

# COLORADO AGRICULTURE--Learn, Speak, Share

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The Colorado Department of Agriculture reaches every single person in this state. Staff works closely with industry, consumers, producers, and state leaders to keep Colorado agriculture one of the most important industries in the state. Besides being one of the largest economic sectors in the state, Colorado farmers and ranchers help feed you, your friends and family, and the world. And it's about more than the food on your plate—it's about food, fiber and fuel—for a growing world population while also conserving environmental resources.

Below are some ag stats and fun facts to help educate your friends and family on the importance of agriculture.

**Colorado agriculture provides abundant, nutritional products for consumers within the state and around the globe.**

- Colorado ranks first in the nation in millet production.
- Colorado ranks in the top ten in the nation in nearly 25 commodities.
- There are over 1 billion eggs laid in Colorado each year.
- It takes a combine 9 seconds to harvest enough wheat to make 70 loaves of bread.
- Cattle and Calves is Colorado's number one agricultural commodity with 2.7 million head of cattle in the state.

**Agriculture is one of largest contributors to the State's economy, supporting more than 173,000 jobs in Colorado, generates more than \$40 billion of economic activity annually, and exported nearly \$1.8 billion of food and agricultural products in 2012.**

- There are 36,700 farms and ranches in Colorado.
- The United States provides about 25% of the world's total supply of fresh peaches. Colorado ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation for peach production.
- Dairy cows provide us with milk and milk by-products like cheese, butter, and ice cream. In addition, milk is also used to manufacture glue, paint, and plastics.
- Approximately 60% of the state's \$7.1 billion in agricultural cash receipts are attributed to livestock.

**Land in farms and ranches provides habitat for wildlife and open space, and innovative and sustainable farming practices ensure that our state's resources will remain protected for generations to come.**

- Of Colorado's 66.3 million acres, approximately 11.5 million of that is cropland area.
- Farmers and ranchers provide food and habitat for 75% of the nation's wildlife.
- Ethanol and new bio-diesel fuels made from corn, soybeans and other grains are beneficial to the environment and helps contribute to energy independence for the U.S.

**Colorado's agriculturists employ sound animal husbandry practices, which ensure livestock remain healthy, productive and content.**

- A pig can run a 7-minute mile.
- It usually takes about 20 minutes for a cow to be milked. On average a cow is milked 2 to 3 times a day. And by the way—Colorado dairy cows produce more milk per cow than almost every other state.
- Producers continually utilize and implement best practices to ensure that animals under their care are healthy.

**Farmers and ranchers are critical to Colorado agritourism, welcoming tourists from around the world and giving them a taste of the Colorado experience.**

- It takes just 40 days for most Americans to earn enough money to pay for their food supply for the entire year.
- George Washington liked ice cream so much he reportedly had a bill for \$200 for ice cream one summer.
- The last USDA Ag Census (2007) indicated that 679 Colorado farms offered agritourism and recreational services, totaling nearly \$33 million in farm income.
- Whether you visit a farm, shop at a farmers' market or tour a winery, you are helping to support Colorado's agriculture industry.
- Colorado's wine production has increased ten-fold over the last nineteen years. Colorado has an estimated 120 grape growers, tending more than 1,000 acres of vineyards, and more than one hundred licensed commercial wineries and wine tasting rooms.
- Buying Colorado products helps support the state economy, so look for the Colorado Proud logo and buy local when shopping or dining.