

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2001 – June 2002



*Governor Bill Owens
Commissioner of Agriculture Don Ament
Deputy Commissioner Robert G. McLavey*

Colorado Agriculture

- Colorado agriculture provides not only food but also ingredients for products in other industries such as x-ray film, bandages, crayons, piano keys, footballs, hydraulic brake fluid and perfume.
- Nearly 29,000 farms and ranches cover nearly half the state, on 31.8 million acres. Colorado agriculture helps feed the nation, provides wildlife habitat, protects the environment and fuels the state economy.
- More than 105,000 jobs, 4.4 percent of the state's total, are provided by agribusiness, which generates nearly \$16 billion for Colorado's economy.
- Agriculture cash receipts are more than \$4.8 billion, with 67 percent credited to livestock. Colorado farmers and ranchers exported more than \$869 million in goods and services in 2001. Japan, Mexico, Canada and the European Union receive the largest share of Colorado food products.
- Our top farm and ranch products, in terms of production, are cattle and calves; corn; wheat; dairy products; hay, greenhouse/nursery; hogs and pigs, poultry and eggs, potatoes, and sheep and lambs.

Our Mission

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is committed to strengthening agriculture's future; providing consumer protection; promoting environmental quality and animal health; and ensuring equity and integrity in business and government.

Our Organization

The Colorado Department of Agriculture serves the state through seven divisions: Animal Industry, Brand Inspection, Colorado State Fair, Inspection and Consumer Services, Markets, Plant Industry and Conservation Board. In addition, the Department administers five independent authorities.

- **The Colorado State Fair Authority** directs and supervises the Colorado State Fair. Eleven members govern the authority, 10 of which are appointed by the Governor with consent of the Senate. The Commissioner of Agriculture, or his or her designee, is the eleventh member.
- **The Colorado Horse Development Authority**, representing a variety of horse interests and breeds, works to promote the horse industry and educate people on the health care and welfare of horses. The horse authority is governed by 14 members, all appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture.
- **The Colorado Wine Industry Development Board** researches grape and wine production, and promotes Colorado wines in Colorado and across the United States. The wine board is governed by 10 board members, all appointed by the Governor.
- **The Colorado Agricultural Development Authority (CADA)** encourages the investment of private capital in the agricultural sector through the use of public financing in order to make low-interest loans available to agricultural producers for specific uses. Seven board members govern CADA: three appointed by the president of the state Senate, three by the Speaker of the House, and one by the Governor. The Commissioner of Agriculture also serves on the board as a non-voting member.
- **The Colorado Aquaculture Board** provides input on the promotion and development of the aquaculture industry. Seven members including producers, representatives from the Colorado Division of Wildlife, representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and representatives from the Colorado Department of Agriculture serve on this board.

Office of Commissioner Don Ament

Robert G. McLavey, Deputy Commissioner

Jenifer Gurr, Executive Assistant

As primary spokesperson for Colorado agriculture, the Commissioner discusses issues facing the industry and works with organizations on various topics of concern. He is a member of boards and commissions, such as the Water Conservation Board and the Wildlife Commission, since many of their activities have an impact on agriculture. The Commissioner also speaks to a number of interests outside of agriculture to improve their awareness of agriculture and rural issues. Town meetings were held in Canon City and Lamar. The Deputy Commissioner provides the day-to-day administration and serves as the Department's Legislative Liaison.

Platte River Governance Committee

This Committee was convened in 1997 to address upstream impacts on four endangered threatened species in the lower South Platte ecosystem. As Colorado's representative in this three-state agreement, the Commissioner continues to work towards compromises with Nebraska, Wyoming and the U.S. Department of Interior on the protection of endangered or threatened species while maintaining beneficial use of the river.

Endangered Species Act

Because two-thirds of Colorado's land mass is privately owned and is home to much of the state's wildlife population, farmers and ranchers are concerned about improper or indiscriminate use of the Endangered Species Act. Of particular concern this year was the black-tailed prairie dog, so the Department participated in the ongoing development of state management plans. Recent data indicate that the state has more than 600,000 acres of active black-tailed prairie dog habitat.

Governor's Chronic Wasting Disease Task Force

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurological disease found in deer and elk in eight states. In Colorado, the disease has been found in wild as well as captive animals. On April 9, 2002, following the discovery of CWD on the Western Slope in Routt County, the Governor created the "Governor's Task Force on Chronic Wasting Disease." Commissioner Ament co-chaired the task force, and its mission was to provide recommendations on the state's efforts to manage CWD in wild and domestic cervid populations within six months. The Task Force will issue its recommendation in October.

Drought

This year's drought had severe impacts on agriculture; it is thought to be the worst drought in this region since the 15th Century. The current drought situation, the availability and value of agricultural water, and the farm economy are causing a shift of both land and water to uses other than agriculture. The Department worked with federal agencies for statewide disaster designations, CRP grazing and passage of the Farm Bill. On a state level, the passage of HB02S-1010 during the special session defers taxes on livestock sold due to the drought. It is imperative that we continue to work on improving the states' water storage. Losing agricultural land and water to other uses will result in a major overall impact to the state's economy.

Colorado Agricultural Commission

Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate to four-year terms, a Democrat and a Republican represent each of the four agricultural districts. Commission members are Bob Briggs, Steve Ela, Max Harper, Penny Lewis, Glen Murray, Brad Rock (chair), John Salazar, Kelly Spitzer (vice chair), and Dan Webster. Activities included the approval of changes to rules and regulations, the appointment of members to various boards, and approval of distribution of payments from the diseased animal livestock fund. All open to the public, nine meetings were held this fiscal year, four of which were teleconferences. In August, a meeting was held in conjunction with the Colorado Livestock Association annual convention. In November members of the Commission traveled to Lamar. They toured Colorado mills to see the processing of sunflower oil; Swanson Hog Farms to look at a methane digester; and the Lamar Community College. Also, they attended meetings with the Water Quality Control Commission and the Wheat Committee and participated in a Town Hall meeting.

Administrative Services

Patricia Farnes, Controller

The Section continues to provide accounting, purchasing, cashier services, payroll, contracts, state vehicle services, facilities/space/maintenance/project planning, and administration, and business support services to each division, the public and department clients. The Section will continue to work with and train staff in accounting rules and procedures in addition to meeting fiscal deadlines and providing timely information as requested by the Governor's Office (OSPB), Joint Budget Committee and State Controller.

