

For Immediate Release

New Concept Local Food Village Coming to Monument

Mike Callicrate, owner of Ranch Foods Direct and advocate for resilient, regional food supply chains, is making his long-time vision of a local food village a reality. Callicrate, along with a number of independent business owners in the Colorado region, have come together to build a collectively owned marketplace that will feature high quality, regionally sourced, and locally crafted food and drink providers.

The group is currently under contract for 8.3 acres of land in Monument, directly off of I-25 at Baptist road. When the village is up and running, consumers will enjoy steaks cut in-house, scratch-made tacos, bread straight from the oven, fresh fermented ciders, mushrooms grown on-site, locally sourced fruits, veggies, and artisanal cheese among many other products. But the best part is that consumers will know the ingredient sources of the food and drink they are purchasing, making it easy and entertaining to make healthy choices.

“It’s about transparency and creating an alternative for farmers and ranchers who struggle to make a profit in the current corporate-controlled food system,” said Callicrate, adding that “Farmers and ranchers need a higher percentage of the consumer dollar for sustainable operations.”

There are other benefits from the concept of “closer” sourcing that are also significant such as reducing spoilage and the need for adding significant preservatives for food traveling from far-away locations. Beyond this, the cost of bringing those goods from far off regions only adds to the costs that consumers have to pay. “There’s simply no doubt that keeping things regional/local sharply reduces transportation costs and keeps food on the shelves. And there’s no need for the heavy preservatives typically used in food transported halfway around the world,” said Callicrate. “We’re bringing freshness and resiliency back to the food supply chain by providing regional farmers with more direct access to consumers, and we’re making it fun and educational. We’ve already seen excitement from community members and town officials who see this as an opportunity to build community around food and drink in a way that really aligns with their values.”

Hungry customers won’t be the only ones who benefit from access to fresh, locally grown and crafted food and drinks. The independent businesses housed in the food village will own their own retail and production facilities instead of renting, building their own equity and keeping dollars local. Shared cold/dry storage and marketing, along with the synergy of shared customers and ingredients reduces costs for business owners, allowing them to focus their energy and capital on providing the best offerings possible, while allowing them to give farmers their fair share.

Marvin Boyd, the project’s real-estate development partner shared “To my knowledge, this concept has never been created before. We’re going to prove that our food village can provide

tremendous financial opportunity for farmers and business owners, while giving consumers the healthy, honest choices they're craving. The synergy that will come from all of these talented entrepreneurs co-locating is going to be powerful."

Business owners are still being recruited to round out the food village's offerings. The most recent member to join the team is Sawatch Artisan Foods, a milk and artisan cheese manufacturer who envisions aging cheese in the food village's basement before making it available to customers above. To make this concept a reality, the group is seeking innovative social financing and investments to accelerate the project. An incubator kitchen and an office that would invest in the replication of this food village would support this concept's potential to transform the food system in Colorado and beyond.

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