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Registration Questions, Call Maxine at 719-852-7381 or Maxine.Lujan@ColoState.edu

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2021 Rocky Mountain Ag Conference is still a go — virtually

By REBECCA COPLEY

The 2021 Rocky Mountain Ag Conference is happening this year although due to the COVID-19 pandemic it will look a little different from in years past.

Despite these challenges the annual conference will still be happening Feb. 2-4. Presentations and classes will be held virtually. For anyone interested in attending the cost for one day is \$30 and \$60 for three days. The conference is only accepting PayPal payment.

A statement from the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce's website explained how both the pandemic and the construction of the new Ski-Hi Complex has affected this year's conference saying, "As we are all painfully aware, COVID-19 has affected

many events and this conference has been no exception. This year's conference will be a scaled down version due to health restrictions and the effect that COVID-19 delays have had on the construction of the new Ski-Hi Multipurpose building."

There will be a trade show from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Feb. 2 and Feb. 3 The trade show will be held in the McMullen Building at Ski-Hi Park and Colorado State University Extension will be conducting a virtual conference. The trade show

will be open to the public. All booths will be 10X10 and there will be at least 6 feet between booths. Masks will be required and will also be available at the Chamber of Commerce booth right at the door when entering. Meals will not be provided this year, however there will be a food truck available outside for the public to purchase food.

For more information on this year's Rocky Mountain Ag Conference, visit online www.montevistachamber.org/ag-conference-2021.html.



Monday Night Ag-Focused Marketing Webinar Series Begins in February

STAFF REPORT

Many agricultural producers don't feel confident in their abilities to market the commodities they produce. In today's agricultural business environment of low-commodity markets, high-input costs and slim or non-existent margins, marketing skills are essential. To help farmers and ranchers improve their marketing skills, Colorado State University Extension Ag Economist Dr. Brent Young is offering a series of ag marketing webinars.

The Monday Night Marketing webinar series is two programs in one. The first meant to be an introductory course covering the mechanics of cash, futures, and options markets. This four-week series is designed to meet the needs of agriculture producers who are new to commodity marketing and are looking for techniques to improve the prices they receive for their crops and livestock.

The final four sessions are a more advanced course that will focus on sophisticated marketing techniques



and the development of a farm/ranch level marketing plan. These sessions are designed for producers who have a basic understanding of the topics presented in the introductory course.

The webinar format is interactive and will allow for live questions. Each webinar session will be recorded for review if you miss a session or for additional viewing

to clarify concepts.

The webinars will be held from 7 to 9 p.m., Mondays in February and March. Register for each session — February and March — separately for \$15 or both sessions for \$25. To register online, visit <https://mondaynightmkt.eventbrite.com>. For more information, contact Brent Young at 970-580-2204 or email at brent.young@colostate.edu.

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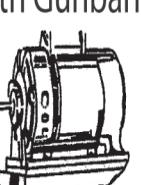
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Potato LEAF Reaches \$2 Million Founders Society Goal

Foundation announces virtual Institute Alumni Summit, July 13-15

STAFF REPORT

WASHINGTON — The Potato Leadership, Education, and Advancement Foundation (Potato LEAF) in January announced it achieved its inaugural fundraising goal of \$2 million for 2020. Launched at Potato Expo 2020 in Las Vegas, Potato LEAF was created to provide tools, training, and support necessary to develop growers and industry members as leaders. “We challenged the industry with an ambitious goal, and we couldn’t be more appreciative of the response, particularly during an incredibly uncertain year,” said Potato LEAF Board Member Gregg Halverson. “We want to thank the growers, businesses, allied partners, and state and national potato organizations who stepped up to the plate during Potato LEAF’s first year. The solid financial foundation provided by these Founders Society

members will ensure Potato LEAF will be able to meet its mission for years to come.”

The Potato LEAF Founders Society, created to acknowledge the inaugural contributors to the foundation, recognizes individuals and businesses making pledges and contributions of \$10,000 or more. The Potato LEAF Board of Directors has extended the opportunity to become a member of the Founders Society. Pledges can now be made through Dec. 31, with fulfillment by Dec. 31, 2023. A full list of Founders Society members can be found <https://pleaf.org/donors>.