Budget

Jon Reitan, Analyst

FY 2002 Actual Expenditures:

	Office Commissioner	of Agriculture Services	Markets Division	Brand Board	Special Purpose	Colorado State Fair	Soil Conservation Board	Department Totals
General Fund	2,046,856	6,391,488				155,720	1,445,154	10,039,217
Cash Fund CF	595,401	4,235,474	54,070	3,566,014	611,003	7,982,151	69,697	17,113,810
Cash Fund Exempt CFE	489,450	290,000	710,667					1,490,117
Federal Funds FF	2,502,552*	394,680					335,945	3,233,177
Division Total	5,634,259	11,311,642	764,737	3,566,014	611,003	8,137,871	1,850,796	31,876,322

* The Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) donated \$1.5 million through a five-year grant to develop a Specialty Crops Center at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colo. The USDA provided every state grant funds based on the state's farm gate sales of specialty crops.

Approximately 300 employees provide more than 300 different regulatory, inspection, marketing, consumer protection and other services across Colorado with .25 percent of the state's operating budget.

Anticipating significant budget cuts in the department's General Fund appropriation for FY 03, due to statewide revenue shortfalls, the Department is currently planning on roughly a 10 percent GF budget reduction for FY 03, which equates to a \$1million GF budget reduction. The Department will work closely with the Governor's Office and Legislature to accommodate budget cuts with the least impact to statewide services.

FY 2003 Estimated Expenditures with special bills and **before** budget cuts:

	Office Commissioner	of Agriculture Services	Markets Division	Brand Board	Special Purpose	Colorado State Fair	Soil Conservation Board	Department Totals
General Fund	2,465,300	6,580,912	54,250				1,517,861	10,618,322
Cash Fund CF	604,583	4,911,497	75,337	3,854,631	469,367	8,162,877	79,024	18,157,318
Cash Fund Exempt CFE	526,851	77,616	788,428		34,650		13,676	1,441,221
Federal Funds FF	253,359	265,407					500,000	1,018,766
Division Total	3,850,093	11,835,432	918,015	3,854,631	504,017	8,162,877	2,110,561	31,235,627

Human Resources

Marilyn Stolpa, Director

Our mission is to provide a full range of services to all customers to ensure that the Department hires and retains high quality as well as satisfied employees. Administration areas include recruitment and selection, job evaluation, benefits, leave, retirements, data input in the state employee database, workers' compensation, short term disability, risk management, and employee and management consultation.

Twelve vacant positions were filled along with temporary ones to provide seasonal assistance for brand inspection, fruit and vegetable inspection, State Fair and other programs. The office coordinated the first year of pay for performance; no formal requests for dispute resolution were received from employees. The liaison committee meetings are held bimonthly to foster problem solving and information sharing throughout the Department. Work site ergonomic evaluations are performed to prevent possible work related injuries.

Information Technology

John Picanso, Director

The Information Technology (IT) Section remains committed to the Governor's initiative to better position state government for the digital age, making it more responsive to rapidly changing situations. To this end, our goals include the following:

- Using innovative technology solutions to better and more quickly meet the needs of an agricultural industry that is facing ongoing and unprecedented challenges;
- Improving access to and interaction with state government;
- Increasing information sharing and collaboration within state government and with national government in response to critical security and other issues; and
- Enhancing enterprise resources, thereby improving business intelligence and decision-making.

Over the past year, the IT section has positioned the Department to take advantage of the up-to-date technology known as Web Services. This technology allows for rapid project development, sharing and reuse of program components, emphasis on business practice analysis and data integration; and reduced maintenance requirements. Web Services provided a solution of data exchange about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in domestic elk and deer populations among divisions within the Department.

Risk-management continues to be a priority. During the year, the IT Section has undertaken the rewriting of the Pesticide Applicator Licensing and Enforcement system to integrate it with other risk-based systems in the Department. The new system will utilize Web Services to allow faster, easier collection and analysis of critical data for the purpose of better allocating Department manpower and resources.

Infrastructure and network security was scrutinized and addressed in light of increasing nationwide threats. A Virtual Private Network and Department firewall were implemented. Increased efforts were made to protect the network against outside virus and other attacks. The result was a more reliable and available network to support all the Department programs, users and customers.

Policy and Communications

Jim Miller, Director

Linh Truong, Public Information Officer

To better educate the public, about 90 news releases were written and distributed about Departmental programs and agricultural issues. The primary audience includes media outlets and industry organizations.

Wildlife Species Protection

The Department worked closely with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to develop a statewide plan for preservation of shortgrass prairie species, particularly the black-tailed prairie dog. A survey showed that Colorado

has more than 630,000 acres of active black-tailed prairie dog habitat—over six times the amount estimated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a result, the Department helped develop a management plan that continued to allow control of the species where critical agricultural property is at risk while maintaining large colonies through incentive payments to offset agricultural production revenues. This plan will also address burrowing owls, mountain plovers, and other shortgrass prairie species of concern.

Drought Mitigation

Staff worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to secure drought disaster declarations for all 64 counties. Demand for low interest loans and eligibility for capital gains tax deferment was unprecedented.

Wildfires plagued many areas of the state causing damage to agricultural property. Livestock, homes, fences, outbuildings, and forage for livestock was completely lost in the wildfire areas. The Department's Conservation Division worked with USDA to secure funding for revegetation. In addition, Governor Owens directed \$2 million to be used in the wildfire areas to offset landowners' cost share payments.

Federal Farm Policy

Colorado's agricultural and conservation communities watched the passage of the 2002 Farm Bill closely. With farm commodity prices at Depression Era levels, commodity programs took on particular importance. Significant changes were made to how the programs were structured in order to provide emergency income assistance during periods of low prices without the need for Congressional action.

Conservation programs were greatly expanded in the new farm legislation. Funding for the Environmental Quality Improvement Program will enable the state to more fully address the demand for soil and water conservation assistance. In addition, programs were funded to enable the state to provide incentives to landowners who provide valuable habitat to wildlife species of particular concern to the state or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Resource Analysis

Dr. David Carlson, Director

This section analyzes key issues and trends affecting Colorado agriculture and develops and manages special programs at the direction of the Commissioner. Issues include growth, ag land conversion, water, wildlife, and renewable energy. In cooperation with the Colorado Water Conservation Board, staff are improving methods to estimate agricultural water demand annually for each county in the state. Staff maintain several tables and prepare articles on agricultural land trends and other resource topics at www.ag.state.co.us/resource analysis. Computer support and other assistance were also provided to implement the Department's Pay for Performance Plan.

