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Division still going strong
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ranchers grow products
with a national following

SMART FARMING

Colorado farmers go high-tech to produce
more with less, protect the environment

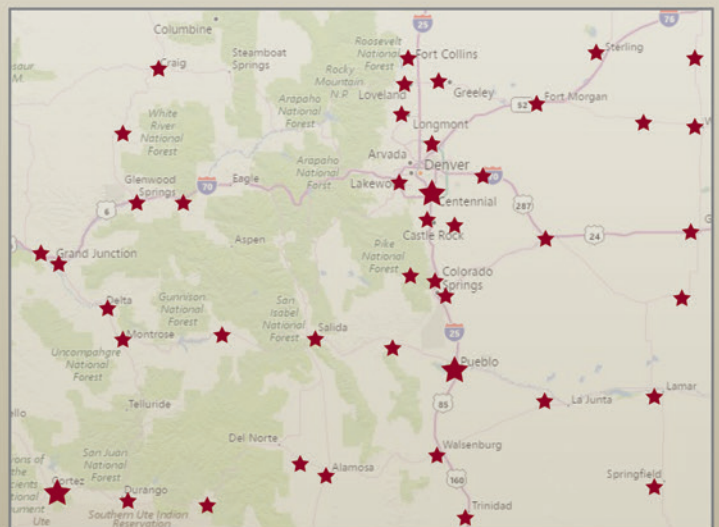




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Administrative
Committee

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TOGETHER, THEY MAKE COLORADO THE
SECOND-LARGEST SHIPPER OF
FRESH POTATOES IN THE COUNTRY.**



Colorado

**SAN LUIS VALLEY
POTATOES**

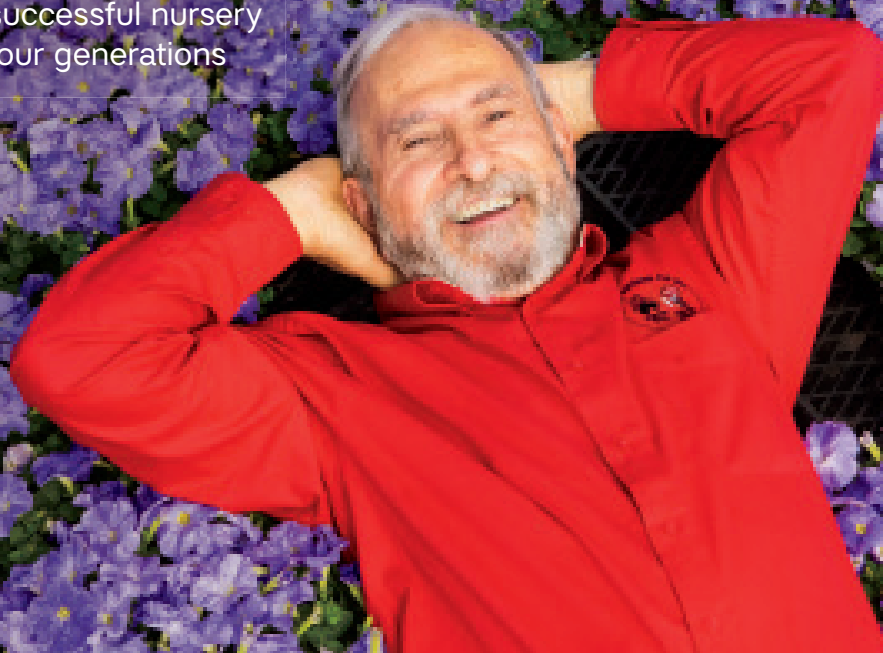
**Discover the
San Luis Valley
Difference.**

coloradopotato.org

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Photo by Jeffrey S. Otto

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MAKING A NAME

Colorado farmers and ranchers grow products with a national following

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CULTIVATING COLORADO

2018 EDITION, VOLUME 2



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Third-generation farmer Don Brown was named Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture in 2015. Brown's family farm in Yuma County was homesteaded in 1911 and has been designated as a Centennial Farm.

Welcome to the second edition of *Cultivating Colorado*.

As the name suggests, this magazine is about the inspirational stories surrounding Colorado agriculture and how this vital industry fosters growth for our food system and economy.

Colorado is blessed with fertile lands, abundant natural resources, and hardworking farmers and ranchers who greatly affect our quality of life. My family's heritage is rooted in Yuma, Colorado, and, as the Commissioner of Agriculture, I travel all across this state where I visit many of our rural communities. I am always in awe of the close family ties and inspired by the all-American landscape that reflects our agricultural families in such a positive fashion.

Through the production of food, fiber, and fuel, agriculture affects every one of us. Our quality of life is enhanced by the tireless efforts of our agricultural communities and I'm proud of the accomplishments of Colorado's farm and ranch families.

This magazine will introduce you to only a handful of the amazing people that make up this great industry. You'll read stories of our true American heritage while simultaneously looking into the future of one of Colorado's strongest economic contributors: agriculture.

Sincerely,

Don Brown

Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

Colorado Agriculture

An overview of the state's food, farming and agribusiness sectors

In Colorado, agriculture reigns supreme. The important industry contributes a staggering \$41 billion to the economy each year, and employs nearly 173,000 people. That includes farmers and ranchers, who work on the state's 36,180 farms, which cover about 31.8 million acres of land. The average size of a Colorado farm is about 881 acres. It also includes people who work in the state's agribusinesses and related industries, such as forestry, nursery and food processing. And Colorado agriculture helps

feed the world, with agricultural exports on track to reach more than \$2 billion for 2017.

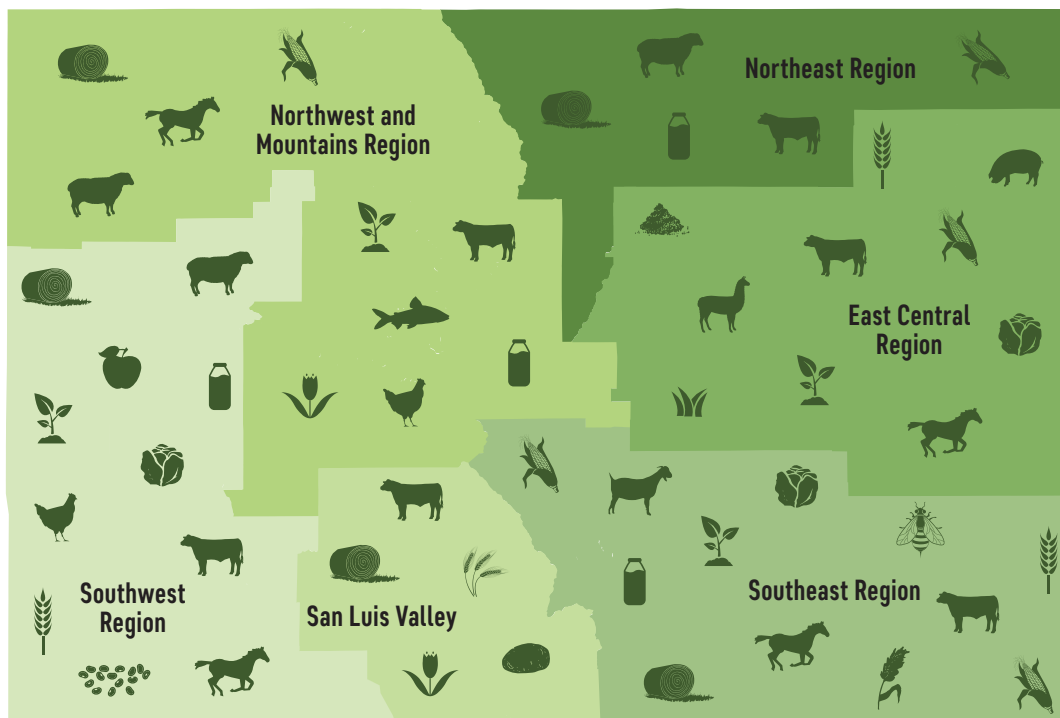
Some of Colorado's top commodities include cattle and calves, dairy, wheat, potatoes, and field corn, and the state ranks first in the nation for millet production. Colorado ranks sixth in the U.S. for peach production, and overall, the state is in the top 10 for nearly 25 different commodities.

Colorado is also well known for beverage production, with several national and craft breweries that call the state home, plus wineries, distilleries and cideries, all making

a name for Colorado. To keep the industry growing, Colorado State University has implemented a Fermentation Science program, which is just one example in all of agriculture where education supports both industry newcomers and veterans.

More than crops and livestock, Colorado agriculture also embraces agricultural education, research, conservation practices, agritourism, local foods and innovative technologies. These aspects together support an ever-growing, viable industry that is only poised for more success.