Potato LEAF also announced the creation of a new program designed to support graduates of its Potato Industry Leadership Institute. The Institute Alumni Summit, open to past graduates of the Institute, will take place virtually, July 13-15. Over the three days, the Summit will provide alumni with engaging training sessions designed with tips attendees can use immediately to improve their leadership skills.

- July 13: Refining Your Leadership Skills
- July 14: Refining Your Conflict Management

- July 15: Boosting the Team’s Morale

“We’ve always seen the need for a continuing education program like the Institute Alumni Summit, and the creation of the Potato LEAF provided the platform to turn that vision into a reality,” said Dan Moss, Potato LEAF Board Member. “Through the Institute Alumni Summit, we look forward to further investing in the emerging leaders within the U.S. potato industry.”

The sessions will be taught by leadership training experts Eric Herdman and Laurie Richards.

Eric Herdman is an accomplished motivator and facilitator. His audiences respond to his approaches to increase productivity, upgrade performance, strategically position business, and get more from their teams. He works with individuals, small business professionals, association leaders, and Fortune 100 companies to help them lead themselves and others to achieve results.

A frequent contributor to the Leadership Institute, Richards has worked with thousands of farmers, executives, sales and marketing professionals, technical experts, and other leaders helping them effec-



Leadership, Education & Advancement Foundation

tively tell their stories and improve communication at every level.

Potato LEAF is a non-profit organization launched in January 2020

designed to provide tools, training, and support necessary to develop growers and industry members as leaders.

Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Conference will be virtual Feb. 17-28

STAFF REPORT

The Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) will hold its seventh annual conference Feb. 17-18, using a virtual format. Registration for the event is \$20 for members registering early.

“With a very reasonable registration rate and no need to travel, we expect even more registrants than the 300 we typically have for in-person conferences,” said CFVGA President Robert Sakata. “While we will all miss the in-person socializing that our conferences provide, we believe the virtual conference will offer a similar line-up of opportunities to engage with others in the produce industry.”

The CFVGA conference will include plenary sessions that inform and motivate participants. In addition, breakout sessions will include a variety of topics, including farm labor, Covid era food system adaptations, consumer behavior changes during Covid, production research, online produce sales platforms and multiple food safety education options. In addition, participants can

watch videos from recipients of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, who have completed their projects.

Most sessions will be pre-recorded with the presenters available live following the recording to answer questions about the topic. An advantage of the virtual format is that these sessions and exhibitor booths will remain on the conference website for a year following the conference.

Exhibitors will be able to showcase their goods and services by uploading a promotional video and handouts to their virtual booth that visitors to the booth can view and download. The virtual platform allows for chat and even live video meetings, either scheduled or spontaneous. Conference attendees can find exhibitor booths either by browsing the virtual exhibit hall or by searching exhibitors by goods and services offered. Exhibitor request forms are being accepted now <https://cfvga.memberclicks.net/cfvga-annual-conference-exhibitor-request-form>

The conference will include the annual business meeting, with results of

the online election of board members announced, and presentation of the 2020 CFVGA Robert Sakata Member of the Year Award.

View the CFVGA conference website and register online at <https://pheedloop.com/cfvga2021/site/home/>. Registration is now open. For questions or more information contact CFVGA at 303.594.3827 or admin@coloradoproduce.org

The CFVGA is comprised of more than 250 members, including growers of all sizes and types of production throughout the state, as well as representatives of allied industries. The Colorado fruit and vegetable growing sector contributes nearly \$485 million to Colorado at the farm gate and is multiplied as it goes through the distribution chain. Over 90,000 Colorado acres are in fruit and vegetable production.