David Carlson was appointed by the Colorado Division of Wildlife director to a state committee to develop a state management plan for the black-tailed prairie dog. He helped to design the \$600,000 voluntary, incentive-based pilot program to pay ranchers an annual fee to maintain quality habitat in eastern Colorado. He also participates in stakeholder meetings to develop growth management approaches acceptable to agricultural interests.

Colorado Agricultural Outlook Forum

Staff coordinated the 2002 Colorado Agricultural Outlook Forum, which attracted nearly 350 people. Several national and state speakers addressed our theme "Colorado-Mexico Connection: Agricultural Trade, Labor and More" during this event on February 19. The mission of CAOF is to facilitate a spirit of community to enhance Colorado agriculture's competitiveness; and to encourage positive awareness of agriculture, and interaction among commodity and other industry segments. Sponsors are the Department, Colorado State University (CSU) Cooperative Extension and graduates of the Colorado Agricultural and Rural Leadership Program.

Animal Industry

Dr. Wayne Cunningham, Division Director

Led by the State Veterinarian, the Division oversees animal health and disease control. Working closely with the livestock industry, veterinary medical organizations and government agencies, staff protect the health, welfare and marketability of livestock. With 20 employees, the Division has five sections: animal health and disease control, Bureau of Animal Protection, Rocky Mountain Regional Animal Health Lab, rodent control and pet care.

Animal Health and Disease Control Section

Dr. Ron Ackerman, Section Chief

The section assisted in the development of a livestock emergency preparedness plan with many stakeholders, including the Office of Emergency Management, industry groups and CSU. A foot-and-mouth disease “table top” exercise was conducted to test the emergency response plan. During the United Kingdom foot-and-mouth outbreak, the Division worked with USDA agencies to control international animal importations and to inform foreign visitors about the risk of disease introduction. The Division also worked with the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) to heighten the same awareness and reduce risk. The Colorado legislature approved legislation, which gave the Division the ability to better prevent contagious and infectious disease introduction.

Rules were promulgated to address the control of bovine trichomoniasis and sheep and goat scrapie. Both rules were requested and strongly supported by the respective livestock industries.

The Division worked with the USDA to eradicate CWD from the Alternative Livestock elk farms. Approximately 3,200 elk were destroyed, which included nine infected herds, 18 exposed herds and trace animals, with an “air curtain” incinerator. The USDA and the Department indemnified all owners of herds that were depopulated. Staff provide producers with a voluntary CWD-herd status in order to provide marketability and improved health of their animals. The Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Department developed a “memorandum of agreement” for the management of captive cervids and CWD protective mechanisms.

Bovine tuberculosis was introduced into the San Luis Valley by a TB infected Longhorn bull grazing in the area during the summer of 2001. Hundreds of cattle were tested for TB with no infected animals disclosed. A cow elk was identified with TB at slaughter in the Montrose area. Exposed elk have been slaughtered and contact herds tested with no evidence of transmission.

The responsibility of monitoring and controlling the transportation of dead stock, rendering and pet food industries was assigned to the section as well.

Bureau of Animal Protection

Dr. John Maulsby, Section Chief

Scot Dutcher, Investigator

The Bureau of Animal Protection (BAP) promotes the proper care of domestic animals in Colorado through educational seminars, interaction with animal protection organizations and livestock associations, and providing assistance to animal control agencies, law enforcement departments and practicing veterinarians. In addition, the BAP investigates complaints of alleged animal cruelty and resolves them.

Four educational seminars were presented during the year. They included the sophomore class at CSU School of Veterinary Medicine, the American Humane Association Horse Cruelty Investigation School, Front Range Community College Equine Class, and Jefferson County Animal Control Cruelty Investigation Class.

BAP is an active member of the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) Animal Welfare Committee, which addressed many issues such as the effect of the drought on livestock. The Bureau purchased five tons of

hay for emergency feeding of thin livestock.

CVMA and NWSS are addressing the issue of extreme tail docking of show lambs. BAP helped establish a tail length standard for show lambs to help prevent rectal prolapses. At the 2002 NWSS, sheep exhibitors were informed that their 2003 show lambs would have the tails measured and must meet the minimum requirement.

The issue of feral cats and how best to handle them was discussed during the fall of 2001, since many areas deal with stray cats and cat collectors. BAP rescued 55 cats from a house in Eads at the request of the Sheriff's Office. CVMA formed a committee to address this topic, which is becoming a common occurrence in many towns.

The fire situation in Jefferson and Park Counties became extreme during 2001. BAP removed horses from the fire areas to take them to safe places. This was accomplished under the direction of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and Animal Control. Bureau staff helped monitor the condition of the horses and provided veterinary care as needed. Staff also helped in the CWD-control program during the spring of 2002.

BAP investigated 272 complaints involving animal care from June 2001- July 2002, and investigations were completed in accordance with Colorado animal cruelty laws. Ninety-five percent are resolved without legal action. The Bureau also gave input to the Colorado legislature in the passage of a new animal cruelty statute, which gave the prosecutor the option of pursuing aggravated cruelty as a felony.

Pet Animal Care Facilities Section

Dr. Keith Roehr, Section Chief

The Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) program has been operating for seven years and has produced a tangible improvement within many pet care facilities across the state. At the inception of PACFA, administrative duties included licensing facilities, completing routine inspections and delivering licenses. As we completed routine inspections of each facility licensed within the program, we were able to develop a risk-based program, which enabled us to focus on higher risk facilities. This year, we've been able to devote more attention to license compliance issues and now have more than 1,575 licensed facilities in the program.

The PACFA Advisory Committee provides guidance and direction for both rule and statute changes. In four of the past five years, we have completed needed changes within the PACFA rule and statute. These changes have improved the program by creating greater equity in licensure, clarified minimum pet care-facility standards, and dealt with facility standards that were previously not addressed. Our program has become a model to other states that have an interest in addressing pet-care problems.