Ag Across the State



- Alpaca
- Aquaculture
- Barley
- Bees
- Bedding Plants
- Cattle
- Corn
- Dairy
- Dry Beans
- Fruit
- Goats
- Hay
- Horses
- Millet
- Nursery
- Poultry & Eggs
- Potatoes
- Sheep
- Sod
- Sorghum
- Swine
- Vegetables
- Wheat

NEWS & NOTES

Well Done, Weld County

Colorado is home to one of the top 10 agricultural counties in the nation: Weld County, which is located in the north-central part of the state.

Weld County's agricultural influence dates back to the early days of its existence when the No. 3 ditch off the Poudre River was built with the purpose of growing food. Agriculture began to take hold in the late 1890s and early 1900s, as more water was used to irrigate fields.

Since then, the county has grown to its current position as the No. 1 agricultural county in Colorado, bringing in \$1.9 billion in mark. Weld County is Colorado's leading producer of beef cattle, grain, sugar beets and dairy. Farmers in the county also grow dry beans, alfalfa and corn.

More than 75 percent of the county's 2.5 million acres is devoted to raising crops and livestock.

Fields of Green and Gold

Hay and wheat are two important commodities in Colorado, consistently ranking in the top 10 of the state's leading agricultural products.

More than 2 million acres of wheat are planted annually in the state. Colorado's only major food grain crop is produced in all regions in more than 40 of the state's 64 counties, and it's often referred to as "Prairie Gold."

As for hay, local farmers produce many varieties of the crop, including alfalfa, grass and various mixes, on about 1.5 million acres.



MORE THAN
2 MILLION
ACRES OF WHEAT
ARE PLANTED
ANNUALLY IN THE STATE.

Farming At Altitude

Colorado's unique geography presents an interesting challenge for farmers, as the high altitude affects the growing season.

A higher elevation means a shorter growing season. For every 1,000-foot gain in elevation, the temperature drops by about 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit. This means that freezing temperatures come earlier in the fall and leave later in the spring compared to a lower elevation. This can especially affect produce crops, such as tomatoes, sweet corn, winter squash, melons, peppers, cucumbers and more, since they need a longer, warmer season to grow.

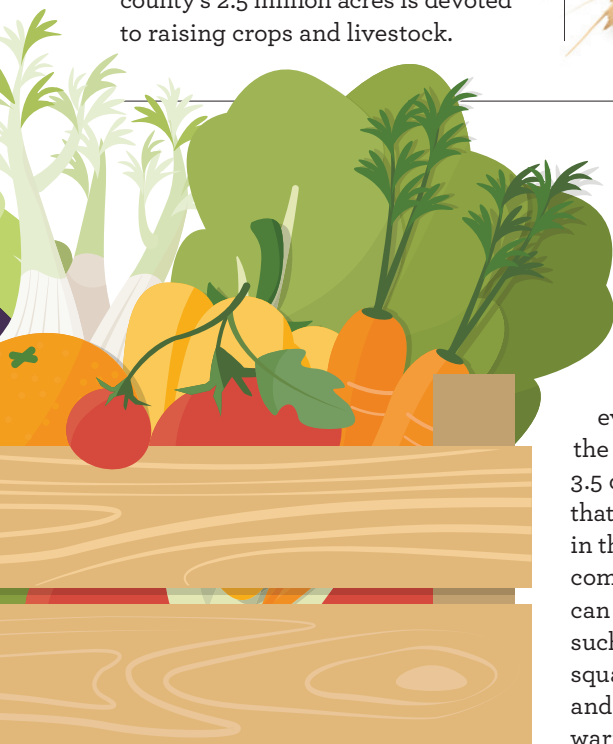
Need a Job? An Ag Degree Helps

With nearly 60,000 job openings annually throughout the nation, agriculture is an attractive career path for incoming college freshmen.

According to forecasts from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that are supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, demand is increasing for agriculture jobs, with expertise needed in food, renewable natural resources and environmental fields.

Management and business jobs are expected to account for about half of the available ag jobs through 2020. Two-year agribusiness degree programs at Aims Community College, Colorado Northwestern Community College, Northeastern Junior College and Trinidad State Junior College can help give job applicants a competitive edge. These colleges also often offer pathways to transfer to four-year universities such as Colorado State University and University of Colorado Boulder.

An estimated 27 percent of the projected annual ag-related jobs will be in technology, science and engineering, according to the USDA, with the rest available in areas ranging from sustainable food to biomaterials production to education.



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What's Growing in COLORADO

A glimpse at the state's leading ag products
based on cash receipts



CATTLE AND CALVES

Colorado is home to over 2 million cattle and calves, and in 2016, they brought in a whopping \$3.1 billion in annual cash receipts. Colorado is also the fourth-largest exporter of fresh and frozen beef in the U.S.

\$3.1B

CASH RECEIPTS



A steer typically yields about 450 pounds of edible meat.

CHICKEN EGGS

Colorado hens lay more than a billion eggs every year. In 2016, the state's eggs earned annual cash receipts of \$68 million. Colorado egg farmers purchase more than 4.4 million bushels of corn each year from corn farmers to feed their hens.

\$68M

CASH RECEIPTS



FIELD CORN

Colorado's field corn crop generated \$462 million in annual cash receipts in 2016. Corn's biggest customer is the cattle industry, which uses 90 percent of the state's corn crop as feed.

\$462M

CASH RECEIPTS



WHAT ARE CASH RECEIPTS?

Defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, cash receipts refer to the total amount of crops or livestock sold in a calendar year.

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- Agriculture Education
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- Equine Science

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"My educational experience at Northeastern Junior College had a very positive effect on my career. The comprehensive courses, professors, students and events came together to make learning a priority and a pleasure. I will always be thankful for the fond memories and fine education that Northeastern provided."

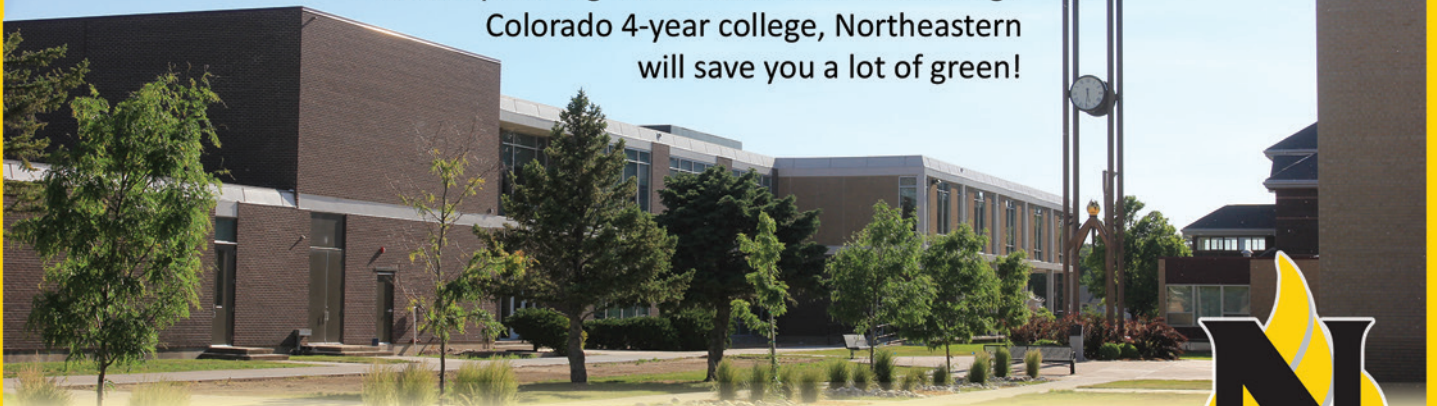
- Don Brown, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture

Northeastern Junior College Class of 1976



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The student life experience at Northeastern makes for an exciting learning environment with on-campus housing, 10 varsity athletic teams, a rodeo team with multiple national champions, a livestock judging team, and stellar arts and entertainment.

The Northeastern sense of community can't be beat!

Colorado's First iPad College



www.njc.edu

POTATOES

In 2016, Colorado's potato crop earned \$177 million in annual cash receipts. There are approximately 50,000 acres in the San Luis Valley in southwestern Colorado that are dedicated to potato production.

\$177M

CASH RECEIPTS

GREENHOUSE/NURSERY

Colorado's greenhouse products include bedding plants, cut flowers and more. In 2016, the sector earned \$294 million in annual cash receipts.

\$294M

CASH RECEIPTS



SORGHUM

Colorado's sorghum farmers earned \$60 million in annual cash receipts for their crop in 2016. Sorghum is a cereal grain primarily used for livestock feed, but also as a sweetener and other food applications.

\$60M

CASH RECEIPTS

FIND MORE ONLINE

Learn more about the state's top ag products at COagriculture.com.

HAY

Colorado farmers harvest over 1 million acres of hay every year. The crop earned the state \$296 million in annual cash receipts in 2016.

\$296M

CASH RECEIPTS



Hay requires plenty of rain, then dry weather for harvest.



DAIRY PRODUCTS, MILK

In 2016, the state's dairy and milk segment earned \$651 million in annual cash receipts. Colorado ranks 15th in the nation for milk production.

