

# ❖ REPORT CARD ❖

Volume 17 Number 1

SPRING 2008

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## CFA ~ Comics

### for Middle School Students

The Colorado Foundation for Agriculture is pleased to introduce the new *CFA Comics* for middle school students. These 16-page student publications provide a fun way to study agriculture and natural resource topics.

These comics are in the review stages and are being pilot tested by educators. They will be ready for distribution to schools this fall. Like the *Colorado Reader* series, they will be provided free to any educator that requests them.

Middle school students can look forward to discovering the *Watershed Defenders* and *Major Ag* — a light-hearted approach to some serious topics. The CFA is completing the development of a series that mixes text and super-hero characters in a comic book format. The *Watershed Defenders* address runoff pollution and present real-life strategies to empower everyone to be a hero. This issue was funded through a grant

**MIGHT YOU BE INTERESTED IN SERVING ON CFA'S BOARD? MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY, MARCH, MAY, SEPTEMBER & NOVEMBER. MEETINGS ARE FROM 11:00 TO 2:00. LUNCH IS PROVIDED. THE LOCATION**

**CHANGES, SO CONTACT:**

**Bette**

**970-881-2902**

**if you would be interested in attending.**

**To Contact CFA**

**Bette Blinde**

**P.O. Box 10**

**Livermore, CO 80536**

**970-881-2902**

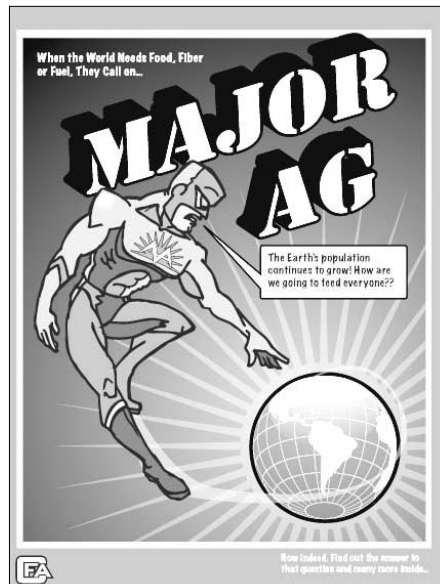
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from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment - Water Quality Control Division.

Major Ag provides a series of agriculture vignettes, explaining where our food and fiber comes from while highlighting the everyday heroes who feed the world.



# Farmer & Rancher Appreciation Dinner



*Katie Geist, April Mendenhall & Shane Sheridan, Joe & Olivia Sponsler provided the youth entertainment.*

*Providing old time country music were the Rocky Mountain Rangers of Ralph Cowan, John Sooter, Bill Torebee and Terry Willert.*



At the Colorado Farm Show, over 180 folks honored youth in agriculture at the first annual Farmers and Ranchers Appreciation Ball to benefit Colorado's Ag in the Classroom program. During the event, six graduating high school seniors received \$2,000 scholarships from the 2008 Colorado Farm Show. The annual scholarship program was started in 1992 to honor the late Chuck Urano, a horticulturist with the Weld County Extension office who was also a founder of the farm show.

The scholarship recipients were Kaitlyn Lingus of Trinchera, Ashton Dilka of Briggsdale, Shannon Thompson of Greeley, Andrea Leininger of La Junta, Kelsey Heupel of Weldona and Kelsey Wilson of Pleasant View.



*Commissioner John Stulp was the master of ceremony for the dinner.*

We'd like to recognize and thank the following businesses for donating food and flowers to the dinner:

- Barkey's Bossies ~ flowers
- Colorado Egg Producers
- Colorado Onion Growers
- Colorado Potato Administrative Committee ~ Northern Office
- Cozy Cow Dairy ~ ice cream
- Hazel Dell Mushrooms
- King Soopers ~ carrots
- Maverick Ranch Natural Meats ~ chicken wings
- Western Dairy Council ~ cheese trays
- Whole Foods Market ~ salad

We would like to recognize and thank the following agencies, businesses, individuals and organizations for sponsoring tables:

- CHS
- NC+ Hybrids
- Centennial Ag Supply Company
- Lower Arkansas Valley WCD
- Weld County Farm Bureau
- Colorado Dept of Agriculture
- Agland, Inc.
- New Frontier Bank
- Warner Ranch
- Joan & Ivan Grein
- Colorado Farm Show

- Colorado Farm Bureau
- Ranch-Way Feeds
- Colorado Onion Growers
- Geist Farm
- Grand Valley Hybrids
- Jerry Alldredge
- Whole Foods Market
- Colorado Veterinary Medical Association

The entertainment for the evening also featured youth from agriculture. First to perform was fiddler, Olivia Sponsler, 11 years old. She was then joined by her 10 year old brother, Joe who played Cello.

