



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**



## StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

# COLORADO

[www.usda.gov/strikeforce](http://www.usda.gov/strikeforce)

### Colorado Fast Facts - 2015

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| State's Child Poverty Rate:     | 17.3%         |
| State's Overall Poverty Rate:   | 12%           |
| StrikeForce State Since:        | 2012          |
| Number of StrikeForce Counties: | 31            |
| Total Outreach Events:          | 356           |
| Number of Community Partners:   | 76            |
| Total USDA Projects:            | 2,258         |
| Total USDA Investments:         | \$562 million |

### Contacts

Contact us to be a partner, or to learn more about StrikeForce opportunities:

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### Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners

Adams State University  
Colorado Acequia Association  
Colorado Cattle Women Inc.  
Colorado Foundation for Agriculture  
Colorado Farm Bureau  
Colorado Farmers Union  
Colorado State University Extension Service  
Food Bank of the Rockies  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Hunger Free Colorado

Currently, 85 percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation's future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

### StrikeForce At Work

#### Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Benefits From Collaboration with USDA

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in the Four Corners Region has found that by weaving USDA programs together with their long term strategic goals, the Ute Mountain Ute people can improve the lives of all of its citizens. Their Farm and Ranch Enterprise has successfully worked with the NRCS EQIP program for many years to develop and refine an irrigation system of over 100 center pivots which supports 7700+ acres of corn and alfalfa.

In a desire to add value to their award-winning corn and keep jobs on the reservation, a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) helped to lay the foundation to produce Bow & Arrow Brand corn meal and support the launching of a \$4 million state of the art grain mill. The mill produces six different corn meal products that are sold in five neighboring states with the potential to produce enough product to meet supply contracts currently under negotiation with several major grocery chains, including to a local tortilla chip producer that has also benefited from RD assistance.

Other recent USDA Rural Development projects include a RBEG grant to provide technical assistance needed to expand transit services for tribal members and a RCDI \$250,000 grant for Economic Development training & education. The Economic Development Grant will support leadership training for the youth, targeted financial strategy training and the development of a "Master Plan" for all Ute Mountain Ute communities (CO, UT and NM). Following extensive technical assistance, a \$10 million water project is about to be launched. The three-year effort will upgrade water infrastructure and waste water management for both the White Mesa, UT and Towaoc, CO communities.



