

Local Products

Nancy B. Kramer, Project Coordinator
Northwest Colorado Products Program
Community Agriculture Alliance

As the Community Agriculture Alliance develops their Northwest Colorado Products (NWCP) program, it is exciting to discover all of the creative and talented producers in the region. A recent article, describing this program, referenced the national movement to purchase products closer to home and the safety, flavor and environmental factors influencing this burgeoning market. Also, this value added and local products program is critical to diversifying our economic development matrix in the valley. But is there something more to this? I think so.....

Expedient growth in the Northwest Colorado region has revealed a notion that our character and sense of community is at risk. This inclination should remind all of us that we, members of this community, are responsible for preserving our identity, culture and values. A variety of avenues exist to help us in this effort; numerous museums and heritage centers, stunning historic preservation projects and cultural heritage tourism initiatives that promote authenticity and differentiating characteristics of all of our towns. And now we can add local, value added products.

Community is commonly known as, by definition, a body of persons having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests. Forget the common political interest part; today, the WEST is a fiercely independent thinking bunch. But the social and economic interests are the glue to preserving and enhancing the character and sense of community of the NW Colorado region. The NWCP community cycle: neighbors supporting neighbors that are producers, retailers supporting local producers and consumers supporting local producers, retailers and the economy.