Katie Geist, age 14, danced to "Apologize." According to her mother, Katie has been dancing since she was 3 years old. She has been participating in 4-H dance for 7 years and has won many competitions. She choreographed her dance

The next entertainers were high steppin' Shane Sheridan and April Mendenhall who danced to Boogie, Woogie Bugle Boy. Shane who grew up in the 4-H program now teaches dance to 4-H members.

## Food, Fiber and More Summer Institute

The 2008 Agriculture in the Classroom Summer Institutes will be held in Craig on June 16-20 and in Fort Collins on June 23-27. This is a five-day course providing hands-on experience, great resources and materials to help educators integrate agriculture and natural resource topics into their academic curriculum. We even put these educators to work on a farm or ranch for a day. Upon completion of the Institute, participants earn 2 credits from Colorado State University.

*We need your help!* The cost per-person to attend the Summer Institute is \$250.00. Through donations we offer scholarships to teachers to help cover this cost. If you are able to provide full or partial scholarships, please fill out the back page of this newsletter and return it with your donation today. Our goal is to provide a scholarship to every teacher attending the Summer Institute.

We are also seeking families near Craig and Fort Collins who would be willing to provide lodging for educators attending the Institute. If you would be willing to host an educator for a week and live near Craig, please contact, Bette at (970) 881-2902.

# Standards Review Process Moves Into High Gear

*John Sepich, who serves on CFA's board, sent us the following information on what is happening with the Colorado State Standards. It is the press release sent out by CDE. Wouldn't it be nice if agriculture literacy standards were included in this process? Oh, by the way, we found it interesting that this press release was sent out on April 8th and the key stakeholders meeting that was open to public comment was held on April 9th.*

From the Colorado Department of Education ~

The process of reviewing and revising the state's model content standards—descriptions of what every student is expected to learn by subject and grade—is moving into high gear.

The Colorado Department of Education has released a briefing paper that provides a review and analysis for definitions of 21st century skills, college readiness and career readiness. The complete report is posted on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

On April 9th, key stakeholders gathered for the first time to begin overseeing the review process. Using the briefing paper as context, the stakeholders will identify Colorado's definitions for 21st century skills, college readiness and career/post-secondary readiness. The stakeholders will also decide whether the standards should be articulated for each grade level (currently, standards are defined only for groups of grades) and assign subcommittee work. The stakeholder meeting will be held at the Education Commission of the States (700 Broadway, Suite 1200) beginning at 8:00 a.m. The meeting is open to the public.

"The content standards form the bedrock of our work in schools," said Colorado Commissioner of Education, Dwight D. Jones. "They represent a joint understanding of what is expected of

teachers to teach and of students to learn. It's critical that we gather the state's best thinking about updating these standards as this revision process goes forward." Commissioner Jones announced the re-evaluation process in September 2007.

The concept of content standards was developed in Colorado in the early 1990's. Statewide standards for the first time defined the knowledge and benchmarks that students should acquire within each grade span and in each subject. Under state law, local school districts may adopt their own content standards as long as they are at least as rigorous as the state's version. The Colorado General Assembly passed the standards-based education law in 1993 and standards were written for reading, writing, mathematics and science. Additional standards have been developed in civics, dance, economics, foreign language, geography, history, music, physical education, theatre and visual arts. The standards have not changed since schools started using them in 1994. The first strand of what has become the full Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) exam was given in 1997, when fourth grade students were tested in reading and writing based on those standards.

The department's Office of Standards and Assessment expects to deliver proposed new standards to the state board of education by December 2008.

The review process is expected to provide students, parents, teachers, educators, business leaders and community members across the state with an opportunity to participate in the process of developing proposed changes to the state's model content standards. Recently, CDE commissioned the Southwest Regional Comprehensive Center (SWCC) at WestEd to guide and support the review process. SWCC obtained the assistance of the Assessment and Standards

Development Services (ASDS) program at WestEd to perform the analysis, because of their specific expertise and experience in performing these types of analysis. The project consisted of four tasks intended to provide information that will refine Colorado's model content standards:

1. A review and analysis of major definitions related to 21st century skills, college readiness and career/postsecondary readiness;
2. A state-by-state profile of how states articulate their standards across individual grades and grade spans;
3. A review and a gap analysis of the model content standards;
4. An evaluation of existing external reports on the Colorado standards.