The use of fines and stayed fines continue to be viable tools to ensure compliance with minimum facility standards. The number of repeat violations has decreased, and an increase in complaints as more of the public becomes aware of the PACFA program, which continues to provide a reasonable minimum standard for the care of pet animals and has improved the welfare of animals at various types of facilities.

Rocky Mountain Regional Animal Health Laboratory

Richard Forde, Section Chief

RMRAHL provides accurate, timely and efficient laboratory services and logistical support to the Division, regulatory programs, government agencies, HACCP systems, animal health programs, and veterinary practitioners. The laboratory also provides a means of conducting animal disease diagnosis and surveillance activities that facilitate the movement and marketing of livestock.

In fiscal year 2001-02, RMRAHL performed 170,954 tests for various livestock diseases. These tests assist in disease surveillance, animal health programs, and the qualification of livestock for intrastate, interstate, and international movement. Laboratory personnel also trained livestock market veterinarians in test procedures and provide confirmatory tests.

RMRAHL collaborated with principal investigators at CSU to provide the laboratory services relating to *Escherichia coli* O157. The information obtained from the project, “*Escherichia coli* O157 in Cattle and Beef: Risks and Outreach Control Efforts”, will be beneficial to livestock producers, meat processors and consumers. In total, 1,420 samples will be analyzed using cutting-edge technologies.

RMRAHL continues its partnership with CSU with the detection of gamma interferon in young bovines infected with *M. paratuberculosis* through the use of CSL’s BOVIGAM. In addition, the laboratory will provide surveillance services for West Nile Virus by offering the IgM Capture ELISA.

An interactive Web site will be available soon. Users can now print the “Supply List Order Form” and the “Testing Services and Fees Form.” When the Web site is complete, users will be able to secure test results, order supplies, download and print various forms, and communicate with the laboratory via the Internet.

Rodent/Predator Control Section

Mike Threlkeld, Section Chief

The Colorado Agricultural Statistics Vertebrate Rodent Infestation Survey states 5.7 million acres of Colorado farm and ranch land are damaged to some degree by prairie dogs, gophers and other rodents. The Section provides options, information, training and supplies to private citizens and local, state and federal officials to control vertebrate pests. Assistance is given to producers in controlling livestock predator losses through cooperative agreements with federal, state and local agencies and associations.

Brand Inspection Division

J. G. Shoun, Division Director

More than 37,000 livestock brands are administered to identify ownership of cattle, sheep, mules, burros, horses, elk and fallow deer. Brand inspection is crucial to verify ownership in cases of strayed or stolen livestock, and animal health programs are strengthened by the ability to trace animals to their herd of origin.

State Board of Stock Inspection Commissioners members, who administer the Division, are Dick Tanner, Yoder; Dean Davis, Lindon; Lee Spann, Gunnison; Linda Ingo, Ridgway; and Roger Hickert, Akron.

With 44 full-time brand inspectors, nine brand supervisors, 11 part-time brand inspectors, one theft investigator and 10 administrative personnel, including the Brand Commissioner, the annual budget exceeds \$3.5 million and is funded by fees levied to livestock owners and by brand registration assessment fees levied every five years.

The Division is assigned five principal regulatory responsibilities: record and administer livestock brands; verify ownership before sale, transportation beyond 75 miles, transportation out of the state, or slaughter; inspect and license packing plants, livestock sale rings as well as inspect all consignments before sale to verify ownership; license and inspect alternative livestock (elk and fallow deer) facilities; and investigate reports of lost or stolen livestock and to return stray or stolen livestock to their owners.

In addition, brand inspectors collect beef promotion and research funds, as well as Colorado Horse Development Authority horse promotion funds. The Division is also the trustee for all surety bonds issued to licensed markets and packinghouses doing business in Colorado.

In 2001-2002, personnel traveled in excess of 1.3 million miles and inspected more than 5.2 million head of livestock. They identified ownership of lost, stolen, strayed or questionably owned livestock valued at over \$57 million. More than 60,000 horse inspections were conducted with permanent horse travel permits issued on more than 7,700 head of horses. About 2,400 elk and fallow deer were inspected, and 156 Alternative Livestock licenses were issued.

The Division has concentrated on educational programs. The focus is on teaching brand law and theft prevention to the public and law enforcement agencies with 14 classes given statewide.

Inspection and Consumer Services Division

Ronald Turner, Division Director

The Division has five sections: technical services, farm products, laboratory services, measurement standards, and fruit and vegetable inspection. With approximately 100 employees, the inspection programs are designed to assure fairness, quality, safety and financial soundness in commercial transactions.

Technical Services Section

Jim Thurman, Section Chief

The Section is responsible for field inspections, testing and/or sampling for the following programs: measurement standards (small devices), feed, fertilizer, anhydrous ammonia, egg and meat inspection. The section has 13 inspectors, each cross trained to work in all of these program areas and empowered to enforce the laws and regulations relating to each program.

The feed program registers feed companies and selectively samples commercial animal feeds. In 2001, 898 companies were registered. Inspection fees were collected for 5,724 individual small package (10 pounds and less) products. Tonnage fees were collected on 1,402,306 tons of feed. Under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 18 medicated feed mills were inspected for compliance with the Current Good Manufacturing Practices for Medicated Feed. Colorado has about 100 feed manufacturers that were inspected to ensure compliance with the FDA "BSE Rule," which bans the feeding of certain mammalian proteins to ruminant animals to prevent the onset or spread of "mad cow disease" in the U.S.

The feed program adopted new rules for Commercial Feed and Pet Food under the Colorado Commercial Feed Law that became effective on June 1, 2001.

The egg program protects human health and safety through a quality and labeling inspection program for shell eggs. Standards are enforced at the retail and wholesale level to assure that eggs are stored and sold under conditions that reduce the potential for harmful contaminants to reach the consumer. This year, 2,273 retail egg licenses and 72 wholesale egg licenses were issued.

The fertilizer program registers and selectively samples fertilizers, soil conditioners and related products to assure labeling accuracy in accordance with state laws. This assures farmers that their crops are getting the proper level of nutrition to maximize their yields. The department registered 354 companies and 3,184 fertilizer products. The program also inspected 4,500 anhydrous ammonia tanks to assure that they are safe to transport and apply this potentially hazardous agricultural fertilizer.

