USU Extension Sponsors Food Hub Exploration Workshop

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Utah State University Extension sponsors a workshop on the food hub business model December 7 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Salt Lake County Extension Office building.

According to Kynda Curtis, USU Extension agricultural marketing specialist, the workshop is designed to introduce and discuss the potential of a regional food hub to assist in the distribution and marketing of locally grown and produced foods. Growers and small food producers, as well as potential food buyers such as chefs, restaurants, schools, hospitals, specialty stores, caterers and tourism providers should attend.

Food hubs are innovative business models that connect producers with buyers by offering a suite of production, distribution and marketing services. Benefits associated with food hubs include increased consumer access to local food, expanded markets for local products, increased access to new buyers, increased producer income and reduced producer transportation and marketing costs. Buyer benefits include streamlined communication and ordering, access to locally grown products and marketing assistance.

Anthony Flaccavento, president of the consulting firm SCALE, will facilitate the workshop. SCALE focuses on designing and implementing sustainable economic development in communities nationwide. Flaccavento provides nearly 30 years of practical experience in this field.

Workshop topics focus on assessing the need, interest in and potential feasibility of a regional food hub; discussing food hub functions, priorities and potential for financial self-sufficiency; and providing a plan for food hub development such as next steps, resource and management needs. In addition to producers and buyers, educators, Extension, government and industry representatives are also encouraged to attend.

The registration fee of $50 includes all materials, as well as lunch and breaks. Online registration is available at http://foodhuborgworkshopslc.eventbrite.com.

For further information, contact Curtis at kynda.curtis@usu.edu or 435-797-0444.

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