

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

2020 Highlights



**COLORADO**  
Department of Agriculture

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is an essential crisis response agency in Colorado.

Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, the Department continues to fulfill our mission. Through thick and thin, we provide leadership, support and guidance to the people of Colorado.

The skill and dedication of our Department's nine divisions to provide ongoing, enhanced customer service during the pandemic to our agricultural producers and the state of Colorado speaks to the commitment and skill of our 300+ employees.

The following pages illustrate only a small portion of the work we have completed and are continuing to deliver in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Collaboration

We are stronger and more effective when we work together. Our strategic partnerships further strengthen the work we do on behalf of our agricultural communities.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT**

Meet daily with CDPHE to ensure awareness of ag-related developments and concerns

## **STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

Meet daily with state emergency leadership to keep apprised of COVID-19 impacts

Representing ag and livestock interests

## **COLORADO AGRICULTURE COUNCIL**

Held weekly meetings to discuss needs, developments and technical assistance

## **USDA**

Coordinating efforts to identify and mitigate livestock production impacts in processing facilities

Protecting worker health and safety

Connecting stakeholders with federal government support and funding

## **COLORADO FARM & FOOD SYSTEMS RESPONSE TEAM**

Secured \$1 million in CARES Act funding for farmers, ranchers, food hubs and processors

# Service

**100%**

of CDA's vital state regulatory services have continued during COVID-19

We exist to serve the producers and people of Colorado. Upholding this purpose, no matter the circumstances, is our priority. We are proud to have not only maintained, but expanded our services across the board.

Surveying custom meat processors to determine ability to increase capacity

Communicated to the grooming industry the impact of Stay at Home Executive Order

Fruit and vegetable inspections increased 20% to help potato shippers meet demand

Providing daily service to veterinarians, producers, and animal owners while working remotely

Prioritizing livestock scale inspections to allow ranchers to bring their cattle to market on time

Hosted 3 virtual roundtables on current experiences, resilience and cultivating food systems

One of only a few states in the nation to ensure pesticide applicator testing remains available



Photo by Michael McCaffrey

# Safety

Attention to safety is an important, long-standing value in the world of agriculture, and it's taken on new meaning in the face of COVID-19. Protecting our industry, and every person along the critically important food supply chain, is as urgent now as it has ever been.

**HELPING SECURE PPE AND SUPPORTING HEALTH EQUITY FOR AG WORKERS THROUGH THE PROMOTORA MODEL**

**HELPED CREATE COLORADO AG WORKER GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

**WARNING COLORADOANS OF FALSE COVID-19 CLAIMS FROM PESTICIDE MANUFACTURERS**

**CREATING AG INDUSTRY-FOCUSED MESSAGING ON SOCIAL DISTANCING**

**DEVELOPED BEST PRACTICES FOR WINERIES, BREWERIES, AND DISTILLERIES TO OPERATE SAFELY**

Photo by Chelsea Ellingson

# Consistency

2020 has given us enough surprises. Our team has provided the steady leadership needed to maintain regular on-site operations while simultaneously navigating a massive shift to virtual workplaces.



Developed guide for field inspectors to address COVID-19 concerns

Brand inspections continue, ensuring the critical movement of livestock to markets and consumers

Developed a new e-license portal for easier submission by pesticide applicators and consistency in service

**100%**

of Conservation  
Program operations  
continue with  
precautionary  
measures in place

All export inspections and certifications continue to be provided with no interruption

Hemp sampling, inspections and testing continue uninterrupted

Seed sampling was completed without interruption

Photo by Tiffany Rieckenberg

# Innovation

**Out-of-the-box. Creative. Visionary. Whatever the label, the concept is alive and well at the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Our professionals have called upon their skill, resourcefulness and commitment to their goals since day one of the pandemic.**

**Implementing department-created guide for brand inspectors to address COVID-19 concerns**

**Through emergency rule, relaxing requirements in order to approve pet animal foster homes faster**

**Adapting laboratory schedules to allow for continuous operations and maximum distancing**

**Following remote data lab review, approval and reporting processes created by the laboratory division**

**Holding weekly virtual wine tastings live-streamed on Facebook**

**Adapting organic certification to a hybrid of online audit and onsite inspection**

**HELD REIMAGINED  
STATE FAIR WITH  
ON-SITE 4-H AND FFA  
EVENTS AND NEW  
VIRTUAL PLATFORM  
CONNECTING  
THOUSANDS OF  
COLORADOANS**

**Photo by Travis Harvey**

# Support

Supporting Colorado agriculture is core to our mission, and we do it every day. COVID-19 hasn't slowed our drive to support our state's producers. In fact, it's further highlighted the support that our nine divisions provide to all of Colorado's communities.



**20,000+**

COVID-19 tests  
conducted at the  
State Fairgrounds

Built new international marketing website and conducting meetings to promote CO food and ag businesses abroad

Providing technical support to Conservation Districts and CACD to host virtual meetings.

Leading meat processing work group

Increasing listening sessions with ag producers

Built new Colorado Proud website to promote local producers and connect consumers

Created "Keep Colorado Strong" campaign to support local food and agriculture businesses



Photo by Michael McCaffrey

# Advocacy

**Advocating for Colorado agriculture is core to our mission. The pandemic has underscored the need to serve as a strong voice for all our state's ag stakeholders and food producers.**

Promoting eligibility of CARES Act funds to conservation districts, resulting in more than \$127,000 in grants awarded to date

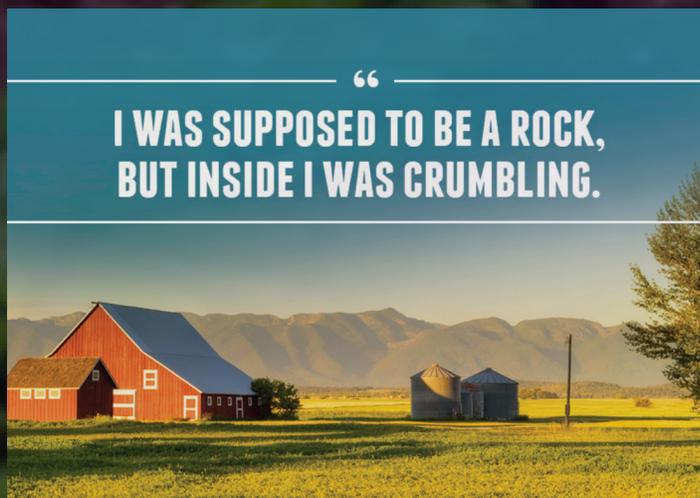
Helping keep farmers' markets open in support of local producers

Created COVID-19 information and resource web page targeted to the wine and grape industry

Supporting Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Tribes in food and business operations

Collaborating with smaller meat processors to support their growth

Worked through the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and federal partners to resolve supply chain disruptions and advocate for federal relief for agriculture



Created impactful new rural mental health campaign in partnership with numerous stakeholders, state agencies and the Colorado Crisis Services hotline. Call 844-493-TALK or text TALK to 38255 for free, confidential, 24/7 support.

Photo by Kate McRoy

# Mission

To strengthen and advance Colorado agriculture; promote a safe and high-quality food supply; protect consumers; and foster responsible stewardship of the environment and natural resources.

# Vision

That Colorado agriculture be strong and vibrant, a key driver of the state's economy, and recognized worldwide for its safe and abundant supply of high-quality food and agriculture products.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Agriculture

Photo by Savannah Schlaufman