

# Scaling up Extension Services to Small Acreage Landowners and Managers in Colorado Through CSU-NRCS Partnership



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## OBJECTIVE

To establish strong, collaborative relations between CSU, USDA-NRCS and Conservation Districts to assist small acreage landowners and managers in making resource (land, vegetation, water, wildlife, soil, and recreation) science-based management decisions.

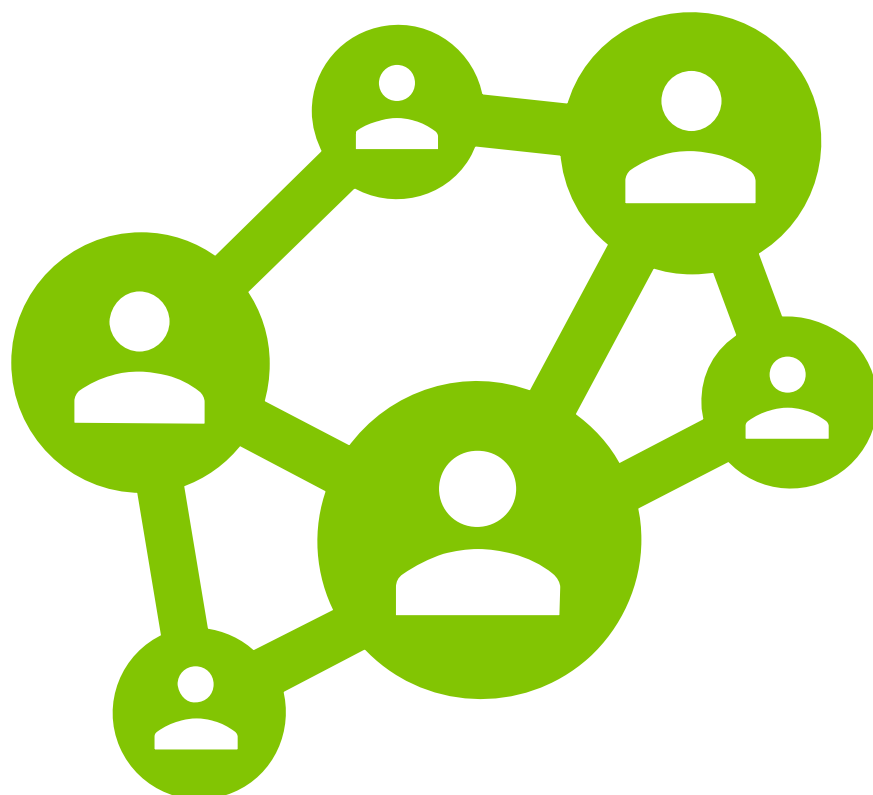
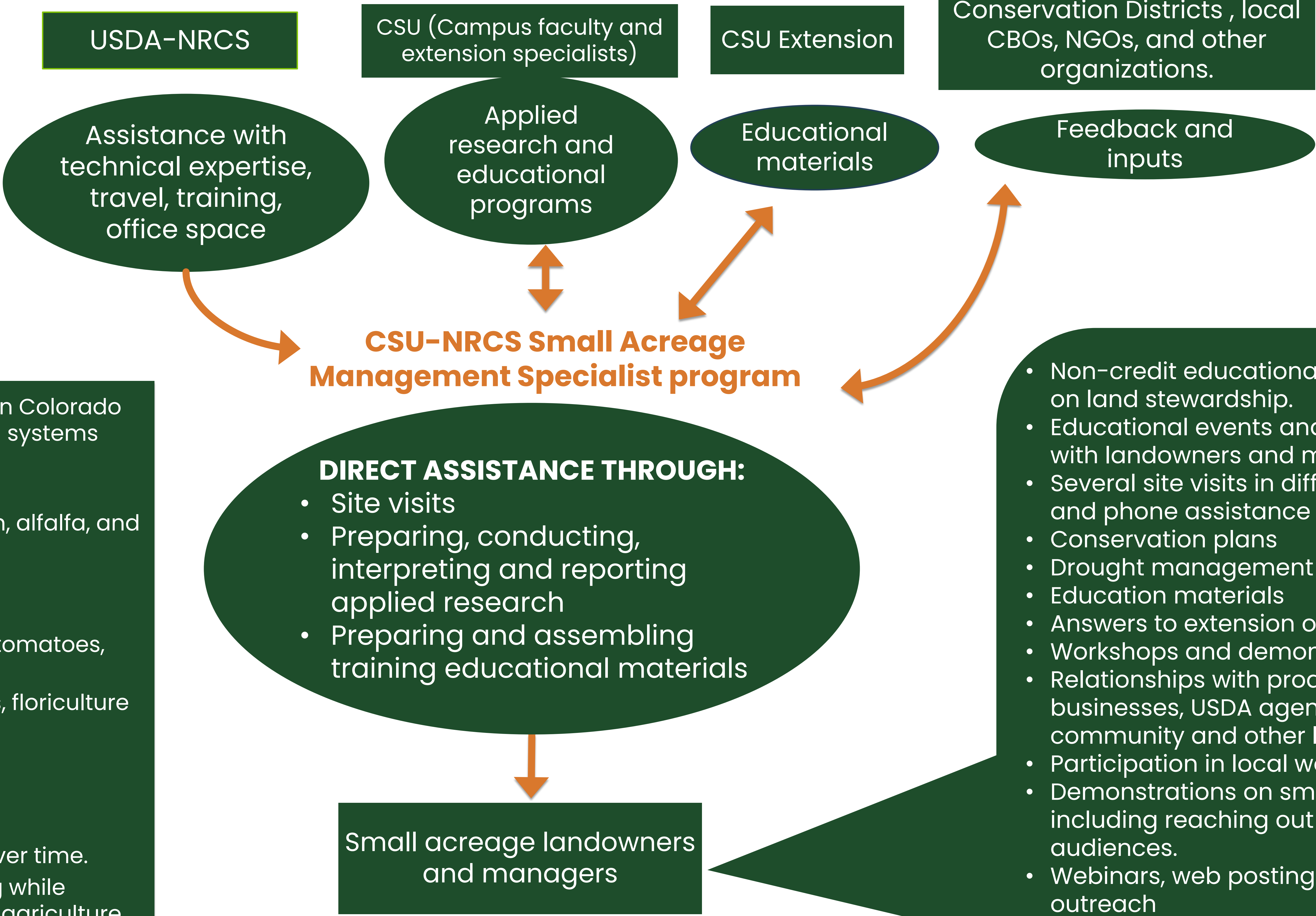
## BACKGROUND