\$651M

CASH RECEIPTS

HOGS

Colorado is home to 670,000 hogs, and in 2016, they brought the state \$183 million in annual cash receipts. The state ranks 15th in the nation for all hogs and pigs.

\$183M

CASH RECEIPTS



WHEAT

Wheat farms brought Colorado \$300 million in annual cash receipts in 2016. The top counties for winter wheat production included Washington, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Prowers and Adams.

\$300M

CASH RECEIPTS



Ask a —SENATOR—

Q&A with Colorado Sen. Rhonda Fields

The daughter of a soldier, Sen. Rhonda Fields values hard work, commitment to equity, justice and service to others. She became involved in public service after her son, Javad Marshall-Fields, and his fiancé, Vivian Wolfe, were murdered in 2005.

The young couple had recently graduated from Colorado State University and were about to begin their careers. But first, Javad was going to fulfill his civic duty and testify about a crime he had witnessed. He and Wolfe were murdered to prevent that testimony.

Devastated from the loss, but not defeated, Fields devoted herself to pursuing policies that would protect witnesses from harm. She advocated for the successful

passage of a bill strengthening the witness protection programs which was enacted in 2006 and titled the Javad Marshall-Fields & Vivian Wolfe Witness Protection Act. She also worked with Wolfe's mother to create a Scholarship Fund in honor of their children. Scholarships are awarded each fall to incoming freshman and renewed annually to encourage retention and graduation. That advocacy led to an interest in public service and a successful run for office. She served as state representative for six years and won a senate seat in 2016. She serves on the Judiciary Committee and the Agriculture, Natural Resources & Energy Committee. Her senate district is one-third rural, one-third suburban and one-third urban.

What is something that you've learned about agriculture that might surprise urban readers?

The needs are the same throughout my district. People in rural areas want what's best for their family and business. They want quality schools, access to health care and a strong economy. At the end of the day, farmers and ranchers want to protect their quality of life and farmland. They care deeply about their land, animals and family. These values are transportable all across Colorado. Farming is a passion and a calling.

I can relate to that. I am passionate about those very same issues and I respect and appreciate all they do for the betterment of our society.

Since joining the Ag Committee, have you had a chance to tour a farm?

I toured the farm of Mark Linnebur who grows wheat in Byers. Mark is a man of integrity and honor, and he allowed me to see firsthand what it is like to live and work on a farm. The crop was beautiful in the fields, and that takes organization, precision, financial commitment and a lot of

very hard work. Farming equipment is expensive and so are irrigation systems. He has to hire people to help harvest and you never know if the weather is going to be too dry or too wet. It takes faith to farm. I don't know if people who live in urban settings realize the amount of labor and love that goes into farming the wheat.

What do you consider the biggest challenge facing the Colorado ag industry?

I think the cost of farming and the regulations imposed on farmers and ranchers are two big challenges.

I also think there is a disconnect between people buying food in the grocery store and understanding all that it took to get it there. Buying food can be done online and the groceries are delivered to our door. That's wonderful, but I worry it takes us further away from understanding the labor it takes to grow food. It's important that we educate ourselves about how food is produced and support our farmers. I am also interested in making sure farmers and ranchers have access to export markets and fair trade agreements.

Do you have a favorite Colorado product to snack on?

I think the Palisade Peaches are delicious. I also love cantaloupe. I enjoy visiting farmers' markets.

Your Twitter page talks about you being an aspiring chef. Do you have a favorite recipe using a Colorado-grown ingredient?

I make this nice summer salad that includes ripe peaches and tomatoes.

Is there something the state Legislature can do to help Colorado agriculture?

Absolutely, I think there are many opportunities to improve agriculture through the legislative process. I am committed to sponsoring bills that reflect what our farmers and communities need to grow. I believe we can protect our environment and support farming at the same time. When you think about how little something costs in the grocery store and all it took to get it there, I'm amazed that farmers can sustain their livelihood. They get up early, work until the sun is down, and then do it again every day. Anything I can do to help ease the burden of regulations and still protect the environment, I will be a champion for that. More folks need to understand the real costs of producing food.



Colorado Sen. Rhonda Fields listens to the concerns of wheat farmer Mark Linnebur during a visit to his farm.

Fields, a state senator, serves on the Agriculture, Natural Resources & Energy Committee, working to help ease burdens for the state's farmers.





MOOVING ON UP

Colorado dairy farmers milk success

Next time you pour a splash of milk over your cereal or watch melted cheddar stretch apart from your toasty grilled cheese sandwich, thank a Colorado dairy farmer. As the second largest commodity in Colorado, dairy farmers produce millions of gallons of milk per year.

Most of Colorado's dairy farms are family-owned and -operated. One such farm is Empire Dairy in Wiggins. Jack Dinis founded the farm in 1981 with 50 cows.

Today, Jack's son, Norm, runs the dairy with 5,000 Holstein cows that are milked three times per day, producing a whopping 52,000 gallons of milk per day. Norm's wife, Britt, and his three children, Austin, 19, Jagger, 16, and Olivia, 14, also help on the farm.

"It means everything; it's one of the main reasons we do it," Dinis says of working the farm with family. "After my dad achieved his goals, he passed the torch to me, and because of his hard work, I've

been able to achieve success and have done lots of things I wanted to in the dairy industry. The motivation is to someday pass it on to my kids."

In addition to working with his family, Dinis says Empire employs 80 workers that help with the dairy and the 5,000 acres of forage crops, including alfalfa and corn silage, which is created when the farmer takes the corn and stalk and ferments it as a high-moisture, high-energy feed.



\$651M

Cash receipts earned by
Colorado dairy and milk in 2016

COLORADO DAIRIES PRODUCE
465 MILLION
GALLONS OF MILK ANNUALLY.

Colorado's annual average temperatures are in the 50s and 60s, which is perfect for raising dairy cows.

THE AVERAGE DAIRY COW EATS
100 POUNDS OF HAY, GRAIN,
SOYBEAN MEAL, CORN AND
OTHER CROPS EVERY DAY.

#2

Dairy is Colorado's
second largest
commodity.



MILK = **87%** WATER + **13%** SOLIDS

Sources: USDA Economic Research Service, Western Dairy Association, Colorado Department of Agriculture



\$651M

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Colorado dairy and milk in 2016

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Sources: USDA Economic Research Service, Western Dairy Association, Colorado Department of Agriculture





Norm Dinis runs Empire Dairy in Wiggins with his family including daughter, Olivia. The second-generation dairy farm focuses on cow care and providing for the land.

Cow Care

As part of the Dairy Farmers of America co-op, Empire Dairy abides by standard care rules set in place to make sure cows are happy and healthy.

“First and foremost, we’re all animal lovers at heart,” Dinis says of Colorado’s dairy farmers. “Second, a healthy cow is a happy cow, and a happy cow gives lots of milk.”

Bill Keating, senior director of industry relations at the Western Dairy Association, echoes Dinis’ sentiment that dairy farmers take care of their cows because it’s the right thing to do.

“Dairy farmers often raise their children on the dairy, and teaching them good animal husbandry is paramount to a dairy farm’s continued existence,” he says.

All cows at Empire Dairy are housed in free-range barns with ready access to outside exercise pens. The barns are equipped with cooling fans and misters to keep cows cool in the summer, plus motion-detecting back scratchers that activate when a cow nudges it. They also have routine checkups and visits from veterinarians.

“All of these practices have become standard throughout the

industry,” Dinis says. “Dairies have become very good at what we do, and we all have the same goal to be as proficient and productive as we can, because we love our animals.”

Love of the Land

Along with keeping cows happy, Dinis says that as an industry, dairy farmers are also stewards of the land.

“A lot of what we do on our farms is to be as efficient as possible and reuse inputs and nutrients,” he adds.

Specifically, Empire Dairy uses groundwater to cool the milk in the milking parlor, then cycles it through to water cows as well.

It also recycles the nutrients from the cows’ manure to grow alfalfa and forage crops.

Keating says that these types of practices have made a huge difference in the past 70 years.

“Thanks to the hard work and innovations of dairy farmers, a gallon of milk is made with 65 percent less water, 90 percent less land and 63 percent less carbon, compared to 1944,” he says. “Dairy is truly a sustainable, honorable, and environmentally sound business that produces a fantastically healthy and delicious product.”

– Rachel Bertone



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65%
LESS WATER

90%
LESS LAND

63%
LESS CARBON

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Compared to 1944



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WESTERN DAIRY
ASSOCIATION

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and planet with world-class care.*

WesternDairyAssociation.org



Cow Know-How

Learn the difference between Colorado cattle breeds

Cows, calves and bulls dot the landscape in Colorado. Ranging in colors and markings, most are raised for beef while others produce milk. The terms may seem confusing, but they're easy to decipher. Cows refer to female cattle that have produced a calf, which is a young cattle (less than a year old) of either sex. A bull refers to a male cattle that is old

enough and ready to breed. All contribute to the state's strong agriculture economy. Agriculture is the second-largest industry in the state and beef cattle are the top commodity in the ag sector. In 2016, cattle and calves earned \$3.1 billion in cash receipts while dairy products and milk brought in \$651 million.

