

FOR TASK FORCE

Several studies have shown that for each dollar invested in the state agricultural experiment station system, the taxpayer gets a return of nearly \$1.50.

In 1988, 76.2% of the Colorado certified seed potato acreage accepted was represented by cultivars developed at the San Luis Valley Research Center.

Centennial Russet and Sangre accounted for 73.6% of the San Luis Valley potato acreage in 1987. These cultivars are responsible for increasing the percentage of US #1 potatoes by 8-10%.

Pioneering research on the blackleg disease and a counterpart program of tissue culture seed propagation prompted the establishment of a limited generation seed potato program. This ensures that all seed potato stocks are derived from laboratory tested material to ensure freedom from potato diseases. In 1988 the incidence of potato leafroll, mosaics, and ring rot in seed lots was very low. This translates into improved yield potential and seed quality. Today the Colorado seed program is a model for other states.

Through the years research on new potato cultivars, fertilizer placement, irrigation timing, cultural practices, disease management, etc. have provided the basis of many of the recommendations followed by potato growers today. One example being the early blight degree day model developed by CSU. These studies are partly responsible for the increased yields and improved quality of the potato crop in the San Luis Valley.