Section 4.2
Financial And Technical Resources For Niche Production & Marketing

American Farmland Trust
USDA Value-Added Producer Grant Program

- Planning grants for developing business and marketing strategies (cannot use for capital costs)
- Awarded to independent producer groups, rancher cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures
- Matching funds required
- Deadlines each August
- In Colorado, contact USDA Rural Development Services at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/co/coopsvs.htm
USDA Western SARE Farmer/Rancher Grants

- Sustainable Ag Research and Education Program offers grants for:
  - sustainable ag projects
  - marketing systems
  - organic systems
- One year grants up to $7,500 for individuals, $15,000 for producer groups
- No matching funds required
- Funds may be used for surveys, materials and supplies, outreach expenses, travel, hired labor
USDA SARE Grants, cont…

- Each project must have an ag professional serving as technical advisor
- Proposals due in October
- http://wsare.usu.edu/
USDA Ag Innovation Center Demonstration Program

• Newly authorized in 2002 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act

• Will provide technical assistance, business marketing planning, and organizational, outreach, and development assistance to increase the viability, growth and sustainability of value-added agricultural businesses

• Location and types of projects still being established within USDA
Small Business Innovation Research

- USDA grants to small businesses for research on important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture
- Nine topic areas, including animal production
- Phase I grants are for 6 months and up to $80,000; Phase II grants are for 2 years and up to $300,000
- Refer to http://www.reeusda.gov/sbir/ for application deadlines
Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program

• Provides USDA matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture for:
  ▶ developing and testing methods of processing, packaging, handling, storing, transporting and distributing food and other agricultural products
  ▶ assessing customer response to agricultural products or marketing services, and evaluating potential domestic and international marketing opportunities
FSMIP, cont.

- Requires one-to-one matching from non-Federal sources
- One to two year grants
- February application deadline
USDA Farmer Direct Marketing

• For small and medium-sized producers
• Site features monthly newsletter, publications, bibliography, schedule of national and regional conferences and workshops
• Links to other USDA and federal programs, state departments of agriculture, national and regional associations, and individual farmers and public markets with web sites
• http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing
USDA National Organic Program

- National standards on production and handling, labeling and certification, certifying agents, consumer information, producers, handlers and processors
- State information and contacts
- Information on trade issues (i.e., export arrangements and recognition agreements, export certificate procedures and accompanying documentation, import authorizations)
Organic Farming Research Foundation

- Funds research relevant to certified organic systems
- Projects should involve farmers and take place on working organic farms
- Average grant approximately $7,600
- Matching funds encouraged but not required
- Deadlines each July 15 and December 15
- Grant procedures: http://www.ofrf.org/research/application.html
USDA National Sustainable Ag Information Service

- Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural America (ATTRA) site has links to publications on livestock production, and marketing and business
- News on producer initiatives and sustainable agriculture
- Toll-free access to a sustainable ag expert (English & Spanish)
- http://attra.ncat.org/
Colorado Department of Agriculture Programs

Colorado Proud

• Free marketing program to help consumers, restaurants and retailers identify and purchase Colorado food and agricultural products

• Bright distinctive COLORADO PROUD logo for recognition of high-quality Colorado foods

• Visit http://www.ag.state.co.us/mkt.html
Colorado Department of Agriculture Programs

Colorado Value-Added Feasibility Grants

- For local governments & private enterprises to determine feasibility of developing or expanding agricultural processing facilities in Colorado
- Applicant must be a Colorado local government
- $15,000 maximum award per project; one-to-one matching required, including $5,000 cash;
- Application deadline March 1 & September 1
Southwest Marketing Network

- Increases regional marketing expertise and opportunities for farmers and ranchers in Four Corners area
- Links to technical and financial assistance, marketing information, business and marketing skills, and peer examples to improve profitability, viability and the bottom line for producers
- http://www.swmarketing.ncat.org/
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

Cooperative Development Center

- Works to increase producers’ ownership in the manufacturing, distribution and retailing sectors of the food industry
- Assists small-scale, minority producers
- Provides technical and advisory assistance on livestock processing and marketing and sustainable agricultural products for cooperatives
- http://www.co-ops.org/
Colorado Organic Producers Association

- Promotes Colorado organically grown products
- Monitors and recommends actions to the official organic certification bodies
- Assists in marketing crops, products and services
- Offers an online Marketing Directory
- http://www.organiccolorado.org/
Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

• AgMRC is a newly formed national electronic or virtual resource center for value-added agricultural groups

• Purpose is to provide producers and processors with critical information to build successful value-added agricultural enterprises

• www.agmrc.org
American Grassfed Association

- Established in 2003 with the goal of promoting the grassfed industry through government relations, research, concept marketing and public education
- President: Marlene Groves; (303) 621-1111; aga@americangrassfed.org
- First Annual Conference March 5 & 6, 2004 ~ Topeka, KS
- www.americangrassfed.org
USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)

- FSA makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loans (OL) to farmers and ranchers who are temporarily unable to obtain private, commercial credit.
- Loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies or to construct buildings or make farm improvements.
- [Visit the website](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/).