

Boulder County

Parks and Open Space Department



BOCC Meeting
March 17, 2016

Cropland Policy Vision: to be a national leader in sustainable agriculture

Agricultural Resources

Agriculture Land

- 25,000 ac leased land
- 16,000 ac cropland

Water rights

- 90 ditches
- 13 reservoirs



Agricultural Resources

- 116 Leases
- 65 Farmers & Ranchers
- Organic: 17 Leases to 10 Tenants



BCPOS Ag Program

- Rent revenue invested into properties
- Leveraged with grants & partnerships

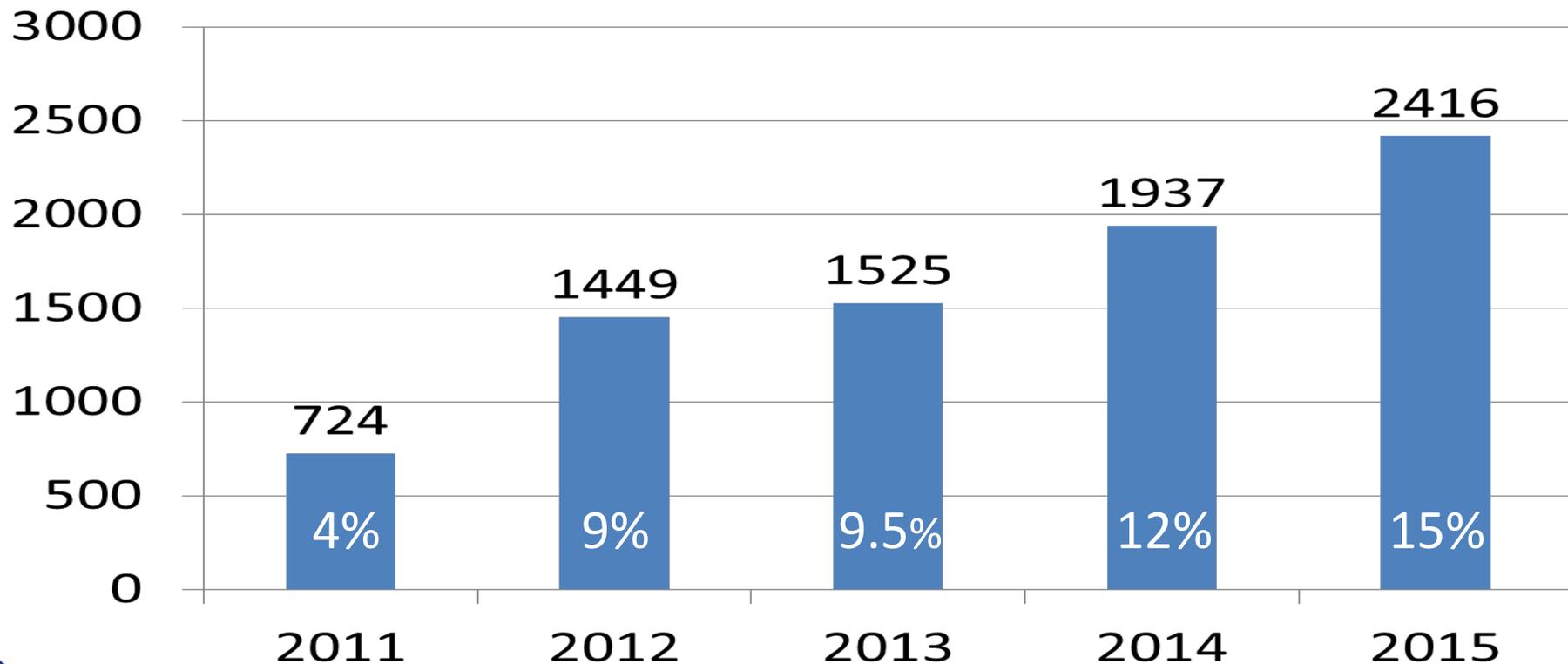


BCPOS Ag Program

- Soil and Water Conservation Plans with NRCS



Certified and Transitioning Organic Acres



Organic Incentives

Organic Preference
in bid process

50% rent reduction
first 5 years

Organic
Certification cost
assistance

Share cost of
organic
crop/marketing
consultant

Infrastructure
Improvements

Organic weed
team available



Organic Investments

- Organic farming workshops
- Building Farmers Program
- \$830,000 investments



Agricultural Water Quality

- 2015: initial year of implementation, tested nutrients, pesticides, sediment and bacteria
- 2016: expand locations and pesticides including neonicotinoids