Small acreage landowners and managers in Colorado are involved in a broad range of production systems including:

- Land stewardship
- Traditional agronomic crops such as corn, alfalfa, and sugar beets.
- Horse ownership
- Alternative livestock
- Commercial vegetables such as onions, tomatoes, lettuce, sweet corn, among others.
- Green industries producing nursery crops, floriculture and turf.
- Specialty crops.
- Homesteading

These producers have been underserved over time. The number of small acreages is increasing while managers typically have no background in agriculture. Colorado has a unique climate, land and natural resources regulations and limitations. Outreach and education is crucial for resource management of these operations.

## APPROACH, OUTCOMES AND IMPACT



### CSU-NRCS Small Acreage Management Specialist program

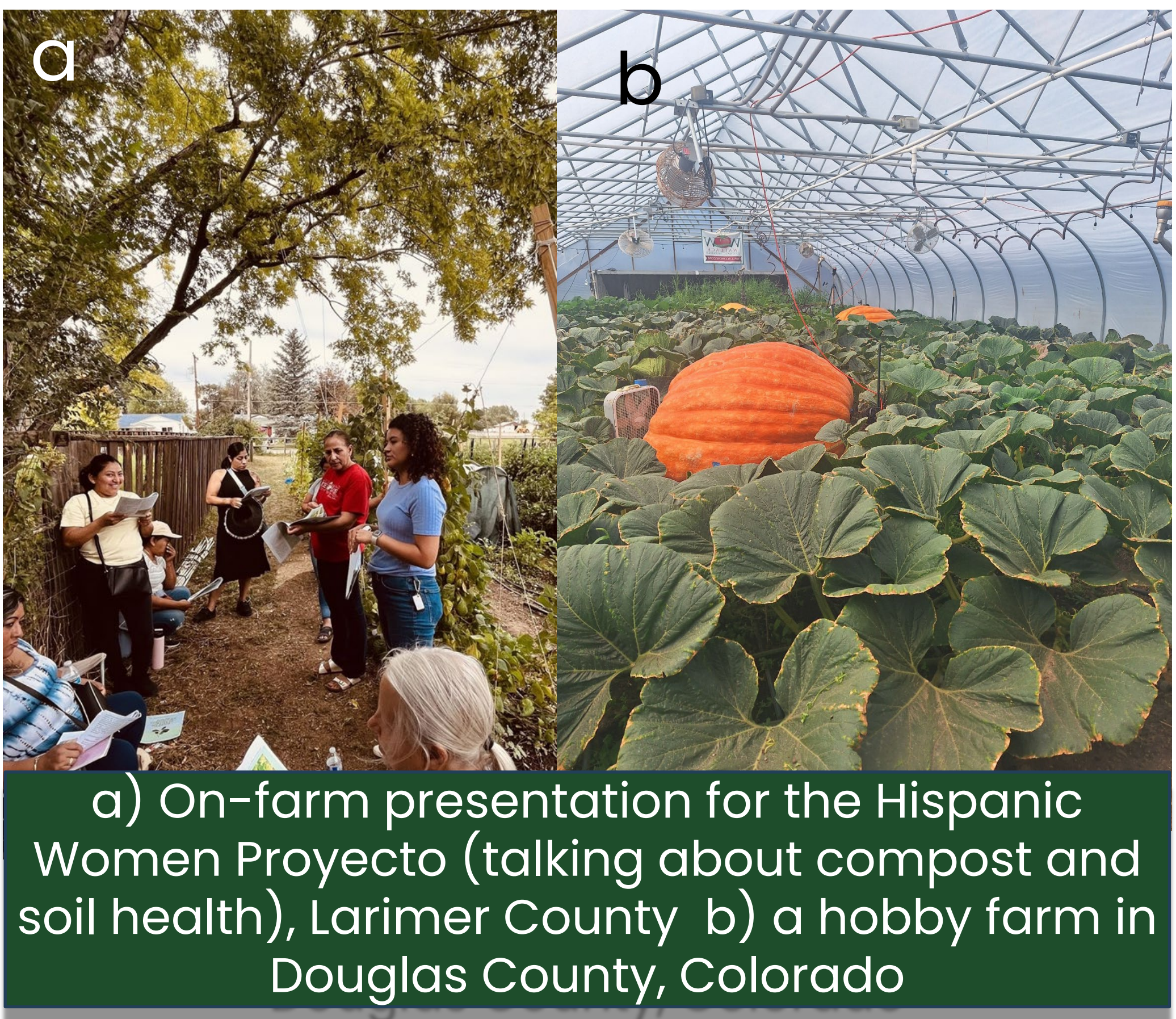
#### DIRECT ASSISTANCE THROUGH:

- Site visits
- Preparing, conducting, interpreting and reporting applied research
- Preparing and assembling training educational materials

Small acreage landowners and managers

- Non-credit educational programs focused on land stewardship.
- Educational events and individual meetings with landowners and managers
- Several site visits in different counties, email and phone assistance
- Conservation plans
- Drought management plans
- Education materials
- Answers to extension online questions
- Workshops and demonstrations
- Relationships with producers, agricultural businesses, USDA agency personnel, CDA, community and other local organizations.
- Participation in local work groups
- Demonstrations on small acreages including reaching out to underserved audiences.
- Webinars, web postings and media outreach
- Continually updated small acreage management webpage and database
- Feedback from small acreage landowners to create more educational content.

