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## **Veterans to Farmers Blossoming Partnerships in Denver**

### **For Immediate Release**

(Denver, Colo.) A partnership that offers veterans three agriculture-based certificate programs, designed to help them assimilate effectively while exploring urban farming has developed in Denver. Veterans to Farmers (VTF) recently announced its expanded partnership with Colorado State University Extension and Denver Botanic Gardens-Chatfield Farms.



“The graduates from the farming program can make a significant impact either growing food for their family or their communities,” says Rusty Collins, director of the CSU Extension office in Denver. “This helps create a more locally-sustained food environment.” Encouraging urban farming and local food production will help Denver as it strives to reach aggressive food goals for the Denver 2030 Food Vision. The collaboration between CSU Extension and VTF has built a strong partnership. The groups are looking forward to the graduation ceremony for the class participants.

The Veterans to Farmers organization is a national leader in the way they work with veterans and the opportunities that are provided for agriculture and small-scale farming. Collins notes that colleagues in cities across the country who have heard about the Denver VTF program always want to know more. This expanded partnership includes three agriculture-based certificate programs to choose from: CSU's Colorado Building Farmers Program, Denver Botanic Garden's-Community Serving Agriculture (CSA) Program and the Veterans to Farmers-Controlled-Environment Agriculture (CEA) Program. Through these partnerships, veterans who finish the 10-week VTF training programs will now receive certificates stamped with CSU Extension's seal of approval.

"These certificates greatly validate our work and dedication to making sure that the veterans going through our courses are receiving an education in farming skills," says Buck Adams, founder of VTF. The program helps veterans assimilate effectively, productively and permanently into private life by training them in agriculture that leads to urban farming and/or business ownership. CSU Extension's program is both an online and hands-on course that teaches veterans about controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) and small-scale vegetable production. The Denver Botanic Gardens also provides VTF with a six-acre site at its Chatfield Farms location for outdoor-gardening training.

Denver Botanic Gardens CEO, Brian Vogt, echoed Collins' enthusiasm about the three-way partnership. "The Gardens is proud to add another component to a decades-long collaboration with CSU," says Vogt. "Our work with VTF is an important link between the veteran community and the food deserts the Gardens serves through the Denver area." "Our partnership began when CSU first offered the CEA class, which was made possible through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program," added Adams. "It has now expanded into three classes and has welcomed DBG into the partnership. We are the only veteran program that has three certified state university programs in the nation."

The competitive grant program requires a partnership between a public and private entity and funds education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives directed at helping beginning farmers and ranchers of all types.

A graduation ceremony for veterans who will have just recently completed the course will be held in conjunction with **VTF's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Harvest Moon Barn**

**Party.** This fundraising event will be held at Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms, on October 22 from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. There will be a silent auction, local hand-crafted hors d'oeuvres and beer. Tickets prices are \$10 for veterans, \$15 for singles, and \$25 for couples. More information



on the event and tickets can be purchased at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/veterans-to-farmers-2nd-annual-harvest-moon-barn-party-tickets-27319165359>

*Veteran to Farmers' mission is to provide American veterans with pride, education and fulfillment through a permanent source of sustainable income, community, and contribution.*

More information on Veterans to Farmers can be found at: <http://veteranstofarmers.org>

More information on CSU's curriculum can be found at: <http://buildingfarmers.com>

More information on Denver Botanic Gardens veterans program can be found at [www.botanicgardens.org/outreach/chatfield-veterans-farm-program](http://www.botanicgardens.org/outreach/chatfield-veterans-farm-program)

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