Which cows make for good steaks and hamburgers and which

ones produce milk for tasty ice cream, butter and yogurt? Here's a list of some of the state's most common breeds.

FIND MORE ONLINE

Learn more about Colorado's cattle industries at COagriculture.com.



ANGUS

Known as Aberdeen Angus around the world, the breed arose in Scotland. Solid black or red, Angus is valued for adaptability, health, and marbled meat.



HEREFORD

From England, Hereford is an ancient breed. Red in color, they are fast-growing cattle with good beef quality.



SIMMENTAL

From Switzerland, Simmental produce a naturally lean beef. They were one of the first continental breeds introduced in the U.S.



LIMOUSIN

Originally from France, the Limousin is a hardy and adaptable animal suited to meat production.



JERSEY

From an island in the British Channel, Jerseys are smaller than Holsteins and produce a denser milk that is higher in butterfat.



HOLSTEIN

Recognizable by their black and white markings, Holsteins are known as a dairy cow and have the world's highest milk productions.

SMART FARMING

Colorado farmers go high-tech to produce more with less and protect the environment



With his iPad or smartphone, manager Rod Weimer of Fagerberg Produce – which is one of the largest onion producers in the country – can control his farm’s water and fertilizer usage from anywhere in the world.

More impressive, since investing in a high-tech, subsurface, drip irrigation system, the family-owned onion farm in Eaton cut water use by 30 percent and nitrogen fertilizer use as much as 40 percent – and increased

the amount of onions produced.

“The water savings alone are tremendous, but so is the biological effect of its use,” Weimer says. “Everything you put into the drip irrigation is actually used by the plant. Nothing runs off. Nothing contaminates streams.”

Advancements in ag technology have created enormous environmental benefits, largely in the reduced use of resources, says Dr. Greg Graff, associate professor of agricultural and resource economics at Colorado State University’s College of

Agricultural Sciences.

Today, Colorado farmers use less water, soil and fertilizer than ever.

“The technological improvements in agriculture over the last half century – of which Colorado farmers and agribusinesses are at the forefront – have doubled our production capacity while using the same amount of resources,” Graff says. “In other words, if we had not achieved these improvements, we would need two Earths to feed the current population. But, instead, we’re able to do it with just one.”



Farmers are using high-tech equipment, including drones, GPS, and smart irrigation systems, to help them farm more efficiently.

Farmers at the Helm

Graff says farmers throughout Colorado adopt precision agriculture concepts to tailor cropping choices and reduce overuse of seed, pesticides, and fertilizer. They apply new soil additive strategies to boost soil microbiology and health. Even genetic engineering can be used to improve pest and disease control, crop moisture deficiencies, and food quality.

Graff sees more agricultural advancements to come with fully autonomous tractors, genetic editing and more intelligent drones.

“In the last three years, the United States has seen unprecedented levels of venture capital investment into ag technology, and it’s happening globally,” he says. “Colorado has a big opportunity, and we’re one of the players.”

In fact, Boulder-based startup Agribotix serves customers in more

than 45 countries with its ag-specific drones. The unmanned aerial vehicle flies over a field in a lawn-mower pattern while taking photographs every few seconds, says Paul Hoff, chief operating officer. The company’s software then stitches the images together for a clear picture of plant health across an entire field, not just a small percentage of a field that a farmer inspects.

Smart Farming

Drones already help farmers identify problems, quantify them and take action before a water or fertilizer deficiency or pest problem hurts yield. Agribotix anticipates that future drones will show how effectively plants use water and will use artificial intelligence, such as the ability to identify weeds the way humans do.

“Drones are computers

“The technological improvements in agriculture over the last half century have doubled our production capacity while using the same amount of resources.”

Dr. Greg Graff, *associate professor at Colorado State University's College of Agricultural Sciences*



in the sky, basically,” Hoff says. “When personal computers first came out, they could do a small number of things. As people think of different ways to use computers, they are able to change the way things work. When you buy a drone today, it allows programmers to put their own smarts on it.”

At Fagerberg Produce, Weimer predicts its modern irrigation system may get smarter.

The farm’s underground drip irrigation tape was installed using the global positioning system, or GPS, and a high-accuracy signal that allows Weimer to locate the subsurface dripline within centimeters. In 2017, the onion farm planned to use new sensors to detect soil moisture 2 inches to 48 inches deep at GPS-sited locations.

The irrigation system reacts to the site-specific information, and Weimer anticipates even greater water savings.

“Technology has come a long way in agriculture, and it’s fun farming nowadays because there is so much new stuff that we are learning and doing,” Weimer says. “Every year, we’re changing something and adding something to make it more efficient. You have to be open-minded, willing to go with the times and make it better for our environment.”

– Joanie Stiers

FIND MORE ONLINE

Learn more about ag technology in Colorado at COagriculture.com.

LET’S GET TECHNICAL

Some of the many innovative ag-tech companies that call Colorado home:



AGRIBOTIX

Location: Boulder

What They Do: Provide fully supported, easy-to-use drone-enabled technologies and services for precision agriculture.

Website: agribotix.com

AQUA TERRA CONSULTANTS

Location: Ouray

What They Do: Water engineering and management, including watershed model applications and software development.

Website: aquaterra.com

HOLLAR SEED

Location: Rocky Ford

What They Do: Breeding and development of cucurbits (cucumbers, gourds, melons, pumpkins and squash).

Website: hollarseeds.com

INFINITE HARVEST

Location: Lakewood

What They Do: Operate a vertical farm based on hydroponic technology.

Website: infinite-harvest.com

PUREVISION TECHNOLOGY

Location: Fort Lupton

What They Do: Convert biomass (renewable non-food plants like wheat straw, corn stalks and industrial hemp) into value-added products and commodities.

Website: purevisiontechnology.com



PARTNERING WITH THE **COMMUNITY**





With several locations throughout Colorado, 4Rivers Equipment has been helping customers solve issues with real-world solutions since 1926. The company provides high-quality products and outstanding customer service to the farm and agriculture, construction, and home and garden industries with a large selection of heavy equipment and machinery for sale and rent.

Striving for more than just a business deal, 4Rivers works to get to know its customers and takes pride in building lasting relationships. Take its partnership with H2 Enterprises, one of the largest seeding and reclamation operations in the country.

“Our partnership with H2 has been in place for about eight years,” says Corey Covelli, partnership representative for 4Rivers. “They’ve grown incredibly fast and are successful in everything they do. It’s more of a team effort between us. I spend most of my time at their office and everyone has become friends, so it’s a working relationship and a personal one.”

He says that to be successful, it’s important to see the bigger picture of the company, not just a sale. “I’m not much of an asset to them if all I worry about is trying to sell them equipment. I need to be a true partner to them and do what I can to help them be more successful.”

“That is a trend with all of our salesmen,” adds Hannah Ross, marketing manager for 4Rivers. “They’re always trying to be friends as well as partners. They’re equally part of each other’s success.”

4Rivers provides about 98 percent of the equipment that H2 purchases for reclamation projects. The company works coast to coast and is looking to expand into international markets.

Brent Huwa of H2 Enterprises agrees that the

relationship goes beyond business. “It’s more than just a sales/customer relationship, and it’s nice when your vendor can become your partner,” he says. “We share ideas and resources and network together. It’s a win-win for everyone – our company, 4Rivers and the customers.”

H2 also puts lots of time and effort into fundraisers to help disadvantaged children, and 4Rivers provides support in those aspects as well.

“The Ropin’ Rascals event was one of the coolest fundraisers I’ve ever been involved in,” Huwa says. The company invited special-needs classes from local schools to experience farm and ranch activities including horse riding, a train ride, John Deere Gator rides, roping and more. “We really wanted the event to

“It’s more than just a sales/customer relationship and it’s nice when your vendor can become your partner.”

Brent Huwa, H2 Enterprises

be all about them for the day, and it was very rewarding to see the expressions on their faces and the interactions with other kids. I was choked up almost all day,” Huwa says.

4Rivers was able to be a part of the event as well, and Huwa says it’s gratifying to work together for a greater cause. “We definitely learned more from the kids than they did from us,” Huwa says. “It was a really cool experience.”



Shannon Mitchell is the director of Pike's Peak Therapeutic Riding Center, which offers horse therapy to veterans, active-duty service members, children and more.

SADDLE Up

Colorado's horse industry thrives with therapeutic riding and more

Coloradans have a special relationship with horses, from the wild herds roaming the rugged backcountry to farm horses that are the backbone of the state's agricultural heritage dating back to the Old West.

Today, Colorado's equine industry is thriving, but it goes beyond agriculture. In addition

also nationally and internationally. We are very well known for our equine industry."