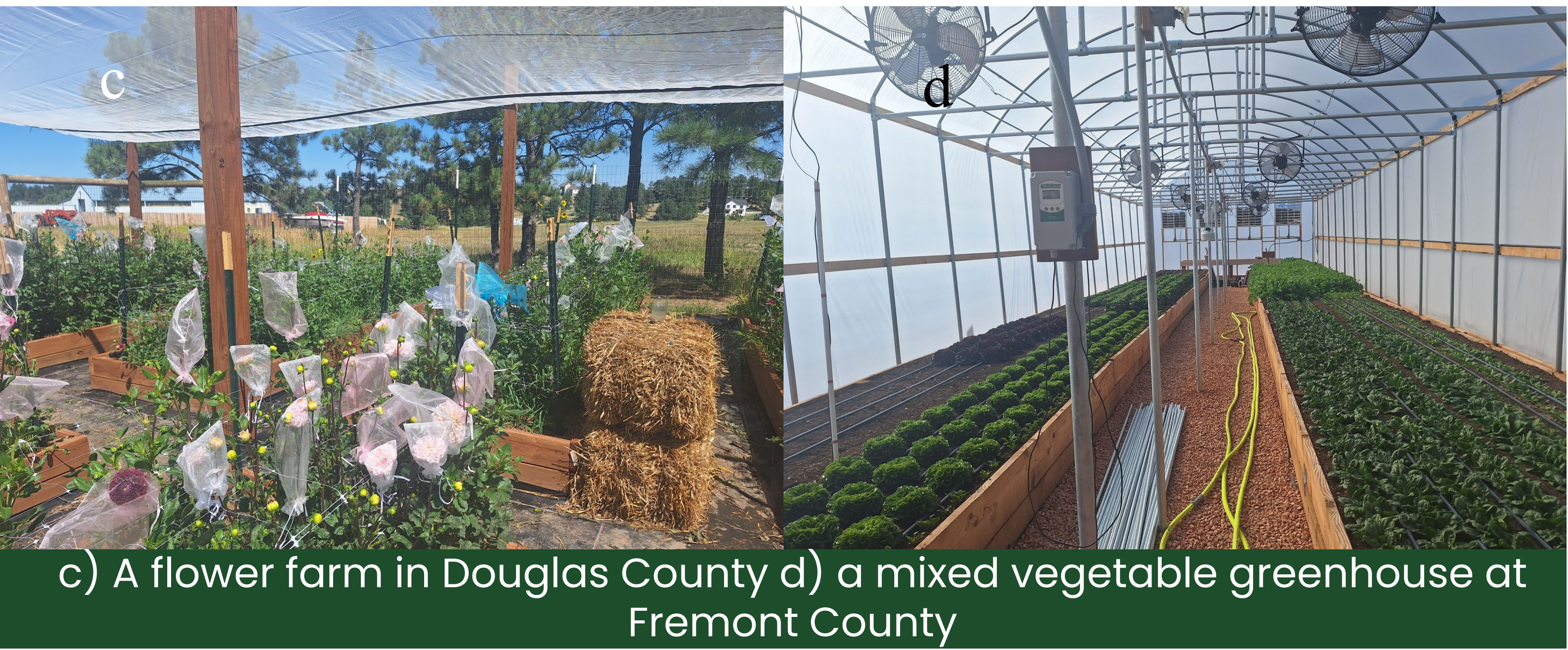
- Identify and implement “best practices” in resource conservation management.
- Develop resource planning tools and implement resource management practices.
- Accept and develop grazing and cropland resource conservation practices.
- Have access to the best small acreage practices and resources.
- Are aware of USDA-NRCS EQIP and other conservation practices.
- Develop sustainable and profitable enterprises.



a) On-farm presentation for the Hispanic Women Proyecto (talking about compost and soil health), Larimer County b) a hobby farm in Douglas County, Colorado

