**Action Team – Interview and Data Collection Form**

**Action Team Member:** Dan Waldvogle

**How Might We:**   Provide educational support for the continued legacy of agriculture.  Specifically to highlight the services that Guidestone Colorado provides.

**Data Source:**

Name:   Guidestone Colorado

Contact: Phone 719 239 0955

Email info@guidestonecolorado.org

Add Contact to Envision Contacts?    Y

[www.guidestonecolorado.org](http://www.guidestonecolorado.org/)

**Insights:**

#### Guidestone Colorado is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that is growing a vibrant agricultural future through education, community building, and partnerships.

Guidestone Colorado’s Board of Directors and staff have completed our 2016-2018 strategic plan focusing on the following overarching goals:

1. Cultivate opportunities and experiences to increase agricultural awareness, connection, literacy (knowledge and skills development), and heritage preservation
2. Build the capacity of new producers and local food systems
3. Ensure organizational strength and sustainability

The organization’s strategies and programming are founded upon the belief that if individuals are exposed to experiences on local farms and ranches, that exposure results in a growing appreciation for where our food comes from and the commitment and resources needed to produce food locally. As a result of that appreciation, those individuals will then make choices that support and increase the capacity of the local food system. The result of these choices will be resilient local food systems, healthier communities, and a vibrant future for local agriculture.

Guidestone’s programmatic approach provides services to farmers, educators, youth, and community members through four cornerstone programs:

**The Farm to School Initiative** provides strategic support for school districts to ensure students have access to healthy, locally grown food in their school meal programs. We help build school gardens and integrate garden-based and classroom learning experiences with curriculum correlated to state education standards.

**Farmhands Education Programs** build a community of learning, sharing, and celebration. Our summer camps, workshops, field trips and special events provide youth and adults with the opportunity to “dig in”, learning about the art and science of grown food and the importance of supporting local farms and ranches.

**The Hutchinson Homestead and Learning Center** is a dynamic heritage site dating back to the 1860’s where today, history and preservation bring the story of the land and community to life through interpretive education programs, celebrations and events. Guidestone Colorado operates and manages this learning center with the vision of bridging our past to the future of agriculture in the Upper Arkansas River Valley.

**Colorado Land Link** – In a time where fewer than 2% of Americans now grow food for a living- coupled with a retiring generation of farmers and ranchers- Colorado Land Link is developing creative solutions to overcome this crisis by connecting the next generation of farmers and ranchers to land opportunities and resources needed to launch a successful agricultural business. Our referral and resource center connects land-seekers and landowners and provides access to a network of tools, resources, and technical services for the next generation of farmers.  Colorado Land Link serves as a catalyst for convening conversations and resource development around the issues of land access and farm succession.  Through fostering meaningful and long-lasting connections, we strive to support the vision and goals of the next generation of farmers and ranchers together with those of current or retiring producers and landowners.

As part of these efforts, Colorado Land Link maintains a database to support potential matches between farmers and ranchers seeking land opportunities with landowners and retiring producers wanting to transitioning their land. We seek to find match opportunities that show strong potential and a shared agricultural vision between both parties.

In addition to this matching service, Land Link serves as a resource clearinghouse for educational and training opportunities, technical resources and networking for technical assistance and support.

The success of Colorado Land Link is not based solely on how many matches we make, but also on how many farmers and ranchers benefit from the tools and resources we provide along the way.

Working regionally across the state, Colorado Land Link supports:

* Beginning farmers and ranchers looking to enter agriculture
* Prospective farmers and ranchers seeking land access and farm opportunities
* Non-farming landowners seeking farmers
* Retiring farmers and ranchers looking to develop farm succession and transfer plans

Land Link serves as a referral and resource center providing tools and services that include:

* Visioning Courses & Assessment Tools for Next Generation Farmers and Ranchers
* Online Database of Landseekers and Landowners
* Technical Resources
* Scaling Up Workshops
* Farm Succession Support Services

**Any reports or maps or web links the team should read/review?**

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