Trail riding is very popular, "with over 45,000 people enjoying the outdoors on the back of a horse on our fabulous trails, dude ranches and camping sites," Scebbi says. The state also offers excellent youth programs, like Pony Club

The Colorado Horse Park in Parker and Arapahoe Park in Aurora. These facilities and others draw thousands of enthusiasts to shows, competitions, and horse racing.

"I don't think there's a weekend that goes by where you can't go to those facilities or their websites and find an activity to enjoy horses," Scebbi says.

Bonding with Horses

The state is also known for its therapeutic riding. "It seems to be a real natural experience to help people out physically or emotionally," Scebbi says.

The Colorado Springs Therapeutic Riding Center focuses on helping clients become stronger physically and mentally through adaptive riding lessons that teach riding skills. The program serves children and adults facing physical, cognitive and other challenges. The program's success stories point to clients, including children, gaining confidence and forming stronger ties with their peers and community.

Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center in Elbert serves veterans, active-duty service members and family members, as well as children

"Colorado has a very vibrant equine industry. We are dynamic not only in local activities, but also nationally and internationally. We are very well known for our equine industry."

Bill Scebbi, *executive director of the Colorado Horse Council*

to riding trails and dude ranches, the industry includes horse competitions, breeding, racing, rodeo and even therapeutic riding opportunities.

"Colorado has a very vibrant equine industry," says Bill Scebbi, executive director of the Colorado Horse Council. "We are dynamic not only in local activities, but

and 4-H, which entail a variety of riding activities. Additionally, rodeos – including the popular barrel-racing competitions – are huge sporting events in Colorado.

There are more than 75 different horse clubs in the state and Colorado boasts fine equine facilities including the National Western Complex in Denver,

and others in need. The center is on a mission to assist those with psychological challenges, such as PTSD or traumatic brain injuries, and other physical disabilities or challenges.

“We find using horses really enhances the therapeutic process,” says Shannon Mitchell, executive director of the center. “Our youngest client is 2 years old and our oldest client is 87, and we serve everyone between.”

According to Mitchell, horses provide insight to our own emotions, which is key to the psychological therapeutic work. “A horse can sense when someone is scared or timid, and will back away,” she says.

The riding center uses this

insight to help its clients learn the skill of approaching a horse and horsemanship.

55K+
OVER 55,000 PEOPLE IN THE
STATE OWN HORSES.

“They mirror what we do, and they don’t hide their own emotions,” she explains. “You’re always told that if you’re riding a horse, they can tell if you’re

scared. They really can. The horse teaches clients to face their own emotions and accept them.”

As for the physical side of riding, the center uses hippotherapy, which engages a horse’s movements for physical therapy purposes to help the rider develop and enhance balance, posture, coordination, core strength, and other aspects.

Healing Warriors

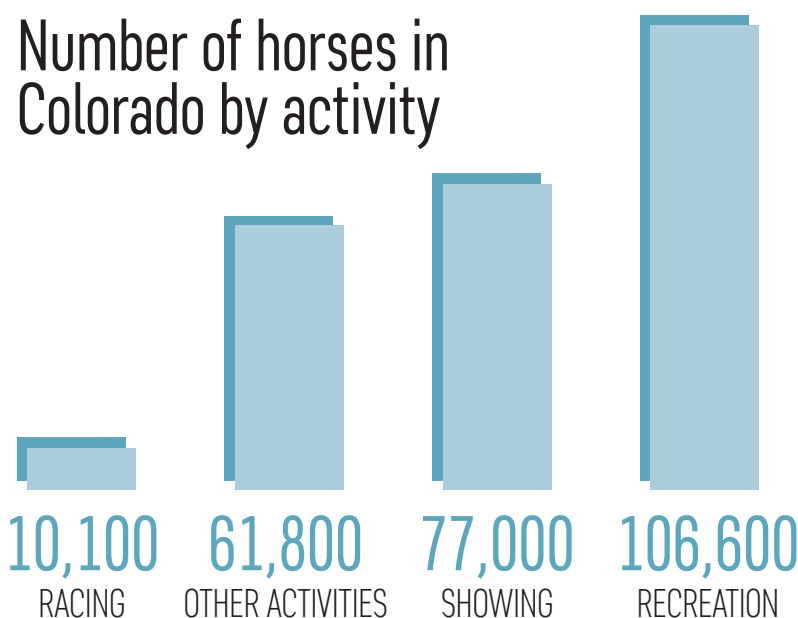
In Colorado Springs, the Warrior Wellness Program is helping military members heal from PTSD. Warrior Wellness is an equine-assisted therapy program at the U.S. Air Force Academy’s (AFA) Equestrian Center.

Army veteran Billy Jack Barrett heads the program. Barrett, who

\$1.6 BILLION

Colorado’s horse industry has a \$1.6 billion total economic impact.

Number of horses in Colorado by activity



Most horses in the state are quarter horses.

THE COLORADO
HORSE INDUSTRY
GENERATES ABOUT
21,000 JOBS.

Source: American Horse Council Foundation – The Economic Impact of the Colorado Horse Industry

has been the stable manager since 1980, developed the idea for the program nearly a decade ago. Boeing provided funding for the Equestrian Center staff, he says, and the OK Corral Series Equine-Assisted Therapy Program provided the volunteers' training for certification.

Eligible military members board

approximately 135 horses at the AFA Equestrian Center and about 30 government horses are used in the program, he says. Warrior Wellness supports The Knights of Heroes, spouses and children of Killed In Action and Missing In Action, Gold Star Families, and Make-A-Wish Foundation, along with many others.

“There are many warriors and their families who need healing where traditional therapy is failing,” Barrett says.

However, he says the heart and soul of the program is the “dedication and loving, caring hearts of the staff and volunteers, to help warriors and their families heal.”

– *Brittany Stovall*



Colorado's equine industry encompasses horses used for trail riding, competitions, breeding, therapeutic riding and more.



Crafting FLAVOR

Colorado is raising the bar in liquid arts with deliciously crafted beers, ciders, wines and distilled spirits



Stem Ciders in Denver is one of several Colorado cideries. Co-founder and CEO Eric Foster (right) says they work with local growers to use heirloom apples in their ciders, taking an orchard-to-glass approach.



With an international reputation for quality and a growing list of niche craft creations, Colorado's liquid arts industry has become a model to follow. The state is home to an eclectic mix of well-known beverage brands – especially in the beer sector – and the industry's pursuit of excellence extends to all aspects of brewing, fermenting and distilling wine, ciders and spirits.

Liquid Arts 101

No matter the end product, there are lots of factors that contribute to the success and growth of

Colorado's liquid arts industry, with the ultimate goal being to create a delicious and unique product for consumers.

One of those factors is using local products to make beverages. This is a founding principle for many Colorado cideries, including one of the region's cider pioneers, Big B's Delicious Orchards in Hotchkiss, and six-generations-strong Talbott Farms cider in Palisade.

In Denver's RiNo Art District, Eric Foster, co-founder/CEO of Stem Ciders and board member of the Rocky Mountain Cider Association (RMCA), finds that

working with local growers provides an opportunity to showcase and promote "heirloom apples from our own backyard." This type of orchard-to-glass collaboration has even led to tasty experiments with local pickle makers.

Stem Ciders decided to expand recently, and in January 2017, broke ground on a new Lafayette facility.

"The 30,000-square-foot facility will be home to our cider-making production, offices, a restaurant and taproom with retail space," Foster says. The expansion will also add 25 new employees to the team.

With Brad Page, one of the



Golden Moon Distillery in Golden makes small-batch craft spirits using historical techniques. Waste from its distilling process is used as compost and livestock feed by local farmers.

principals of RMCA, Foster and other local cideries are leading a regional cider revival, benefiting both the state's industry and agriculture.

For wine-grape growers, Colorado's arid climate helps deliver the desired complex flavors in

"Additionally, our wineries are being creative about new approaches to packaging," Doug Caskey, executive director of the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board, says. "The Infinite Monkey Theorem in Denver and Colterris Wines in

farmers and gardeners.

"We want to be as green as possible. This is amazing material that other people can benefit from," says Stephen Gould, proprietor of Golden Moon Distillery and one of the principals of the Colorado Distillers Guild.

Unlike traditional distilleries, Gould applies techniques used by distillers in the late 1800s to develop a variety of artisan ultra-premium spirits, distributed across 13 national markets and three in Europe.

"We're making spirits that no one else is making, like our crème de violette. It's the only distilled violet liqueur in history and we believe it's currently the only American-made violet liqueur of a dozen brands available worldwide," he says.

Gould stresses that the continued growth and success of Colorado's distilling industry relies heavily on the state maintaining its pro-business laws. The strong support of the state Department of Agriculture has also been instrumental.

The "Colorado difference" is perhaps best summed up by a philosophy out of Palisade-based The Peach Street Distillery: Hard work packs the best punch. It's a method that's tried and tasted true.

