

# MOBILE FARM WORKFORCE PILOT

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**YEAR 2 | NORTHERN FRONT RANGE**

**FINAL REPORT: OVERVIEW**

David Laskarzewski



2019



**Rocky Mountain  
Farmers Union**



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Greetings.

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted life as we know it across much—if not most—of the world and our day-to-day efforts at UpRoot are certainly not immune.

We are a grassroots still-budding organization, having received our 501(c)(3) status in March and resources to accomplish our work are sometimes very limited (i.e., we can't always get done what we'd like to as fast as we want to).

We owe you a report on the 2019 Mobile Farm Workforce (MFW) pilot project, a project that you have kindly and generously invested in and graciously supported. The MFW is a collaborative idea. Along with our colleagues at Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, the Good Food Collective and Veterans to Farmers, we've taken a notion off of the drawing board and have now put workboots on the ground for two harvest seasons to answer an important question: Can we viably support the agricultural labor needs of Colorado's farmers and ranchers with an on-demand and efficient mobile workforce?

The answer is yes, though we have much more work to do to realize our goal of a year-round agricultural services cooperative. For now, this very brief overview shares data from our work in 2019. The writing and editing of the full report is in progress and we will have it published for your review by mid-July.

In the meantime, we again appreciate your generosity and your patience.

*Dave*

# OVERVIEW



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The 2019 MFW pilot along the northern Front Range (NFR) spanned 13 weeks—from September through to Thanksgiving week—setting foot on seven farms across four counties with a roster of 26 workforce members, each of whom had at least one-year of either on-farm or outdoor (e.g., landscaping) work experience.

Budget constraints forced the 2019 pilot to operate without van transportation—leveraged in 2018 to pick up and drop off crew members from a central location—increasing time spent coordinating logistics to get workforce members to and from farms; the 2019 pilot did not include any veterans.

The NFR MFW pilot harvested approximately 125,000 pounds of commodity (i.e., cash) crops—with an estimated market value greater than \$350,000—including lettuce, carrots, beets, onions, potatoes, multiple varieties of squash, both decorative and pie pumpkins, and more than 10 acres of hemp.

The NFR MFW pilot also performed duties ranging from weeding to pulling drip tape and agricultural plastics, to the installation and removal of t-posts, to harvesting and tying decorative corn stalks, to bailing hay, to painting farm sheds and performing season-end field clean ups.

The workforce and its coordinator collectively contributed roughly 2,400 working hours over the 2019 pilot, travelling nearly 6,000 total miles.

# OVERVIEW



## Data points: 2019 MFW pilot | Northern Front Range

- 7 farms
- 4 counties
- 13 weeks (Sept - Nov)
- \$16/hr. cost to farmer per workforce member
- \$14/hr. rate paid to each workforce member\*
- \$22.50/hr. rate paid to coordinator via the budgets of RMFU and UpRoot Colorado (weekly hours > 37.5 were donated as in-kind)
- 1,538.61 hours worked (workforce only, cumulative)
- \$26,897.84 billable hours (workforce only, cumulative)
- ~125,000 lbs. of commodity (i.e., cash) crops harvested
- >\$350,000 in retail value
- Miles traveled: ~6,000 (workforce & coordinator, cumulative)
- Fuel costs: ~\$750.00 (workforce & coordinator, cumulative)
- Carbon offsets: 2,044 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>e
- Carbon offset cost: \$10.20
- Coordinator project hours, total: 818.50
- Coordinator project hours, in-kind: 342.75

\*Hemp harvesting/processing at The Golden Hoof paid workforce \$20/hr.

# OVERVIEW





## Participating farms and organizations

Acres Farm (Lakewood)  
Aspen Moon Farm (Hygiene)  
Cottonwood Farms (Lafayette)  
Kilt Farm (Longmont)  
New West Genetics (Ft. Collins)  
The Golden Hoof (Longmont)  
Zephyros Farm & Garden (Paonia)

## Workforce members

Annie Pevear	Malena I. Ordnung
Cameron Mohseni	Matthew Kinneberg
Carmen Lucero	Maya Velasco
Christina Jensen	Mica Button
David Laskarzewski (Coordinator)	Rachel Moheban
Ethan Shillington	Ryan Greycheck
Guillaume Keller	Valerie Peterson
Jason Ribble	William "Kipp" Nash
Jessi Burg (Pears to Perennials)	Zachary Kennison
Jessica Stensland	
Jorge Ortega	
Kailey Littlehorn	
Kaydee Snodgress	
Korey Littlehorn	
Landon Sheaffer	
Lasha Guillen	
Lexy Timmermans	
Maggie Brown	



