry engagement are thoughtfully integrated to provide diverse learning experiences in production agriculture to advance agricultural literacy, student success and workforce development. The Ag Campus will also be a gathering place for students and industry leaders alike, building community and inspiring solutions for the industry’s greatest challenges.

WHERE WE WILL INVEST
Places

IDEAS IN ACTION:
CSU Spur

Opening in early 2022, the CSU Spur Campus at Denver’s National Western Center will bring together research, teaching and engagement activities from the three campuses of the CSU System in a modern-day approach to the university’s land-grant mission. The public-facing campus will celebrate the proud tradition of Colorado agriculture while inspiring innovation with global impact. Diverse research, demonstration and education programs at Spur will promote agricultural literacy and lifelong learning, foster agribusiness entrepreneurship, enhance the health and well-being of individuals and communities, and advance the sustainability of urban and rural food systems.

Regenerative Agricultural Management Systems (RAMS)

RAMS bridges the agricultural tradition of producer-led innovation with the development and application of cutting-edge tools, leveraging the broad scientific expertise at CSU and the creative spirit of our producers and ranchers to co-create new knowledge and practice. RAMS will be a network of collaborative hubs across Colorado that work with local communities to co-create regenerative approaches unique to each region of the state. Frontier Projects stationed at CSU’s research centers will pilot groundbreaking research, education and extension programming designed to encourage and facilitate adoption by small-scale operations, while creating experiential learning opportunities for students. CSU’s new Metropolitan Agricultural Research Center at Spur will strengthen this network, acting as an important bridge between urban and rural interests.

IDEAS ON THE GROW:
Ag Campus @ ARDEC

Located just 4 miles north of CSU’s Fort Collins campus, the Agricultural Research, Development and Education Center (ARDEC) has been a valued part of the university’s research center network since 1993. Our vision for the future of this center is the creation of a world-class campus where teaching, research and industry engagement are thoughtfully integrated to provide diverse learning experiences in production agriculture to advance agricultural literacy, student success and workforce development. The Ag Campus will also be a gathering place for students and industry leaders alike, building community and inspiring solutions for the industry’s greatest challenges.