— Keri Ann Beazell

Colorado's wine sales have more than tripled since 2005, from \$42 million to more than \$144 million. Two-thirds of the increase is from tourism.

well-balanced wine, while minimizing pests and diseases. The state gets more than 300 days of sunshine each year, with cool nights and low humidity. Coupled with an alkaline soil composition, Colorado has prime conditions for growing world-class grapes.

Lucky for consumers, that means Colorado can make a wide variety of wines with different types of grapes, including sauvignon blanc, merlot, Riesling, viognier, chardonnay, muscat, chambourcin, and other fruits including cherries, apples and peaches.

Palisade are putting their wines in cans. Talon Wine Brands in Palisade and Kingman Estates Winery in Denver have had success packaging their wines in Mylar (storage) bags inside a box that are more convenient for outdoor enthusiasts. "

The Craft Distillery Movement

The number of distilleries in Colorado is also increasing, as is their waste-not production style. For example, at Golden Moon Distillery, located in Golden, waste from distilling processes is used as compost and livestock feed by local



PROVIDING A RURAL RESOURCE

Access to affordable and reliable electricity is critically important to Colorado's rural communities. For over 75 years, Colorado's electric co-ops have been providing the power needed to run homes, farms and businesses all across the state.

The Colorado Rural Electric Association supports the mission of Colorado's electric co-ops by providing essential services like government relations, communications, education and safety training. "CREA doesn't produce electricity," says Kent Singer, CREA's executive director, "but we provide services that help our members keep the lights on in the most efficient and affordable way."

While other electric utilities provide service in the urban parts of the state, Colorado's electric co-ops serve primarily the rural parts of Colorado. In all, electric co-ops provide electricity to over 70 percent of Colorado's landmass but only about 20 percent of the state's electricity consumers. This means that co-ops have about seven consumers per mile of distribution line while investor-owned and municipal

electric utilities have about 35 to 45 consumers per mile of line. Co-ops were created to provide electricity in areas that no other utility was willing to serve.

Today's electric co-ops are, according to Singer, "the hearts and souls of their communities. They not only provide electricity to run farms and homes, they also provide great jobs, support many charitable causes, and award scholarships to local high school kids."

Colorado's electric co-ops are also adopting the latest technologies to respond to a changing industry landscape. "Our co-ops are working at a fast pace to install automated metering systems, deploy renewable energy facilities and encourage the efficient use of electricity," Singer says. "Every day, co-ops across the state are deploying technologies and adopting policies that are responsive to the members they serve. The bottom line is that Colorado's electric co-ops are always looking for new ways to improve the lives of folks living in rural Colorado."



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Field to Foam

CSU boosts beverage and food industries with new programs

Colorado State University (CSU) is leading the pack in innovation and research for the state's beer, beverage, and food industries.

As one of the state's fastest-growing industries, brewing contributes about \$1.7 billion to Colorado's economy, thanks to some of the nation's biggest names in brewers and more than 350 craft breweries.

CSU researchers are helping brewers make beer even tastier with fresh hops grown indoors using LED lights. Hops, the flowers used to flavor beer, are best when they're fresh, but they have only a small window after harvest before they start to deteriorate, so most breweries use dried hops. CSU uses LED lights in a greenhouse to simulate the sun, and a hydroponic growing method that doesn't use soil. This could offer local breweries fresh hops year round. The technology produces three crops of hops per year rather than just one.

In 2013, the university began

offering its Fermentation Science and Technology (FST) program. The program includes beer, but that's not all, according to Jeff Callaway, associate director for the program.

"It encompasses the fermentation of foods and beverages, as well as the health side and the impact these foods have," he says. "It includes many basic foods that people take for granted such as yogurt, cheese and pickles, plus some more obscure ones like tempeh and other soy products. You can ferment just about anything."

The program focuses on teaching students about the entire process, or as Callaway says, from "field to foam," including how ingredients are grown, the processing aspects, engineering and the technology used. "We want them to understand the entire supply chain," Callaway says.

Part of that understanding comes from working with the researchers at the CSU San Luis Valley Agricultural Experiment Station (AES). The station raises barley for MillerCoors, and they have several

varieties of malting barley for growers to observe.

"We're still trying to develop that relationship with the FST program, but Jeff and I both have an interest in beer," says Tyler Thompson, manager of the AES. "It might be sending barley varieties so that students can see it and really understand the growing end of things."

"Many people think of barley malted once it's already in a bag, and we're trying to get them to think of it in the field," Callaway adds. "Again, it's the field-to-foam concept we're actively exploring."

Graduates from the program have an advantage as they seek jobs in the fermentation industry.

"We have companies like Leprino (a major cheese manufacturer) interested in our students because this program isn't just general science. We are teaching the students the hard and soft skills they need to work in the industry," Callaway says. "We have great relationships within the industry to help students obtain jobs."

— Rachel Bertone

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Al Gerace, president of Welby Gardens, is part of the family business' second generation. Al's parents, Alex and Esther Gerace, began the company in 1948.

FLOWER POWER

The Gerace family has stayed grounded in a successful nursery business over four generations

More than half a century ago, the Gerace family planted the beginnings of a small produce and plant farm. Today, with greenhouses in three locations and more than 3,000 varieties of annuals, perennials and food plants, you could say Welby Gardens has deep, strong roots.

“Originally, my parents, Alex and Esther Gerace, were growing vegetables in their garden,” says Al Gerace, president of Welby Gardens and part of the second generation of Geraces. “In 1948, they built their first greenhouse and grew vegetable starter plants for other farmers. As time progressed, they began growing flowers: geraniums first and then petunias.”

Today, the business – which has 1 million square feet of greenhouses over its three locations – grows anything that consumers might want to plant in their yards and gardens, including flowers and organic vegetables. Currently they sell to landscapers and

independent retailers only.

“Our fastest-growing division is our young plants division, which includes baby plants that we sell to other greenhouses like ourselves,” says Marty Gerace, CEO and third-generation family member at Welby Gardens. These baby plants are sold under the name of Hardystarts and Welby’s bedding plants are under the Hardy Boy brand – one of the most well-known brands of ornamentals in the industry. Marty says that status is thanks to the innovative marketing practices of the earlier Geraces, who were ahead of the times.

“We were the first greenhouse to brand our product and sell outside with a brand attached,” Marty says. “A lot of that marketing was done early on where we were marketing commercially through newspapers and TV in the 1980s.”

Industry Leaders

Along with brand recognition, both Al and Marty say Welby Gardens has always stayed



on top of what's new in the industry in terms of science and technology.

"We've become more sophisticated," Al says. "Growing up, we were the labor. My dad was a salesman and my mom managed the details. It was mostly backbreaking work, and it still is, but today it's a lot more in your head."

To stay on top of the game, Welby Gardens works closely with Colorado universities to gain knowledge on everything from water usage to cost analysis. Al says they're part of a plant alliance consisting of 10 universities that share helpful research findings, and Welby Gardens has also participated in trials on their farm so that they can have the best, newest products and also test certain plant traits, such as drought resistance.

"When we started the trialing process, we were doing it ourselves in-house," Marty says. "As time went on,

"Our family work ethic has made us what we are. We've never asked our employees to do anything that we wouldn't do."

Marty Gerace, CEO of Welby Gardens

Colorado State University started doing some trialing as well, and we've always supported their program. We supply them with vegetative annuals and hire lots of interns from there. We're very open to education."

Al adds that one thing that makes Welby Gardens unique and helps them progress is the education of the employees.

"We hire people with degrees in our company," he says. "My son is a post-grad entomologist and the fourth generation, Nick, is a soil agronomist." An agronomist is an agricultural scientist whose work focuses on issues ranging from crops to water to chemistry. Nick Gerace focuses on soil health and plant growth.

All in the Family

Both Al and Marty agree that the company wouldn't be where it is without the foundation from Al's parents and their work ethic, plus family members of ensuing generations.

"We're very fortunate that my parents laid the groundwork for a strong work ethic," Al says. "And everyone has played their part."

"Our family work ethic has made us what we are," Marty adds. "We've never asked our employees to do anything that we wouldn't do. We're right there with them in the trenches and the hard times."

- Rachel Bertone



Welby Gardens grows more than 3,000 varieties of annuals, perennials and food plants in three greenhouses. The fourth-generation family-owned and -operated business works with Colorado universities to perform trials and research, and stay on top of what's new in the industry.

GUARDING *the* BRAND

Colorado Department of Agriculture's Brand Inspection Division still going strong after 150 years

Almost like a secret code, livestock branding uses its own language to declare ownership and deter thieves. That's as true today as it was in the Old West.

The Colorado Brand Inspection Division's storied history dates back to 1865 when investigators traced altered livestock brands and tracked cattle rustlers, as well as missing livestock, which included cattle, calves, horses, mules, donkeys and burros.

