RESILIENT RESTAURANTS of Colorado

Our Food Ecosystem Vision
To build a community resource and industry working group that engages members throughout the food ecosystem, delivers measurable outcomes that achieve our mission, and informs consumers to where we have facilitated real, long-term and systemic change towards a resilient, equitable and healthy food service industry.

RESILIENT RESTAURANTS of Colorado members believe the roadmap to a resilient food service industry is one that illustrates and accounts for the complex, interconnected processes involved in creating any dining out experience. We organize our work into three pillars: Economic Prosperity, Ecological Sustainability and Equitable Community.

Our Statement of Purpose
Accelerate the resilience of Colorado’s food service industry while improving the standards and performance of our restaurants, the lives of our employees and everyone in our food ecosystem.

We advocate for National, State and Municipal legislation and community programs to protect and support regenerative businesses so they can operate competitively while we transition to a RESILIENT Industry.

We Stand at the Edge of a Creative Response
We recognize the growing shared vision to embrace new standards that establish a sustainable, equitable and resilient food service industry. Chefs, farmers, restaurateurs, employees and customers around the globe are organizing their efforts to adopt better policies and practices. We can see a committed, regenerative response in almost every aspect of the Colorado food chain and service ecosystem. From the local, organic farm-to-table to new financial models that alleviate the front-of-house back-of-house inequity and food recovery programs that deliver tens-of-millions of servings to those in need, the potential for restaurants to significantly impact our food supply and community well-being is massive.

The Challenges We Face
Fundamental changes are needed to address systemic deficiencies in our food service industry and the myriad of economic, public health and human rights issues that are interconnected with restaurants.

The dominant patterns in food production and food service disrupts our understanding of the real-world cost of providing a served meal and the expectations customers have about paying for it. Conventional supply chains and methods of increasing consumer demand impede an essential service we should be delivering, providing communities with natural, nutritious, ethically sourced, prepared and served foods that are affordable and accessible to everyone.
Restaurants operate in an economic model built from pre- and Industrial Era standards where food was scarce, significantly lower in quality, and employment standards were largely unregulated. The industry settled on a model that mandates customers compensate half of its employees for them, and where they are generally not expected to provide equitable employment conditions, benefits or growth opportunities for women and people of color. Today, our workers have different lifestyles, values and needs than ever before. We need an environment where professional, skilled, loyal and invested employees are the majority of our workforce and a culture of service, respect and joy can be appreciated and encouraged.

There are many paths to a resilient restaurant industry; an educational journey each business will have to make for itself, but not alone.

Organizational Objectives of the Charter
Each business owner is responsible and accountable for the operations of their own business. Our community intentionally shares information, best practices and resources to enable each restaurateur to make the best possible choices for their business. Our community is built on integrity and transparency.

To act as a community resource working group focused on:

- Business model and case study analysis that offers restaurateurs cutting-edge options for taking action
- Implementing RAISE workforce best practices in Colorado; fair wages, better benefits, racial equity, gender equity and professionalism. Leadership skills training to foster a skilled, stabilized workforce.
- Providing resources for how to operate food establishments with ecological integrity; waste, water and oil handling, operational efficiencies and a pathway to carbon neutrality

Signing and adopting the RESILIENT RESTAURANTS Charter is an intentional commitment to promote our Mission and implement as many best practices as possible, as quickly as you are able.

Guiding Principles
Once our Membership is able to convene after the intense Covid-19 recovery timeframe, we will begin drafting a detailed list of Guiding Principles that capture the essence of a RESILIENT model.