The meat inspection program protects the public health and safety and prevents fraudulent practices in certain categories of meat processing and in bulk meat sales. The program licensed 93 meat processors and performed 220 sanitation inspections on these businesses. The program also licensed 12 food plan operations.

Farm Products Section

Gary Graalman, Section Chief

The Section enforces statutes regarding licensing and regulations of those who buy and/or store agricultural products produced in Colorado or owned by Colorado residents. The section ensures that dealers and state-licensed warehouses are bonded and adequately capitalized. More than 1,250 firms were licensed and hold surety bonds in excess of \$92,000,000. The section coordinates with the USDA and Commodity Credit Corporation to assure that Colorado grain producers can participate in the government grain loan programs.

Staff investigates complaints by dealers, producers and owners against farm products and commodity handler dealers operating in Colorado. Cease and desist orders and/or other regulatory sanctions can be issued if a firm appears to be financially unable to meet its commitments. Investigations are conducted regarding timely payment or non-payment for farm products purchased and seek remedies for losses including bond demands, licensing changes, and civil and criminal prosecution.

A grain storage taskforce was created to prevent, prepare for and address grain and livestock problems. Discussions included grain storage problems, genetically modified corn regulations, the federal loan deficiency payment program guidelines and the loan environment for grain and livestock producers.

The Section has assumed the Anhydrous Ammonia Safety program. This program is responsible for developing rules and providing education to ensure the safe handling of this valuable agricultural fertilizer. Currently the Section is meeting with representatives from the EPA, the fertilizer industry and the Colorado Emergency Planning Commission to develop new rules for the safe handling of anhydrous ammonia and to discuss changes to the program that will shift the focus towards safety awareness through education and decrease the resources needed to operate the inspection program.

Colorado Agricultural Mediation Program

The Section has received a grant from the USDA to develop and operate a mediation program. Mediation services are offered to distressed agricultural producers facing bank loan foreclosures, grazing lease problems, wetlands issues or other detrimental financial situations. The section has several private mediators under contract and is working with local banks to inform them of the services we offer with this program.

Laboratory Services Section

Charles Hagburg, Section Chief

The laboratory feed and fertilizer sections analyzed 3,616 samples to ensure that the products conform to manufacturers' label claims for nutrients, minerals, medications and other ingredients. The Pesticide section analyzed 13 concentrates for compliance with the manufacturers' label claims. A total of 226 pesticide residue samples were analyzed in a cooperative grant program with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Department investigators collect the residue samples in cases of commercial pesticide applicator misuse.

The laboratory's microbiology section, in a cooperative grant program with USDA's Microbiological Data Program (MDP), analyzed a total of 324 samples, including tomatoes, lettuce, celery and cantaloupe for *E. coli* and salmonella bacteria. These organisms are responsible for many cases of food borne illness each year. One goal of MDP is to determine the prevalence of these bacteria in our nation's food supply.

The groundwater section of the laboratory continued its work on water samples from across Colorado, completing analysis of 287 samples for pesticide and nitrate contamination. The chemists in the residue and groundwater sections also started a new project in the fall of 2001, the Pesticide Data Program (PDP). Funded by USDA, the laboratory will analyze finished drinking water samples for extremely low levels of over 100 different pesticides.

Measurement Standards Section

Kristin Young, Section Chief

The Section inspects all weighing and measuring devices in commercial use and certifies public scales. The State Metrology Laboratory maintains Colorado's official mass, length and volume standards and provides calibration of mass, length, volume, frequency, time and moisture in grain for public and private agencies. The Laboratory calibrated 6,605 mass standards, performed 255 other tests, certified 1,370 tuning forks used to calibrate radar speed detectors and calibrated 158 laser speed guns. Law enforcement jurisdictions have recently begun using photo radar and photo red light equipment. The Laboratory calibrated 11 and 12 of these, respectively.

The Section inspects and test packages for truth in labeling and the accuracy of measuring devices used

commercially. Of the 21,853 small weighing devices tested, 11.2 percent were out of compliance. Multiple inspectors also performed 92,576 price verifications, finding a 1.5 percent error rate. Of the 47,819 packages examined for short measure, 21.4 percent were found to be in error, so the section collected \$52,079.04 in fines.

The section's large-scale units tested and inspected 4,052 scales, while rejecting 34.8 percent of the scales. The section tested grain moisture meters and has tested 168, rejecting 23 percent of them.

Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Section

Tracy Vanderpool, Section Chief

To assure consumers have high quality Colorado produce, the program provides official inspection, grading, and certification of produce quality, condition and size of fresh fruits and vegetables grown in the state. Inspection certificates are issued to certify grade and condition of the product at the time of shipment.

Mandatory inspection is required for potatoes by statute to promote quality standards. Non-mandatory inspections are conducted on other commodities for shippers who wish to market an inspected product.

This year, the section inspected 17,390,174 cwt. of potatoes and issued approximately 26,000 mandatory inspection certificates. Staff also inspected 3,354,017 cwt. of other fruits and vegetables and issued 1,427 non-mandatory inspection certificates.

Markets Division

Jim Rubingh, Division Director

The Division develops new marketing opportunities for Colorado producers and processors as well as retaining and enhancing existing markets for Colorado products. The Division also oversees nine market orders, is responsible for administration of the Wine Industry Development Board and the Colorado Agricultural Value-Added Development Board, licenses all of the state's aquaculture producers and provides staff for the Colorado Agricultural Development Authority.

Market Orders

The Division's responsibilities involve establishing, enforcing and overseeing the administration of nine active market orders: apples, corn for grain, potatoes (two separate growing areas), dry edible beans, sweet corn, milk, wheat and sunflowers, representing 15,000 farms and more than \$1 billion in sales.

A market order allows producers of a specific commodity to work together to solve marketing problems and conduct programs that would be impossible for individual producers to accomplish. Enforcement involves conducting investigations, holding hearings and reviewing audits of the orders. Budgets for the nine market orders were reviewed with approved expenditures totaling over \$3 million. Market orders are created and can be discontinued only when growers petition the Commissioner of Agriculture. Each commodity has its own board, composed of producers who determine how those funds should be used such as on research, promotion and education. Most are totally or partially refundable, allowing producers to request refunds within 30 days.

Four market order violations were investigated and enforced in 2002.