The Division, which became a state agency in 1903

and part of the Colorado Department of Agriculture in the 1970s, is still charged with deterring theft and locating missing livestock. However, its day-to-day activities also focus on assisting livestock commerce.

Branding animals can be traced back to ancient Egypt and Spain. Today, brands are registered like trademarks and remain a critical element in the cattle industry.

Each year, thousands of head of livestock are sold at Colorado's 27 livestock markets, which are licensed by the Brand Inspection Division. All livestock at those markets are inspected before sale to verify ownership. That protects buyers and sellers, as well as lenders underwriting purchases.

Methods of branding include the traditional hot-iron application and newer freeze branding that uses a super cold iron. Even tattooing and microchips are in use to protect ownership.

Wide-Ranging Inspection

Nearly 70 brand inspectors, supervisors and staff form the foundation of Colorado's livestock industry.

"Brand inspectors verify animal ownership before that ownership changes by sale or gift," Colorado Brand Commissioner Chris Whitney says. "Livestock ownership must also be verified before animals are transported over 75 miles within Colorado, any transport out of state, and transport to sale or slaughter. If you have a trailer full of livestock, the inspection certificate issued by the Brand Inspection Division is the proof of who owns those animals," Whitney says.

The Brand Inspection Division also administers the state's certified feedlot program. Feedlots are



Colorado Brand
Commissioner
Chris Whitney

approved operations in the state that grow and finish animals. When leaving the feedlot for processing, the animals must have a current brand inspection certificate. In addition, the Division licenses and certifies elk and fallow deer facilities. Fallow deer are an exotic species raised in North America for their excellent meat.

Brand inspectors also are present at rodeos and livestock exhibitions. “At the National Western Stock Show and Rodeo in Denver, inspectors are there when inspection is required,” Whitney adds.

Additionally, the Division researches, authorizes and maintains records of nearly 33,000 brands registered by livestock owners in Colorado. The earliest brand on file is from 1899. Brands not only support livestock commerce and investigations, they help preserve Colorado’s heritage.

“Some Coloradans wish to maintain a livestock brand associated with a ranch or family even if they are no longer branding livestock,” Whitney says.

Making Improvements

All Brand Inspection Division duties are connected by the agency’s historical task of verifying livestock ownership.

“The basic business of buying and selling livestock – taking livestock to market – hasn’t changed dramatically in the last century,” Whitney says. “Our job to verify livestock ownership hasn’t changed. But some of the tools we use to do the job are changing.”

Electronic records are one way the Division is moving brand inspections into the future.

“The transition offers a number of advantages for the livestock industry and Brand Inspection Division, including improving accuracy and legibility of data, more timely reporting of information, improved and faster accessibility to data, and less cumbersome storage of data,” says Deb Vernon, a brand inspector supervisor who coordinated the project. “We anticipate the Division’s approximately 60 brand inspectors and supervisors will all be preparing their inspection certificates digitally by Jan. 1, 2018.”

Improved access to electronic records may deliver other benefits, such as possible implications for animal health.

“Our inspectors are out in the field every day and are familiar with the state’s livestock operations and operators,” Whitney says. “The inspectors’ knowledge can be very helpful in tracing livestock in the event of a disease outbreak such as the contagious equine diseases that may break out from time to time.”

The electronic certificates will also bring new technology to the Division’s original focus. Cattle in particular remain attractive targets for thieves.

“Rustling is still very much alive in the West,” Whitney says. “Brands are livestock’s return address.”

– Matt Ernst



One of several livestock brands owned by the family of Don Brown, Colorado’s Commissioner of Agriculture.

Brand inspectors are
the perfect combination
of modern-day cowboy
and skilled detective.

THE DIVISION ADMINISTERS
ALL OF COLORADO’S
32,753
REGISTERED LIVESTOCK BRANDS.

About **68** brand inspectors,
supervisors and staff serve
in **10** supervisory districts
throughout Colorado.

Source: Colorado Brands Division – Colorado Department of Agriculture

MAKING A



Pueblo Chiles



Colorado Potatoes



Olathe Sweet Corn

Pueblo Chiles are an iconic Colorado product with a distinct flavor. Colorado's San Luis Valley is the second-largest fresh-potato growing region in the U.S. Olathe Sweet Corn is considered some of the best sweet corn in the nation. Palisade Peaches are prized for their taste, texture and juiciness. Colorado Lamb is the culinary star of menus from New York to California. The Western Slope's warm days with intense sunshine and cool nights produce apples that are sweet, crisp and delicious.

NAME

Colorado farmers and ranchers grow products with a national following



Palisade Peaches



Colorado Lamb



Colorado Apples

ISTOCK.COM/SADDAKO, BHOFAKZ | ELA FAMILY FARMS PHOTO COURTESY OF KIM COOK

A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but that’s not the case for Colorado-grown fruits and vegetables. Name recognition means a lot in the state, from juicy Palisade Peaches and sweet Rocky Ford Cantaloupe to Colorado Potatoes, Olathe Sweet Corn and the sizzling Pueblo Chile.

Pueblo Chile

“Colorado growers do a great job because they know their name is riding on the quality of their crop, as well as 100 years of pride,” says Shane Milberger, a chile grower and owner of Milberger Farms in Pueblo. “Pueblo has been growing chiles since as far back as 1903. One family of growers here is in its sixth generation. We’re so well known for chiles in this area, and that gives us pride, because everybody wants the Pueblo Chile.”

Milberger Farms grows 60 acres of chiles in different heat levels, from as mild as a bell pepper to as spicy as a ghost pepper. The true Pueblo Chile variety, Milberger says, is the Mirasol, which has a unique, spicy flavor. Mirasol means “looking at the sun,” and the chile is aptly named since it grows upright toward the sun.

“What makes the Pueblo Chile so great is that, first, our community knows how to grow them – they’re a staple in southern Colorado,”



Milberger says. “Second, we have an ideal climate. The hot days and cool nights create body and thickness in the chile and enhance the flavor. Plus, we have good soil and water.”

Growers harvest the chiles from August to October, and they typically are eaten fire-roasted.

“They’re good with everything,” Milberger says. “You can eat them with olive oil and garlic on bread, put them in spaghetti sauce or green chili, on sandwiches, or stuffed like a chile relleno.”

Rocky Ford Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe is the city of Rocky Ford’s claim to fame. The first

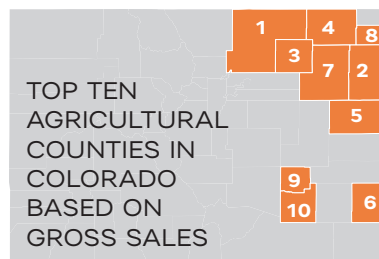
Rocky Ford Cantaloupes were grown in the area in 1887, and by 1896, the melons were being shipped by train to markets as far away as New York.

“Rocky Ford Cantaloupes were actually featured on the menu of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel many years ago,” says Michael Hirakata of Hirakata Farms, president of the Rocky Ford Growers Association. “Our cantaloupes are unique because they are sweeter than any other. They are grown in Otero and Crowley counties south of the Colorado Canal. The area we are in is special due to the elevation, the heat of the day, the cool of the night, and our water

The Colorado Proud Program: Better for you. Better for Colorado.

Support your state by purchasing locally grown, raised, and processed food and ag products. When looking for products at the grocery store, farmers’ market, restaurant or garden center, look for the logo sporting a purple mountain and yellow sun with the words “Colorado Proud.” By purchasing local foods and more, you are helping support Colorado’s economy, farmers, ranchers, greenhouses, and more.

The program even helps you pick fruits and vegetables and track down where Colorado Proud products are sold. Be sure to visit coloradoproud.org to see a farm-fresh directory, find stores that carry local products and local wineries, read tips on choosing fresh produce, and much more.



- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Weld | 6. Prowers |
| 2. Yuma | 7. Washington |
| 3. Morgan | 8. Phillips |
| 4. Logan | 9. Crowley |
| 5. Kit Carson | 10. Otero |

and arid environment.”

The highly sought-after melons give the whole community a sense of pride – even Rocky Ford High School’s mascot is the “Meloneer.”

“I enjoy watching them grow and mature, and finally shipping them to stores,” Hiramata says. “Sometimes you run into somebody who will thank us for what we do, and we also thank the consumer, because without them we couldn’t exist. That’s very rewarding.”

Colorado Lamb

Colorado also has a nationwide reputation for producing tender, mild cuts of lamb, and foodies often request Colorado Lamb by name.

“You can find Colorado Lamb on restaurant menus from coast to coast,” says Bonnie Brown, executive director of the Colorado Lamb Council. “Our lambs are raised with plenty of sunshine, fresh mountain air, and a variety of nutritious grasses and grains that finish in a tender, mild and flavorful center-of-the-plate entree.”

The Colorado Lamb Council has partnered with the American Culinary Federation Colorado Chefs Association to promote Colorado Lamb for more than 20 years, and the meat is featured at some of the most prestigious events in the state.