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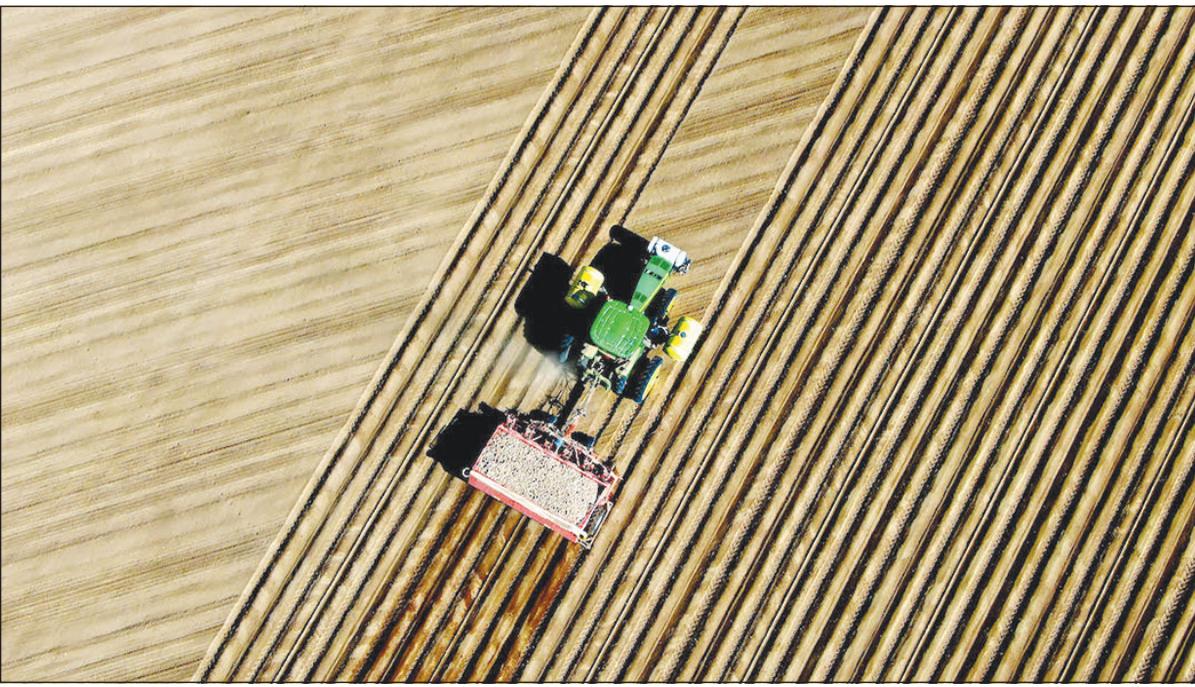
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Monte Vista man's potato planting photo gets honorable mention

STAFF REPORT
BROOMFIELD — An aerial photo of “Planting Patterns” during the 2020 potato planting season by Daniel Harvey of Monte Vista earned honorable mention in the 2020 Best in Show Photography Contest sponsored by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

More than 100 photos were submitted through the annual contest, which invites photographers of all skill levels to capture images of Colorado’s vibrant agriculture industry in every corner of the state.

The judges were faced with the daunting task of choosing only three winners from a large pool of excellent photographs. All entries have a valuable role in promoting and helping tell the stories of Colorado agriculture and will be featured widely in CDA communications.

The 2020 first place winner was Brad Hensley of Longmont, with his entry titled “Peaks, Horns, Smoke.” Taken in Weld County last September, the winning photograph shows a dramatic image of grazing cattle silhouetted against the front range

at sunset contrasted by a massive smoke plume from the Cameron Peak wildfire.

The second- and third-place photographs feature images of woolly sheep in falling snow in Arapahoe County taken by Ben Griffiths and a bird’s eye view of Colorado’s Eastern Plains corn harvest near Kersey captured by Shelby Chesnut.

Visit the CDA website to view more of this year’s top photo entries and for information about the 2021 Best in Show contest, now underway.

Colorado Ag Department Seeks Listings for 2021 Farm Fresh Directory

STAFF REPORT
 Colorado agricultural producers are encouraged to be part of the 2021 Farm Fresh Directory, published annually by the Colorado Department of Agriculture. The directory, which will be released in June, promotes Colorado farmers’ markets, roadside stands, u-picks, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) producers, agritourism activities, wineries, and farms and ranches that sell direct to the public.

