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Arizona farmers and ranchers continued to face unusual challenges in 2004. The drought in the western United States continued and water issues ranked high on the radar screen. Toward the end of the year, precipitation was starting to approach near normal amounts and above normal rainfall was recorded for the late winter and spring months of 2005. This was a welcome relief to all Arizonans.

Through hard work, perseverance and innovation, Arizona farmers and ranchers have overcome considerable obstacles while managing to stay profitable and produce safe and abundant food and fiber for the world.

Everyone at the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Arizona Department of Agriculture has worked hard to try and support Arizona farmers and ranchers as they dealt with the many challenges that crop and livestock production present.

The statistics included in the **2004 Arizona Agricultural Statistics Bulletin** will show the size and scope of one of Arizona's largest industries. In 2004, total cash receipts for all commodities rose, powered by the livestock and vegetable sectors. Even in these challenging times, agriculture continues to make a major contribution to Arizona's economic vitality.

Crop and livestock producers need a source for accurate and relevant statistics to make important decisions. We hope all producers and others interested in agriculture will use this publication, and the other reports released by USDA-NASS to make well-informed decisions about their production and marketing. Our thanks to the thousands of Arizona crop and livestock producers, agribusiness firms, and others who have voluntarily provided information that makes this publication possible.