International Marketing

Timothy J. Larsen, Senior International Marketing Specialist

Dawn M. Velásquez de Pérez, International Marketing Specialist

The goal of international market development at the Department is to provide assistance to companies just beginning to export and support those companies who are already exporting Colorado products worldwide.

Colorado's food and agricultural exports continue to represent \$1 billion in annual sales, providing new markets for Colorado producers and jobs within the food processing sector.

Current exporters are supported through a wide range of programs. Through the state's membership in WUSATA (Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association), companies gain access to USDA-sponsored programs, as well as trade development grants. Colorado companies have annually received over \$250,000 in matching grant funds to assist in their international marketing. These funds support overseas trade shows and travel, international advertising and in-country trade promotion programs. Colorado companies also have access to trade promotional events, such as buyers' missions to the U.S. and market development efforts in foodservice, produce, organic products, consumer goods and food ingredients. In addition, Colorado companies have opportunities to participate in U.S. pavilions at major food shows around the world.

The Markets Division assists new-to-export companies evaluate the export potential for their products. An analysis can be provided that details the current U.S. export trends of over 2,000 different agricultural products. New-to-export companies find the most success in entering international markets where similar products are already sold. Personal counseling helps each company identify their export potential, direct them to programs that can help them prepare for the market and gain access to programs that help them initiate their international efforts.

In addition to providing access to the full range of WUSATA programs, the Markets Division took the lead in various programs. These include the WUSATA pavilions at Mexico's major trade shows for snack foods and consumer food products and coordination of produce promotions that will bring key Mexican retail produce buyers to Colorado to meet with producers. Colorado will continue to lead the program to promote Colorado beef cattle genetics to Mexico in cooperation with the Colorado Cattle Trade Cooperative. Colorado will also coordinate the WUSATA efforts for promoting organic food products in Japan, Canada and Europe.

The Markets Division published multilingual brochures that will promote Colorado's produce, livestock and organic industries. These brochures are available in English, Japanese and Spanish, as well as appearing electronically on the Division's Web site at www.ag.state.co.us/mkt/mkt.html.

Domestic Marketing

Wendy White, Marketing Specialist

The mission of the domestic marketing program is to increase awareness and demand for Colorado food and agricultural products in local, regional and national markets.

In addition to a quarterly newsletter, several annual directories are published for distribution including the Colorado Hay Directory and the Colorado Farm Fresh Directory. The Colorado Food and Beverage Gift Guide and the Colorado Agricultural Database Directory are only available on the Internet.



The Colorado Proud marketing program continues to grow with more than 320 licensed participants. The summer 2001 advertising campaign included bus ads, radio ads, transit shelters and billboards, which generated nearly 30 million impressions of the logo. August was once again proclaimed Colorado Proud month by Governor Owens. The Second Annual Governor's Award for Excellence benefit banquet was a success in September. Six Colorado Proud companies were acknowledged for their excellence in marketing the logo.

Several Colorado Proud companies exhibited at the 2001 Colorado State Fair, and six companies participated in WestEx 2002, the Rocky Mountain Regional Restaurant and Foodservice Show. Colorado Proud partnered with the ACF Colorado Chefs Association to organize the second annual Governor's Symposium Celebrating Colorado Cuisine. Each Thursday during the 2002 legislative session, senators and representatives received a different Colorado Proud food item and a bookmark with facts about Colorado agriculture.

Colorado Proud also partnered with the Colorado Food Bank Association and Safeway to raise \$40,000 for local

food banks through the Check-Out Hunger in Colorado program.

Ongoing domestic marketing activities include the seal of quality program that differentiates super-grade apples; a seal of quality program with Colorado livestock; the Centennial Farms program, which recognizes 100-year-old farms in the state and the Colorado 5-a-day produce campaign, a statewide effort to increase awareness of the importance of fruits and vegetables in the diet.

As part of AgInsights, the Markets Division maintained the Colorado Agricultural Speakers Bureau, which provides speakers on Biotechnology for audiences throughout the state, and an agriculture awareness campaign. AgInsights also sponsored a photography contest and worked with a local sculptor to create and sell statues to honor Colorado farmers and ranchers. With each statue purchase, the buyer's name is engraved on a bronze plate, which will be placed at the foot of the heroic-sized sculpture at Colorado State University. A luncheon celebration was also held to recognize Farm-City Week in November.

Within the Division, the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board promotes Colorado wines across the state. Also, the Division continues to serve as the lead agency for aquaculture development and licenses 46 aquaculture facilities in the state. Personnel assist in distributing \$6 million in agricultural loans/bonds for first-time farmers and for agricultural processing.

Business Development

The purpose of the business development program is to encourage agricultural manufacturing in Colorado by assisting start-ups and existing businesses as well as agricultural recruitment undertaken in partnership with the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

The Colorado Agricultural Value-Added Development Board provided \$150,000 in grants, including more than \$400,000 in grants to help sugar beet farmers with the purchase of two processing facilities in Colorado.

Publications include the *Food Processing Kit*, the *Colorado Co-Pack Directory*, *Public Finance for Colorado Agriculture*, *Food for Thought* and *Getting the Most Out of Your Feasibility Study*.

Market News

Tom Gutierrez, Charlie Niccoli, and Steve Watkins

Personnel attend livestock sales at the major sale yards around the state to report the movement and price of livestock exchanged in open trading. This information is made available to livestock producers. The staff also monitors and reports on hay, fresh produce and nursery marketing.

Plant Industry

Mitchell Yergert, Acting Division Director

The Division of Plant Industry performs a wide array of services to the public and engages in several important environmental and public health protection programs.

Biological Pest Control

Kent Mowrer, Section Chief

In 1945, the Bureau of Plant and Insect Control developed the state's initial biological pest control program in Palisade. Employees study, import, rear and release beneficial insects to control plant and insect pests. The result of these efforts decreases production costs, reduces chemicals in the environment and offers a more permanent pest control solution.

Staff made releases of 39 species of beneficial insects that were designed to assist in the suppression of 14 weed

species and six insect pests. A total of 775 releases of natural enemies were made during the growing season. From 227 post-release surveys, it was determined that 25 of the beneficial insect species are now established in Colorado. These activities were conducted throughout the state on private and public lands.