“Farm Fresh is a popular and helpful resource for Colorado residents and visitors,” said Danielle Trotta, Business Development Specialist at the Colorado Department of Agriculture. “The goal of the publication is to connect consumers to local producers, farmers markets, and other local goods all in one easy place.”

More than 100,000 copies of the directory will be distributed to consumers through libraries, extension offices, farmers’ markets, welcome centers, chambers of commerce, home milk delivery services and other busi-



nesses. Additionally, Farm Fresh is available as a mobile app for smartphones and on the Colorado Department of Agriculture website.

The fee to be included in the directory is \$25, and the listing deadline is Feb. 15. For more information, contact Loretta Lopez at 303-869-9175.

The role of technology in agriculture

When asked to think of industries that utilize technology in unique ways, few people may immediately think of agriculture. But technology has left a significant footprint in every industry, and the agricultural sector is no exception.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture notes that modern farms operate a lot differently than the farms of yesteryear. Dramatic changes have taken place within the agricultural industry over the last few decades, helping farming operations become more efficient and profitable as well as safer and more eco-friendly.

Robots, temperature and moisture sensors, aerial images, and GPS technologies are now routinely employed within the agricultural industry. The NIFA notes that the value of such technologies cannot be understated. Thanks to the technologies at their disposals, farmers no longer have to uniformly apply water, fertilizer and pesticides

to their farms. Technology now allows them to use only the minimum amounts required as they zero in on individual plants and target specific areas of their farms. The NIFA notes that the utilization of these technologies produces some very real

benefits, including:

- Higher crop productivity
- Reduced impact on natural ecosystems
- Less runoff of chemicals into rivers and groundwater
- Increased worker safety

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Ag Conference Schedule

Tuesday, February 2

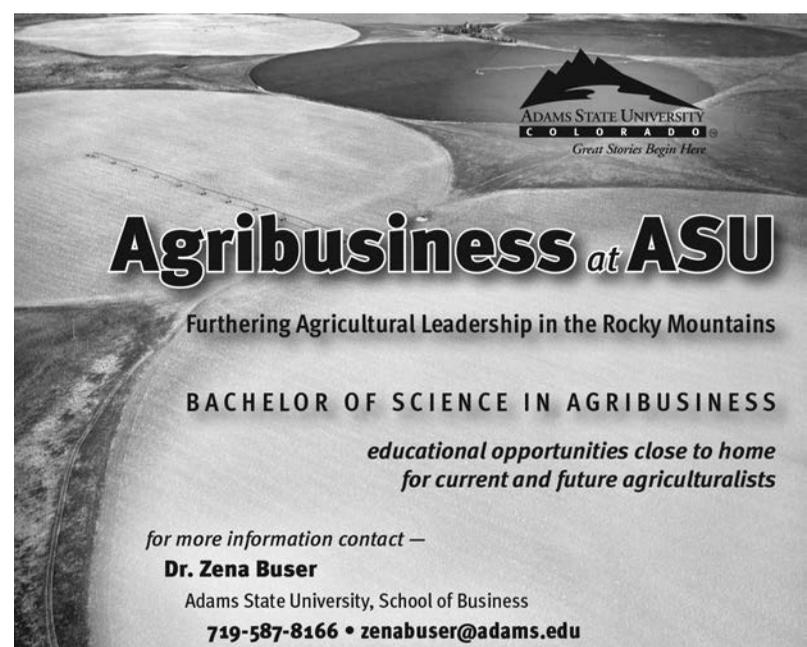
- 8:00 am Welcome
- 8:05 am **The Role of Calcium in Crop Stress Mitigation**, Jimmy Ridgway, *Regional Sales Manager, Yara International, ID*, Monte Vista Chamber Diamond Sponsor
- 8:15 am **Kubota/Powder River Ag Equipment**, Monte Vista Cooperative, *Diamond Sponsor*
- 8:25 am **Potato Certification: Winter Test Update**, Dr. Andrew Houser, *Manager, Colorado Potato Certification Service, CSU/SLVRC, Center, CO*
- 9:25 am **National Potato Council 2020 Results and 2021 Priorities**, Kam Quarles, *CEO, Washington, D.C.* and Mike Wenkel, *COO; National Potato Council*
- 9:55 am **Soil Potato Health—Colorado and Beyond**, Dr. Jane Stewart, *Assistant Professor, Agricultural Biology, CSU* and Dr. Courtney Jahns, *Professor, Agricultural Biology, CSU*
- 10:40 am **President's Update - Colorado State University**, Joyce McConnell, *President, Colorado State University*
- 11:10 am **Potatoes USA**, John Toasperm, *Chief Marketing Officer, Potatoes, USA*
- 11:40 am **Developing Genome Editing for Colorado Potato Breeding**, Dr. Stephen Pearce, *Assistant Professor, Soil & Crop Sciences, CSU*
- 12:30 pm **Fresh Potato Market Update**, Mark Klompien, *President/CEO, United Potato Growers of America*

