



“Serving Montana Agriculture and growing prosperity under the Big Sky.”

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANNUAL PLAN

FY2024



The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) operates more than 30 programs, many funded entirely through user fees. These include regulatory programs that protect producers, consumers, and the environment, as well as development and marketing programs to foster growth in Montana agriculture. The Director's Office also serves as an advocate for Montana agriculture in national and international forums and works to make the department's programs accessible to the public. Our vision is to protect Montana producers, maintain and develop viable markets for farmers and ranchers and promote Montana's high-quality Ag products throughout the world.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The **Agricultural Development Division** (ADD) is responsible for administering programs that promote and enhance Montana agriculture. Within the division are three bureaus: the Wheat and Barley Bureau, the Agricultural Finance, Trade, and Development Bureau, and the Montana State Grain Laboratory Bureau.

The **Montana Wheat and Barley Bureau** (MWBC) typically hosts 15 foreign trade delegations and 60 visitors from seven nations that have an interest in purchasing Montana grains each year. The Committee invests in research and represents producers on trade policy, transportation issues, and market development.

The **Agricultural Finance, Trade, and Development Bureau** (FTD) is responsible for market enhancement and development through direct market development activities, grants, seed capital loan investments in new and innovative products or process, marketing, and product development. Marketing and agri-business development personnel work closely with individuals and organizations to promote and enhance our agriculture industry.

The **Montana State Grain Laboratory Bureau** (SGL) completes tests for grade, protein, germination, falling numbers and vomitoxin for wheat, barley, canola, dry peas, lentils, and various other commodities. Both the Great Falls and Plentywood facilities are authorized to completed official inspections for all domestic and foreign exports as an official agency of the Federal Grain Inspection Service under the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES DIVISION

The **Agricultural Sciences Division** (ASD) provides agricultural, public, and environmental services and protection through administration of the Montana laws and rules. Cooperative agreements with the USDA, Food and Drug Administration and Environmental Protection Agency provide services and jurisdiction in areas of interstate and international movement of plant materials, produce and feed; enforcement of FDA rules to prevent transmission of BSE disease in cattle; and the regulation of pesticide sales, use and production in Montana. The Agricultural Sciences Division contains three bureaus.

The **Agricultural Services Bureau** (ASB) provides services and enforcement of laws related to pesticide use and ground water monitoring as well as funding suppression efforts for weed control.

The **Commodity Services Bureau** (CSB) provides field inspection services and enforcement of laws and regulations related to nurseries, produce, feed, seed, fertilizer, grain, and organic certification, as well as overall management of field operations, quarantines, import and export certifications, and insect and disease surveys.

The **Analytical Laboratory Bureau** (ALL) provides chemical analytical services for feeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and cannabis out of the analytical lab in Bozeman, MT.

CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION

The **Central Services Division** (CSD) provides accounting, budgeting, computer programming, fiscal management, human resources, payroll and benefits, public information and communications, purchasing, property control, records management, systems analysis, training, website administration and legal support to all programs within the department.



Strategic Outcome

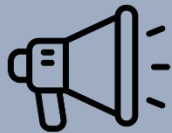
#1

IMPROVE CUSTOMER INTERACTIONS THROUGH WIDESPREAD ECOMMERCE IMPLEMENTATION

Through the implementation of an ecommerce solution, the Montana Department of Agriculture can better serve the farmers and ranchers of Montana while moving to eliminate departmental inefficiencies and streamline operations. All ecommerce implementations work to maintain ADA compliant standards.

Key Measures

- Complete agency inventory moving to digital. Identify 3 impactful programs to move to digital by December 31, 2023.
- Maintain licensing/registration processing deadlines to less than 21 days. Maintain a rate of less than 10% late.
- Implement digital manuals. Currently 38% are available online. 100% completion by June 1, 2024.
- Develop new field inspector training plan. 50% achieved with 100% completion by March 31, 2024.
- Deploy online assessment collection. To be completed by December 31, 2023.



Strategic Outcome

#2

PROMOTE MONTANA AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS

Montana’s commodities like wheat, barley, pulse crops, and beef are known throughout the world for their superior quality. By showcasing local value-added ag businesses, implementing a strategic domestic and international trade plan, and fostering trade delegation relationships around the globe, we will continue the promotional growth and marketing of Montana’s high-quality agriculture industry and products.

Key Measures

- Visit and showcase role of innovative value-added ag businesses. 100% achieved with 4 more media stops planned for 2023.
- Implement Montana Ag product trade and promotion strategic plan. Complete plan by Dec. 31, 2023 / Event Schedule by Feb. 29, 2024
- Develop and execute monthly “public newsletter” promoting local ag businesses and recapping department promotional action items. 8 of 12 months executed. Goal to grow email list from 250 to 350 by October 1, 2024
- Foster increased foreign and domestic market development opportunities. Carry through 5 inbound/5 outbound trade delegations year over year.



Strategic Outcome

#3

INCREASE SERVICE OFFERING AWARENESS

Through the implementation of new software, obtainment of new Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) licenses as well as a new communications and social media plan in place, the department continuously works towards creating transparent awareness and offering a greater depth of services.

Key Measures

- Meet industry’s certification and testing needs. Earn two additional Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) licenses, complete testing of Laboratory Inventory Management System (LIMS) software and maintain 1 open FTE by December 31, 2023.
- Work towards new combined Analytical Lab. Finalize contractor bid by December 31, 2023. Break ground by May 1, 2024.
- Share press, pictures/video of department engagements on social media. Cumulative social media outreach is up 171.6% year over year. Goal to maintain 150% growth year over year.

Strategic Outcome

#4



STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY RELATIONSHIPS

What makes the Montana agriculture industry special is its people. Through the implementation of an all-employee outreach and engagement plan, we will create and strengthen industry relationships from all divisions and levels of the department. Furthermore, the MDA will continue to participate and lead conversation at ag-related events and conferences.

Key Measures

- Engage with customers through all-employee outreach. Goal of 100% participation by October 1, 2024
- Represent MDA at relevant ag-related events and conferences. 5 senior staff speaking engagements at industry events to be 100% completed by February 29, 2024
- Red Tape 2.0. The creation of 3 stakeholder groups (Commodity Assessment Boards, Commodity Dealers, and Pesticide Businesses) to be 100% formulated by March 31, 2024