Four major steps will occur prior to the state board of education receiving recommendations for revisions to the current model content standards. The steps began with the release of "Review and Analysis of Definitions of 21st Century Skills, College Readiness and Career/Postsecondary Readiness." After the state reviews and determines Colorado's definitions, next steps include:

- Publication of an analysis of the other 49 states (and several nations) and how they break out by grade levels what students should know. This information will assist in deciding if Colorado should continue with broad grade spans—only defining what students should know at end of various stages of academic growth (for example, fourth grade, eighth grade and 12th grade) — or whether precise standards should be set for all grades.
- A review of the current model content standards will be performed to provide qualitative feedback on the current rigor, clarity, balance and relevance of the Colorado standards. For each content area, a gap analysis will be conducted by a nationally recognized, independent firm. This analysis will inform Coloradoans of the differences between and among the

best states and international content standards.

- Finally, a trend study will be done based on recent reports from the Colorado Alignment Council, Education Trust, Achieve, Fordham Institute and others to indicate common and repeated recommendations for all of our content areas. "The overall intent of the process is not to abolish the current standards in place," said Jo O'Brien, assistant commissioner of standards and assessment. "Instead, the review will modernize the core content, articulate new skills and attempt to tighten the focus of a viable scope of expectations."

The state of Colorado will be fully involved in the process with the following assumptions:

- WestEd research and analysis will initiate each step in order to ensure third party objectivity
- All briefs and gap analysis will be shared in their entirety with the public
- A representative and demographically diverse core stakeholders group will help to both frame the reports and charge regional conversations throughout the year in order to give focus to the analysis
- Higher education, pre-school leaders, the business sector and career and technical education will join primary and secondary education leaders in sub-content reaction and advice
- The state board of education is the final audience and authority to determine the recommendations adopted
- A variety of methods will be employed to reach the maximum number of citizens
- All feedback, reports and recommendations will be written by another third-party entity to present to the Colorado Department of Education for presentation to the state board of education.

For more information, contact Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications.

# WANTED

## FUN FACTS

about your industry.

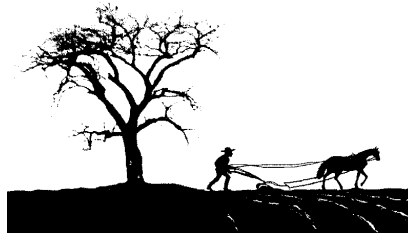
For example:

Colorado farmers sold more than 1,100 truck loads of potatoes to Mexico – that’s more than 55 million pounds. Lined up end-to-end, those trucks would stretch about 12 miles!

If one sandwich was eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner every-day, it would take 168 days to eat the amount of bread produced from one bushel of wheat.

It takes about 1.4 gallons of milk to make 1 gallon of ice cream.

Please e-mail them to [bblinde@growingyourfuture.com](mailto:bblinde@growingyourfuture.com) or mail it to CFA.



# Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum Opens

This museum, located southeast of Wellington, tells the story of farming in Larimer County through the letters and artifacts of the Bee Family. It plans to be open on Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. beginning on July 5. The farm will be open through the summer until the end of October. The suggested admission donation will be \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. Group tours are available by appointment by calling (970) 482- 9168. For more information go to [www.beefamilyfarm.org](http://www.beefamilyfarm.org)

*If you know of other educational farms, please let CFA know about them.*



**HAVE YOU SIGNED UP TO RECEIVE** our e-newsletter about Colorado agriculture and natural resource topics? We send the e-newsletter to educators and others three times a year - September, December and March. You can subscribe to receive the e-newsletter on CFA's website: [www.growingyourfuture.com](http://www.growingyourfuture.com). If you would like to include information in the newsletter, please submit it to us the month before distribution.

**Bette Blinde, CFA, P.O. Box 10, Livermore, CO 80536, phone 970-881-2902. Website: [www.growingyourfuture.com](http://www.growingyourfuture.com)**

**YES!** I want to support the Colorado Foundation for Agriculture and the Ag in the Classroom programs!

Enclosed is

- \$60 Adopt a Classroom
- \$15 Donation
- \$50 Donation
- \$100 Donation
- \$250 Donation
- \$500 Donation
- \$1000 Donation
- Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Send classroom sets of *Understanding Water Activity Book*– \$75 per classroom set. Number of sets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 75 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Send classroom sets of *CFA Comics* – \$50 per classroom set .....Number of sets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Send classroom sets of *Wool & Sheep Activity Book* – \$35 per classroom set .....Number of sets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 35 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Provide scholarships to the Food, Fiber & More AgriCULTURE in the Classroom Institute – \$250 per teacher. ....Number of scholarships \_\_\_\_\_ x \$250 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor “Food, Land & People” CD to a Classroom.....Number of CDs \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 35 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL CHECKS MADE PAYABLE TO: **Colorado Foundation for Agriculture**  
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*May 1, 2008*