Wednesday, February 3

- 8:00 am Welcome
- 8:05 am **Bayer Crop Sciences**, Monte Vista Chamber Diamond Sponsor
- 8:15 am **CPAC Update**, Jim Ehrlich, *Executive Director, Colorado Potato Administrative Committee*
- 8:25 am **Challenges in Agriculture, Working with Corporations and Other Topics**, Dr. Temple Grandin, *Professor, Dept. of Animal Sciences, CSU*
- 9:25 am **Causes of Farm Labor Shortages**, Dr. Roland Fusami, *Vice President and Senior Analyst, Rabo Bank*
- 10:25 am **Update on PVY Biology and Management**, Dr. Amy Charkowski, *Professor and Department Head, Department of Bio-agricultural Sciences and Pest Management, CSU*
- 11:10 am **Pea Aphids Correlated with Early Season Potato Virus Y Spread**, Tess Christensen, *Agro Engineering and Jacob Pitt, PhD Student, CSU*
- 11:50 am **Colorado Tuber Quality Project**, Dr. Sastry Jayanty, *Extension Specialist – Postharvest Physiologist (50%) College of Agricultural Sciences Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture*
- 12:10 pm **CSU Activities in the SLV to Support Community Economic Development: Opportunities To Engage**, Dr. Becca Jablonski, *Assistant Professor* and Dawn Thilmany, *Professor, Agricultural and Resource Economics, CSU*

Thursday, February 4

- 8:00 am Welcome
- 8:05 am **Agri-Store Up-date**, Mike Lamoreaux, *Business Development, Agri-Store, Monte Vista Chamber Diamond Sponsor*
- 8:15 am **Wenta-Nip**, Monte Vista Chamber Diamond Sponsor
- 8:25 am **Community Food Insights with COVID 19**, Dr. Becca Jablonski, *Assistant Professor, Agricultural and Resource Economics, CSU*
- 9:50 am **Water Subdistrict Update**, Marisa Fricke, *Program Manager, Amber Pacheco, Program Manager, Chris Ivers, Program Manager, Cleave Simpson, General Manager, Rio Grande Water Conservation District*
- 10:25 am **Colorado Water Plan and the San Luis Valley**, Mr. Craig Cotton, *Staff Engineer/Water Engineer, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Alamosa Division 3*
- 11:25 am **Water Export Update**, Heather Dutton, *Manager, SLV Water Conservancy District*
- Livestock Programs (virtual)**
- 11:15 am **Grazing Croplands**, Dr. Joe Brummer, *Associate Professor, Forage Specialist, Soil and Crop Sciences, CSU*; Dr. Meagan Schipanski, *Associate Professor, CSU*
- 11:55 am **Causes of Reduced Reproduction Rates in Beef Cattle**, Dr. Ryan Rhoades, *Associate Professor, Extension Beef Specialist, Department of Animal Sciences*; and Dr. Franklin Garry, *Professor, Extension Specialist/Veterinarian, Collee of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Department of Clinical Sciences, CSU*
- 1:00 pm **Calving School**, Dr. Kayla Bentley, *Veterinarian, Alpine Vet (an in person event planned at McMullen Building/Ski Hi Park)*



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Ag Conference Schedule

Private Applicators CEU is a separate registration from the 2021 Southern Rocky Mountain Ag Conference. Use the link below to register for the Seven Pesticide Applicator CEU's.