## PARTICIPANTS

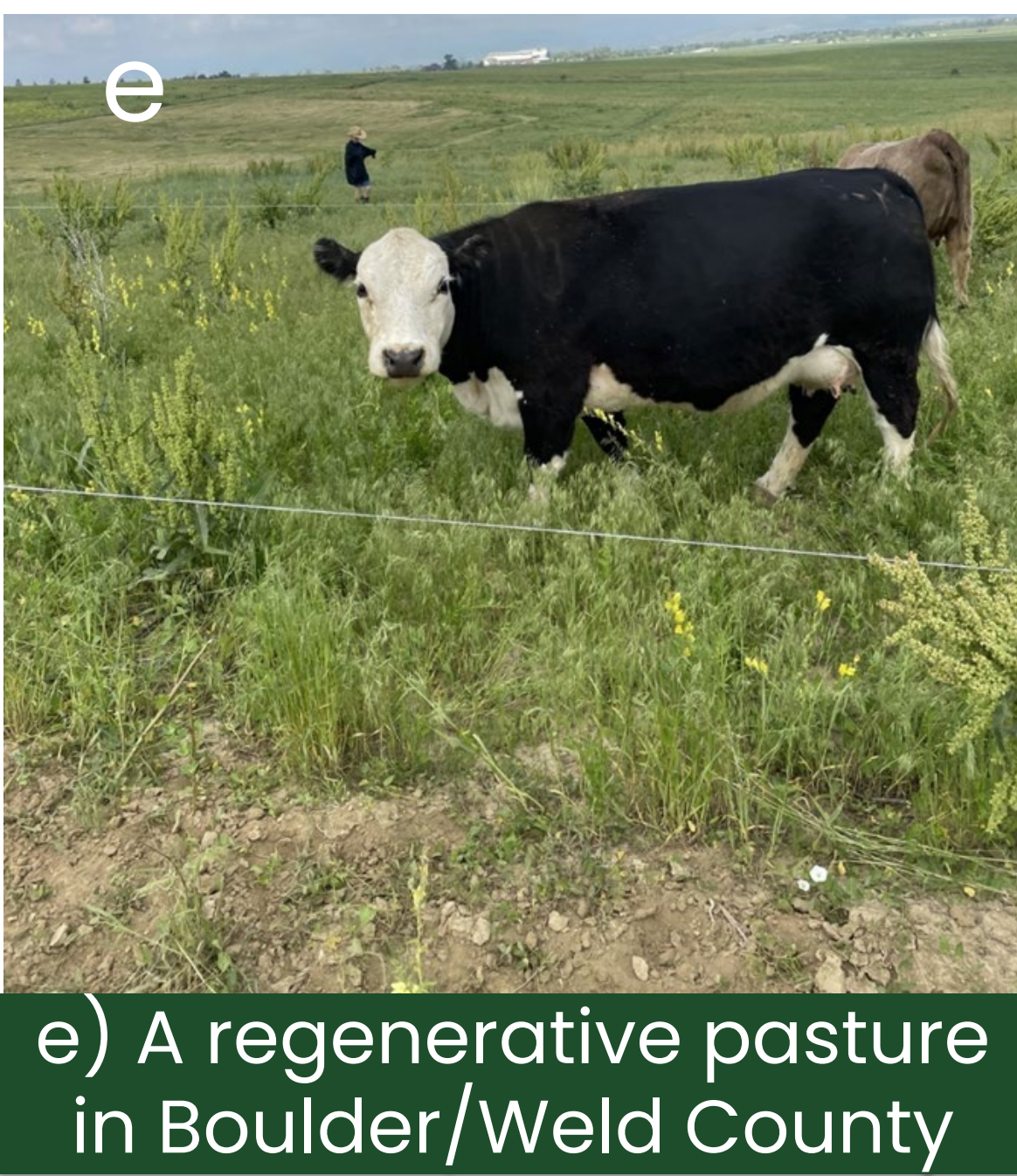
1. Colorado State University
2. Colorado USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
3. Local Conservation Districts



c) A flower farm in Douglas County d) a mixed vegetable greenhouse at Fremont County

## REFERENCES

Colorado State University 2022 County Needs Assessment Reports



e) A regenerative pasture in Boulder/Weld County



High tunnel inspection f) El Paso County, g) Teller County

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kerri Rollins, CSU Extension, Front Range Region Director