“We work with culinary schools to educate chefs about Colorado Lamb’s nutritional value and versatility,” Brown says. “Many chefs develop a lifelong affinity for Colorado Lamb and continue to use it throughout their career, regardless of what state they live in.”

– Jessica Mozo

WHAT’S IN SEASON?

PRODUCT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Apples								A	S	O	N	
Apricots							J	A				
Arugula				A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
Asparagus					M	J						
Beets						J	J	A	S	O	N	
Bell Peppers								A	S	O		
Broccoli							J	A	S	O		
Cabbage							J	A	S	O	N	
Cantaloupe							J	A	S			
Carrots						J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Celery							J	A	S	O		
Chard						J	J	A	S	O	N	
Cherries						J	J					
Chile Peppers								A	S	O		
Cucumbers	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Eggplant								A	S	O		
Grapes									S	O		
Green Beans							J	A	S			
Herbs	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Honeydew								A	S	O		
Leafy Lettuce				A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
Mushrooms	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Onions/Garlic							J	A	S	O	N	
Peaches							J	A	S			
Pears								A	S	O		
Plums								A	S			
Potatoes	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Pumpkins									S	O		
Raspberries							J	A	S	O		
Summer Squash							J	A	S			
Spinach				A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
Strawberries						J	J	A	S			
Sweet Corn							J	A	S	O		
Tomatoes	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Watermelon							J	A	S			
Winter Squash	J	F							S	O	N	D

FIND MORE ONLINE

Explore the state’s agriculture industry and farmers at COagriculture.com.

LAMB CHOPS WITH BERRY MINT SAUCE

Ingredients

- 8-10 thick-cut lamb chops
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt and pepper, to taste

Berry Mint Sauce:

- 2 cups berries (any combination of sweet berries, such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries or blueberries)
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 cup fresh mint, chopped

Instructions

1. Rub lamb chops evenly with garlic. Coat with olive oil, salt and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to grill.
2. Sauté onion in olive oil in a medium saucepan until soft. Stir in berries, sugar and seasonings (reserving mint).
3. Stir over medium heat until berries are mashed and mixture begins to bubble slightly. Set aside and cool.
4. When cool, puree berry sauce in a blender or food processor. Add mint. Blend just until evenly distributed. Set aside.
5. Grill chops to desired doneness. Serve sauce as a dip alongside the chops.



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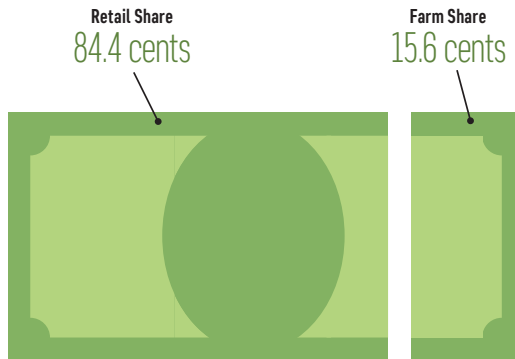
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Your Food Dollar

An in-depth look at where your food dollars go

HOW \$1 SPENT ON FOOD IS BROKEN DOWN



This dollar bill shows the farm and marketing costs in a typical \$1 food purchase. For some commodities, the farm share is much less. For example, wheat farmers receive about 2 cents for every loaf of bread that's sold.

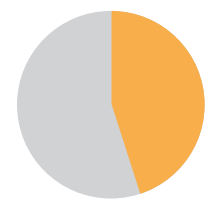
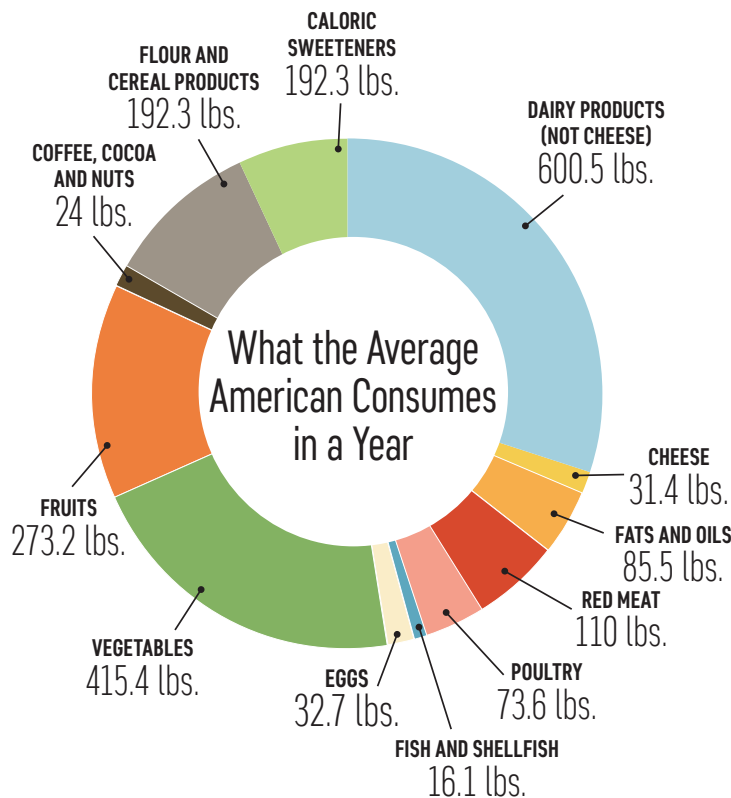
- The farm share of the food dollar is the share received by farmers from the sales of raw food commodities.
- The retail share combines the portions received by all post-farm activities from processing to transportation to retail marketing.



The average U.S. household spends **6.4 percent** of its household income on food.



THE U.S. SPENDS LESS HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON FOOD THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY.



In 2016, millennials spent **44 percent** of their food dollars – an estimated \$2,921 annually – on dining out.

Source: USDA



Keep up with COLORADO AGRICULTURE

Want to stay in touch with Colorado food and farmers?
Here are a few ways to get started:

Shop at a Farmers' Market

With more than 100 farmers' markets across the state, it's easy to buy fresh local produce, meats and other foods in Colorado. Find a farmers' market near you at coloradofarmers.org.

Keep Learning

Ag in the Classroom provides agricultural education to students across the state. For more information, visit growingyourfuture.com.

Buy Local Products

Want to support producers in your state? Discover products made in Colorado at coloradoproud.org.

Visit a Farm

Picking berries, exploring a corn maze, selecting the perfect Christmas tree – these are just some of the fun things to do on farms. To learn more about Colorado agritourism, visit coloradoagritourismassociation.org.

Share Infographics

Download shareable graphics featuring the state's top 10 ag products, seasonal produce calendars and more at COagriculture.com.

Stay in Touch

Keep up with the wide-ranging efforts of the Colorado Department of Agriculture at colorado.gov/agmain.



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture



Visit Our ADVERTISERS

Learn more about the organizations that support Colorado's agriculture.

4Rivers Equipment
4riversequipment.com

Aims Community College
aims.edu

American AgCredit
agloan.com

Colorado Corn
coloradocorn.com

Colorado Egg Producers
coloradoeggproducers.com

Colorado Farm Bureau
coloradofarmbureau.com

Colorado FFA Foundation
coloradoffafoundation.org

Colorado Potato Administrative Committee
coloradopotato.org

Colorado Rural Electric Association
crea.coop

Colorado State Fair
coloradostatefair.com

Colorado State University
agsci.colostate.edu

Colorado Wheat
coloradowheat.org

Common Ground
findourcommonground.com

Northeastern Junior College
njc.edu

Our Side of the Divide
deltacountycolorado.com

Premier Farm Credit
premieraca.com

Western Dairy Association
westerndairyassociation.org

COLORADO WHEAT

Colorado has a long and proud history of wheat production. Three organizations serve the wheat farmers of Colorado, who in turn serve Colorado consumers.

*Colorado Wheat
Administrative
Committee*



*Colorado
Wheat Research
Foundation*



*Colorado
Association of
Wheat Growers*



The Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee

(CWAC) helps Colorado wheat producers develop, maintain, and increase domestic and export sales while supporting education, research, and promotional programs designed to increase the consumption and utilization of Colorado wheat. CWAC is funded by a producer-approved assessment of two cents per bushel.

The Colorado Association of Wheat Growers

(CAWG) represents its dues-paying members at the state Legislature and Congress at the national level.

The Colorado Wheat Research Foundation

(CWRF) works hand in hand with Colorado State University (CSU) to help develop and distribute new wheat varieties. Varieties are marketed as "PlainsGold" in Colorado and surrounding states. CSU and PlainsGold feature a heavy focus on improving the quality of wheat grown by local farmers, which leads to improved wheat products for consumers.

One example is the use of PlainsGold varieties Snowmass, Sunshine, and Thunder CL to make ULTRAGRAIN® whole-wheat flour. ULTRAGRAIN®, produced by Ardent Mills, provides whole-grain nutrition with the taste, texture, and appearance of refined white flour.

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