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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 16, 2013

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Agricultural Exports Increase \$14.5 Million in First Six Months of 2013

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – Colorado’s agricultural exports for the first six months of 2013 totaled \$725.6 million, an increase of \$14.5 million over the same period for 2012. Increases in exports to Canada of \$23.1 million and to Hong Kong of \$18.2 million helped to offset a \$27 million decrease in exports to Russia. The \$725.6 million level recorded for the first six months of 2013 represents a twenty percent increase in just the past two years.

Colorado’s agricultural export growth included increased imports by seven of Colorado’s top ten markets. While Canada’s increase covered a wide spectrum of products, Hong Kong’s import increase was all red meats. Brazil joined the top ten markets in the first six months of 2013, increasing their imports of Colorado agricultural products from \$328,000 to more than \$9 million. Brazil is importing wheat directly from Colorado for the first time with purchases of \$8.5 million. Colorado’s exports went to 102 countries, with new markets opening in Tunisia, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Vincent/Grenadines, Anguilla and Aruba.

“Colorado’s broad market reach is critical for our industry,” said Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture John Salazar. “By increasing our global markets, Colorado can continue to increase sales well into the future.”

Decreases in exports were reported for several markets, most notably Russia, which dropped over \$27 million in this period due to the continued closure of the market to Colorado and U.S. red meats. Mexico’s weak economy also contributed to a \$26 million decrease in imports of Colorado agricultural products despite the fact that Mexico imports of U.S. beef increased in June, reversing a trend of the first five months of reduced imports of U.S. beef according to the Denver headquarters of the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

“Colorado’s cattle industry continues to focus on not only expanding current markets, but also to advocate for the opening of both the Russian and Chinese markets, which will provide additional export opportunities for the Colorado beef industry,” continued Salazar. “Gaining access to these markets represents a critical element of our industry’s future viability.”

International marketing specialists are available to assist in beginning and expanding Colorado’s export markets. Assistance includes training for export operations, assessment of market options, international finance and accessing USDA funding support for exporters. For more information visit www.coloradoagriculture.com, call (303) 239-4118 or e-mail Timothy.Larsen@state.co.us.

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