Registration will be required. Each participant will need to register and participate on their own device to receive credit.

Register in advance for the Private Applicator Seven Core Credit class:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting/register/tZUldGvrTwtGNFtI9wcQKR0a0Lp9OudOdM>

Private Pesticide Applicator 7-Core Credit

Continuing Education Classes

Classes will be scheduled on Monday, February 1, 2021 and Friday, February 5, 2021 on the following schedule

Monday, February 1

- 1:00-1:30 Laws and Regulations Part 1
- 1:35-2:05 Pesticides and Families
- 2:10-2:40 Environmental Protection
- 2:45-3:15 Applicator Safety

Friday, February 5

- 1:00-1:30 Use of Pesticides
- 1:35-2:05 Public Safety
- 2:10-2:40 Laws and Regulation Part 2

Safety tips for parents of young farmers

People who live in cities, exurbs or suburbs may not come across farms very frequently. But millions of people, including children, still live on farms. In fact, in 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that more than one million children under the age of 20 lived, worked or had a regular presence on farms in the United States.

Protecting children from injury on farms, especially those who perform work on farms, is of paramount importance. The American Society of Safety Engineers offers the following safety tips to parents of children who will be spending time on farms.

- Know and obey the laws. Various state and federal laws are in place to protect young children from farm-related accidents and injuries. Age requirements dictate which jobs children can perform on a farm, and parents should adhere to those requirements. Asking children to do more than they're physically capable of can lead to accident, injury or even death.

- Review equipment operation instructions. Before assigning children a task on the farm, parents should review the equipment operation instructions. Doing so can help parents reacquaint themselves with tools and equipment they may not have used in awhile, and that can make it easier for them to teach kids how to use such equipment. In addition, reviewing equipment instructions may provide insight to parents unsure if their children are old enough to use certain tools.

- Inspect equipment. Before children perform any tasks on the farm, parents should inspect the equipment their children are likely to use to make sure each tool is safe. Make sure tools are in proper working order, as broken or poorly working equipment increases the risk of accident or injury.

- Enroll children in farm safety camps. The ASSE recommends that parents contact their local Cooperative Extension and Farm Bureau offices to enroll children in farm safety camps. Such camps can teach kids safe farming techniques and the proper ways to use age-appropriate tools.

- Set a positive example. Another way for parents



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to protect their children on the farm is to set a positive example. Parents can do so in various ways. Using equipment properly, removing tractor keys from ignitions when tractors are not in use and exercising caution when using hazardous materials shows kids the importance of caution when working on farms.

Hundreds of thousands of children perform jobs on farms across the country. Parents who want to teach their kids to farm should always do so with safety in mind. TF185005