Plant and Insect Programs

Jerry Cochran, Program Coordinator

Don Gallegos, Program Coordinator

These programs provide the following services:

- Inspect plants and plant products intended for export to provide certification required by receiving states and countries;
- Register sellers of nursery stock, providing inspection of that stock to aid in control of insects and diseases, and aiding consumers in purchasing high quality stock;
- Inspect apiaries for bee diseases, by request;
- Conduct pest surveys and work with private and public agencies to control certain pests;
- Administer and enforce the Colorado Chemigation Act to avoid pollution of ground and surface water sources;
- Register and inspect commercial seed dealers to assure truth in labeling of seed as to content and germination claims;
- Administer the organic production certification program to assure buyers organically-grown produce conforms with state standards;
- Administer fruit and vegetable pesticide residue monitoring under contract with USDA; and
- Administer request program for certification of weed free forage crops including hay and mulch crops;
- Register canola fields to avoid cross-pollination of different types of rapeseed (The San Luis Valley is the only area subject to the registration program at this time);
- Implement noxious weed program including distribution of grant money allocated by the Legislature for use by counties, and numerous other activities performed by the state weed coordinator; and;
- Enforce late blight quarantine by inspecting seed potatoes coming into the San Luis Valley.

An estimated 1,450 phytosanitary inspection certificates were issued on plant products for international export, valued at approximately \$26 million. In addition, about 1,776 registrations were issued to sellers of nursery stock. A total of 956 inspections of nurseries and greenhouses were conducted with about 67,000 stop-sale orders issued on nursery stock with over 48,000 of these having been issued to one company as a result of a hailstorm.

At total of 3,400 chemigation permits were issued. Approximately 1,000 inspections of seed dealers were conducted, and an estimated 476 cease and desist orders were issued for violations of labeling. The Section registered 1,015 seed sellers and custom seed conditioners and certified 214 organic growers. The Fruit and Vegetable Pesticide Residue Monitoring program identifies possible contaminants in the food system with a total of 364 samples taken. The Microbiological Data Program started in April 2001, and 74 samples were taken for analysis. Under the Weed-Free Forage Certification program, 459 field inspections were made on 20,993 acres of forage and mulch crops, mostly hay, for 160 producers. In the Potato Late Blight Quarantine Enforcement program, 82 loads of seed potatoes transported into the San Luis Valley were inspected. Seventeen compost facility inspections were performed, and 31 cull pile inspections were conducted.

Noxious Weed Management

Eric Lane, State Weed Coordinator

After several years of conferring with agricultural and environmental organizations as well as weed management professionals from around the state, the Department prepared and released a strategic plan to stop the spread of noxious weeds in Colorado. This plan provides a framework to focus and integrate Colorado's diverse weed management efforts on both public and private lands into a statewide coordinated and cost-effective effort to protect agriculture and the environment. In addition to the Governor's approval, 43 public and private organizations endorsed this plan and agreed to participate in collaborative efforts designed to carry out specific

actions to implement the plan and achieve its objectives. This plan may be found at www.ag.state.co.us/dpi/weeds/strategicplan/strategicplan.pdf.

The Department initiated a statewide weed mapping program in cooperation with CSU's Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Already, this program has developed and implemented a methodology to collect and assemble inventory and mapping data from local, state, and federal jurisdictions across the state and prepared the first maps depicting the distribution and abundance of 21 noxious weed species. The program also provides ongoing technical advice and training to local, state, and federal weed management programs, saving local weed management programs thousands of dollars each year. More information can be found at www.ag.state.co.us/dpi/weeds/mapping/cwmprogram.html.

The Department evaluated 37 management and 11 education proposals to the Colorado Noxious Weed Management Fund requesting a total of \$615,948 in assistance and providing a total match of \$3,397,118 (5.5: 1 overall matching ratio). After careful review, the Department distributed \$239,692 to 20 management and 8 education projects of local, regional, and statewide importance. Collectively, recipients matched the state's dollars with approximately \$1,368,264 (5.7: 1 matching ratio). Awarded grants ranged from \$710 to \$27,500. A summary of funded projects can be found at www.ag.state.co.us/DPI/weeds/grants/grant.html.

Pesticide Registration

Laura Quakenbush, Program Coordinator

The number of pesticide products registered for distribution in Colorado was 11,014 for the 2001 calendar year. There were 998 pesticide retailer/wholesaler inspections between 4/1/01 and 3/31/02. Cease and desist orders were issued 132 times for violations of the Pesticide Act, including 25 for unregistered pesticide products and 67 for illegal chlorpyrifos products still displayed for sale for residential uses. As part of the EPA's Cumulative Risk Assessment for organophosphate insecticides, almost all retail sales of chlorpyrifos (e.g. Dursban or Lorsban products) became illegal on Jan. 1, 2002.

CDA has been delegated authority by the EPA to register pesticides for Special Local Needs (24(c) registrations) unique to Colorado, and also to petition to EPA for tolerance exemptions and permission unregistered pesticide use for emergency needs (section 18s). Nine new 24(c) registrations were granted by CDA in 2002. Colorado currently has 45 active 24(c) registrations. CDA obtained 15 section 18 exemptions during the 2002 growing season. Each user of a section 18 product must receive a permit from the Department. The total number of section 18 permits issued was 160, with 93 of these permittees receiving inspections to ensure compliance with the conditions of each section 18.

Commercial Pesticide Applicator Program

John Scott, Program Coordinator

In 2001-2002, 483 applicators were tested for competency. Approximately 799 commercial pesticide application firms were licensed, and 140 limited commercial and public applicators were registered. About 2,919 applicators were licensed as qualified supervisors or certified operators. Thirty eight (38) complaints regarding violations of the Pesticide Applicators' Act were filed and investigated with 48 current and existing complaints resolved: 20 stipulation and orders, three letter of admonition, one miscellaneous enforcement letter, one cease and desist orders, 19 dismissals and five dropped investigations.

Agricultural Chemicals and Groundwater Protection

Robert P. Wawrzynski, Program Coordinator

To ensure groundwater quality, the program coordinates the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies with the emphasis on public education, outreach, and monitoring. Presentations to industry, professional organizations, and interested groups are ongoing to inform and seek input. A citizen advisory committee of representatives from the

general public, producers, and agribusiness, has been instrumental in determining program priorities, development, and implementation.

