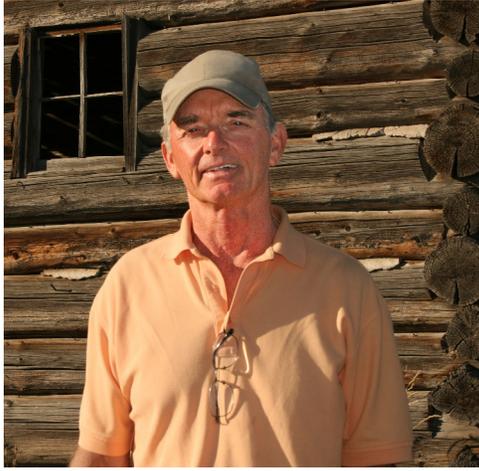


**MESSAGE FROM  
THE DIRECTOR**



Agriculture is the backbone of Montana’s economy. Despite the current climate of low prices, high operating costs, and extreme weather, Montana’s producers are continuing to grow through careful planning and sustainable farming and ranching practices.

Montana continues to be the leading producer of dry peas and lentils, good rotational crops that have helped our already high-quality wheat. Beef, barley, sugar beets, seed potatoes, canola and organics are some of the commodities that continue to be vital components of our agriculture industry. The high quality agriculture products grown and produced in Montana continue to be the foundation of our state’s economy and rural communities.

At the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA), we are always looking for ways to promote and advance agriculture. We are reaching out to folks across the state to find out what they need and how MDA can help them accomplish their goals and reach new markets. Whether it’s through grant funds or direct technical assistance, MDA is working hard on behalf of Montana’s producers and consumers.

If you have an idea, don’t hesitate to contact the department at [agr@mt.gov](mailto:agr@mt.gov) or call (406) 444-3144. Updates to this annual Montana Agricultural Statistics bulletin, produced in cooperation with the National Agricultural Statistics Service, are available electronically at [www.nass.usda.gov/mt](http://www.nass.usda.gov/mt).

Ron de Yong, Director, Montana Department of Agriculture