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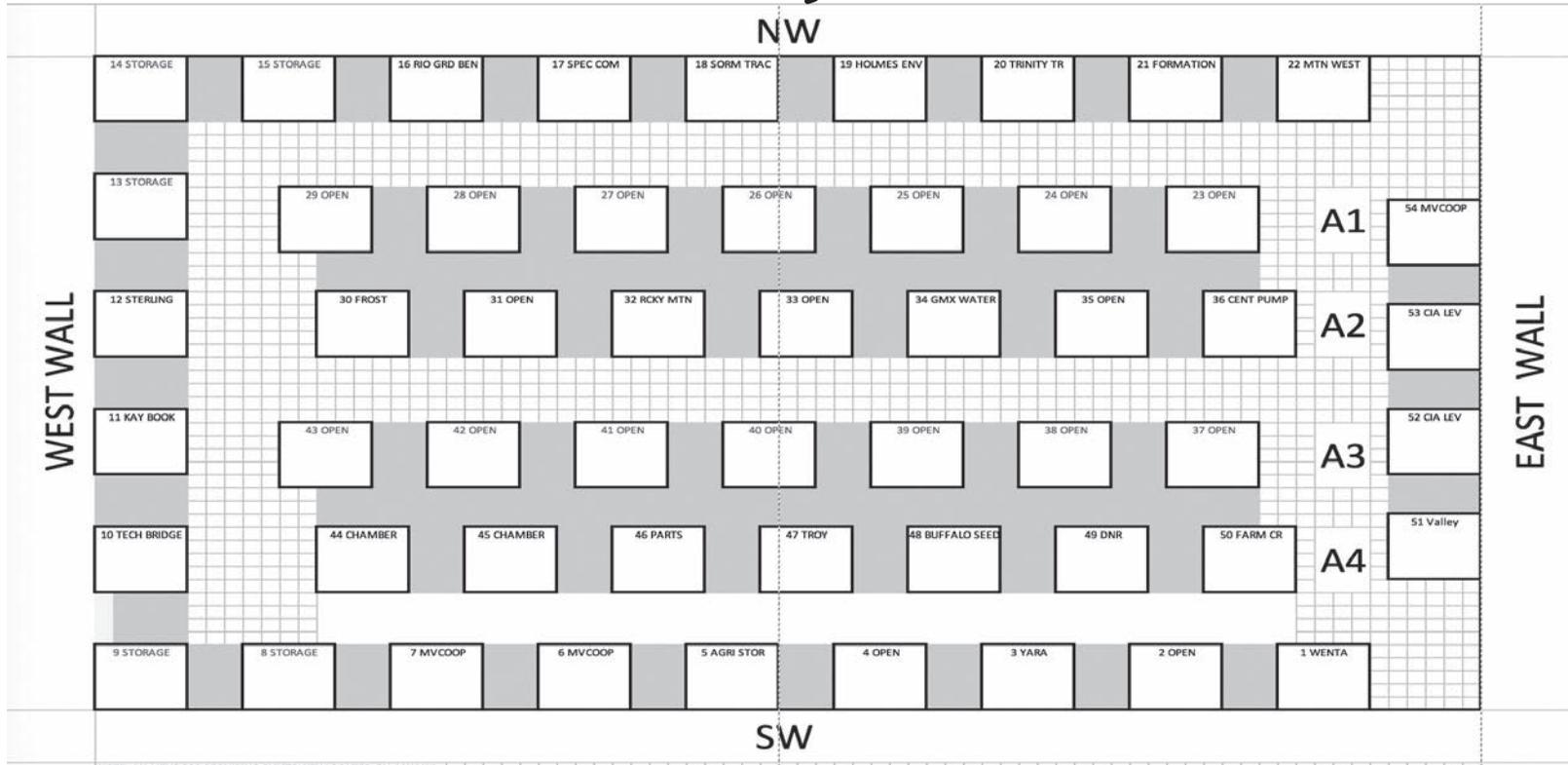
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Planning for Colorado Hemp Center of Excellence underway

STAFF REPORT

The Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) awarded the contract for development of a strategic plan for a state Hemp Center of Excellence to MPG Consulting.

The selection was based on the recommendation of an independent review committee, which included a member of the Colorado Agriculture Commission, a member of the Hemp Advisory Committee, and other leaders and experts in Colorado agriculture and purchasing. The strategic plan will be completed by July 2021.

"We are very excited about moving forward with the development of the

Center of Excellence and are confident that MPG Consulting will be a strong partner in helping us and our many stakeholders advance the hemp industry in Colorado," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kate Greenberg.

CDA is committed to elevating industrial hemp as an agricultural commodity, a priority since the launch of Colorado's nationally-recognized Industrial Hemp Program in 2014. The collaborative development of the Hemp Center of Excellence aligns with the Department's mission to strengthen and advance Colorado agriculture, and hemp industry stakeholders will be participating in the strategic planning process.

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