The program is responsible for regulating bulk chemical storage facilities to ensure groundwater protection. In FY02, the program inspected 60 secondary containment sites, inspected 84 mixing/loading pads, conducted one leak detection test, and conducted 65 follow-up inspections for previously noted problems; one violation notice was issued. The program also conducted a regional groundwater quality study of the South Platte River alluvial aquifer in Weld, Morgan, Logan, and Sedgwick Counties, as well as completed the seventh year of a long term monitoring effort in the South Platte alluvial aquifer from Brighton to Greeley. The program continued work on a statewide aquifer vulnerability study, which determines the likelihood of an agricultural chemical entering the groundwater.

State Conservation Board

Bob Zebroski, Division Director

A resolution was approved at the annual meeting of the Colorado Association of Soil Conservation Districts in November to change the name of the 77 districts. House Bill 1099 was approved by the Legislature effective July 1, 2002, to change the name of the soil conservation districts and the Colorado State Soil Conservation Board to conservation districts and the Colorado State Conservation Board.

Seventeen districts conducted elections in May for the removal of term limits for the board of directors, elimination of TABOR restrictions and establishment of mill levies. The voters with the exception of the four elections for mill levies approved most of the issues.

The State Conservation Board became a member of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Civil Rights/Equal Opportunity Committee. The goal of this action was to ensure that the membership of the State Board and the boards of the 77 conservation districts reflects the diversity of landowners throughout the state.

In cooperation with the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD), the Conservation Board sponsored the first Legislative Day at the State Capitol. Breakfast was provided for the senators and representatives and seven conservation districts had displays on their local conservation programs.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been petitioned to have the black-tailed prairie dog placed on the endangered species list. Working with a number of government agencies and private organizations, the Conservation Board established the Shortgrass/Black-tailed Prairie Dog Pilot Private Lands Incentive Program. This program was offered through the conservation districts and resulted in one landowner in Pueblo County receiving payments for providing habitat for prairie dogs and other associated species.

Distributing the latest information on conservation in Colorado, the State Conservation Board partnered with the CACD, NRCS, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Colorado State Forest Service to publish the "Colorado Conservator" four times each year. The 12-page newsletter is mailed to over 11,000 individuals.

Four conservation districts in the Upper Colorado River Basin received \$506,046 from the Bureau of Reclamation for financial assistance with local farmers and ranchers to improve their irrigation systems. The State Board is beginning the sixth year of a multi-year program that has provided \$3,032,238 to Colorado producers to improve on-farm irrigation efficiencies that will result in lower salt contributions to the Colorado River. The Bureau approved 20 projects for the year. A total of 3,470 tons of salt has been saved from entering the Colorado River annually through the 49 completed projects at an average cost of \$30.56 per ton.

The Conservation Board provided financial assistance to the 77 conservation districts in Colorado through a series of programs:

Distributions to Districts: The funds (\$391,714) are used by the districts to pay for the travel of the local board

members, salaries for employees and office expenses. This amount is approximately 6 percent of the total budgets of the local districts.

Assistance to Local Governments: Thirteen districts entered into agreements with counties and municipalities to conduct natural resource inventories used for local land use planning. The \$31,146 was matched by \$497,250 from local sources.

Matching Grants to Districts: Requests totaling \$991,454 were received from 46 districts for cost-sharing projects that had a total cost of \$5 million. These funds must be matched dollar for dollar from private, local or federal sources. The match this year for the \$500,000 was approximately 3.7 million dollars.

The Irrigation Water Management Program is designed to extend the life of the Ogallala Aquifer in eastern Colorado. Funding of \$84,905 was received from the Legislature, and \$79,024 was collected in fees from the Program users. Through the efforts of three State Board employees, 380 irrigation wells were tested and 30,000 acres were enrolled in the irrigation water management program using gypsum blocks to monitor the water available in the soil profile for the growing crop. Twenty-five irrigation systems were converted to Low Energy Precision Application (LEPA) saving considerable water and electricity.

Soil surveys are being accelerated in the last seven counties of the state with \$75,000 from the Colorado Legislature resulting in a completed soil survey for Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties. The soil information is critical in land use planning especially with the pressures of population growth.

The State Conservation Board participated in a joint effort with the CACD on Camp Rocky and the Colorado Conservation Teachers' Workshop. Some 60 youths attended the week-long session of Camp Rocky held near Divide, and 50 teachers attended the Conservation Teachers' Workshop in Durango. These education opportunities are exciting times for the individuals of both ages.

Each year, the conservation districts as the outstanding farm and ranch of the State choose one farm and one ranch. This past year, the Godsey Family of Wray were recognized as the Conservationist of the Year in the farm division and the Coleman family of Saguache County was awarded the Conservationist of the Year in the ranch division. These individuals were honored at the National Western Stock Show in January.

In contrast to the NWSS where the State Conservation Board in partnership with CSU Cooperative Extension and Colorado State Forest Service usually sponsored a display, the display was at the Denver Garden and Home Show. The focus of the display was on forest management and wildfires not knowing that 2002 was to be one of the worst in size and acreage of wildfires.



State Fair

Ed Kruse, Division Director

The 2002 Colorado State Fair experienced a year of attendance growth for the 16-day event. Although gate attendance was up, there was a decrease in overall revenues due to a slow down in the economy. In anticipation of a down-turn, the Fair held expenses to a lower level than the previous year. However, the Fair missed its projected bottom line due to the decline in revenue.

More than 800 buyers in the Events Center enjoyed another very successful Junior Livestock Sale. Having raised

\$300,000, the money went to the 107 FFA and 4-H youth who participated in the sale, giving them the opportunity to pursue a college education or participate in future livestock projects.

In addition, the State Fairgrounds in Pueblo host hundreds of events throughout the year. A short list includes concerts, rodeos, RV rallies, monster truck shows, 4-H activities, receptions, trade shows, car sales, and graduation ceremonies. The largest off-season events include the summertime's NSRA Street Rod Nationals and the Rocky Mountain Thunder Rally, in January Tommy G Production's PBR Bull Ride and the 1A/2A State Basketball Tournaments.

Controlled maintenance projects to address infrastructure on the grounds has been accomplished with the final appropriated funds to be utilized this winter. Other scheduled controlled maintenance projects are on hold in response to the economic down-turn.

The 2003 State Fair, which runs from August 16 through August 31, will celebrate its 131st anniversary.