Pollinator Protection

- Facilitate coordination between POS tenants & Beekeepers
- Introduced and implemented *Fieldwatch*
- Incorporate pollinator protection awareness into IPM program



Pollinator Protection

- Pollinator Action Team: POS & Extension staff
- CU Researchers study “Agricultural practices on BCPOS: Implications for bee conservation”



Pollinator Protection

- Establish pollinator habitat, 2011 & ongoing
- Native pollinator volunteer monitoring program, 2014 & ongoing
- Future: Local honey bee health monitoring, access to ag land for beekeepers to keep hives



Local Food Initiatives

- Double SNAP at area Farmer's Markets
 - “Harvest Bucks”
 - SNAP reimbursements at BCFM markets increased 176.5% in 2015



Local Food Initiatives

- Locally Grown Pinto Beans
- Fairgrounds Kitchen/
Food Preservation Center
- Local Food Groups
- County Meat Marketing
Cooperative



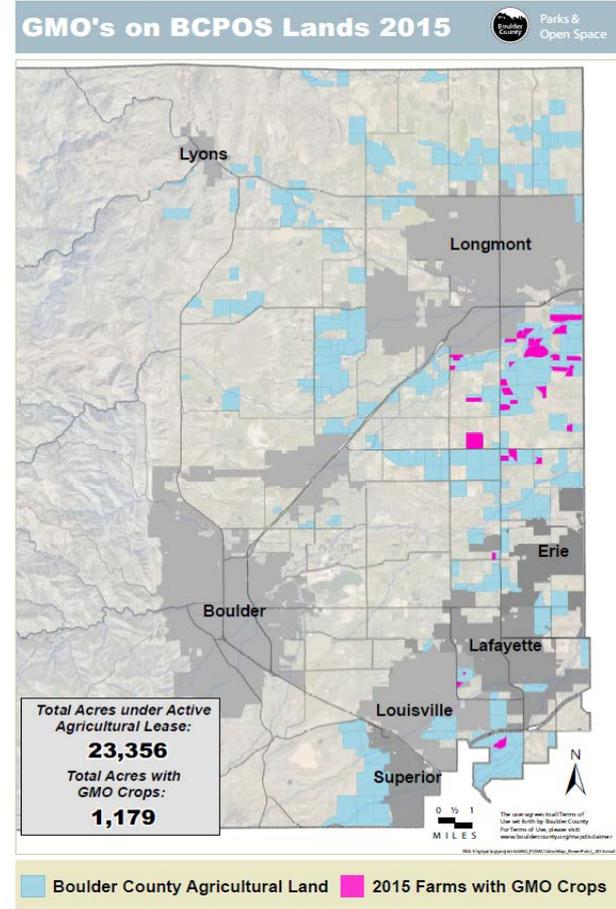
Integrated Pest Management

- 2011: **Pesticide application data** collection, ongoing
- 2012-2013: **Tenant survey** documenting pest management practices, developed with input from CSU faculty, Extension, crop consultant
- 2012-2013: Employ **EIQ**, a method to measure the environmental impact of pesticides
- 2014: **IPM checklists** completed for alfalfa, barley, corn, wheat, and sugarbeets
- 2015: **IPM checklists** completed for irrigated pasture, grass hay and dryland pasture



GE Crops

- 9 Farmers
- 1,179 total GE acres in 2015
- 8% of cropland
- 5% of leased land



Genetic Engineered Crops on BCPOS

2011

beets

0

corn

2,307

2012

beets

494

corn

1,875

2013

beets

432

corn

1,313

2014

beets

286

corn

1,227

2015

beets

135

corn

1,044



POSAC Action 3-15-16

- Recommendation to continue approval of GE crops as set forth in Cropland Policy, 5-3 vote
- Unanimous support for more rigorous data collection
- Unanimous recommendation to fund more research on cropping systems in Boulder County



Action Requested

- Discussion and guidance on the role of genetically engineered crops on the County's open space agricultural lands

