

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R16-1096.01 Darren Thornberry x4143

SJR16-016

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Sonnenberg,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Vigil,

Senate Committees

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 16-016

101 **CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF COLORADO CENTENNIAL FARMS.**

1 WHEREAS, In 1986, the Colorado Centennial Farms program was
2 created by Governor Richard D. Lamm, History Colorado (formerly
3 known as the Colorado Historical Society), and the Colorado Department
4 of Agriculture to recognize the important role agriculture has played in
5 our state's history and economic development; and

6 WHEREAS, The Colorado Centennial Farms program recognizes
7 Colorado farms and ranches that have been owned and operated by the
8 same family for 100 years or more for their strength, endurance, and
9 perseverance despite the associated challenges; and

10 WHEREAS, In the last 30 years, nearly 500 family farms and
11 ranches in 61 of Colorado's 64 counties have been designated through the
12 program; and

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 WHEREAS, The histories of the Colorado Centennial Farms and
2 those individuals who have worked in the agricultural industry are an
3 intrinsic part of the cultural tapestry of this state; and

4 WHEREAS, Many of the farms and ranches located across
5 Colorado were first homesteaded by filing a claim pursuant to the federal
6 "Homestead Act of 1862", planting crops and constructing a dwelling,
7 which resulted in the transfer of the deed to the new owner, while other
8 properties were purchased outright; and

9 WHEREAS, Regardless of the method of acquisition, the
10 transaction did not guarantee success for the farmers and ranchers; their
11 success had to be secured through dedication and hard work; and

12 WHEREAS, The Ortega Farm in San Luis, established in 1851, is
13 Colorado's oldest Centennial Farm; and

14 WHEREAS, The majority of farms and ranches designated as
15 Colorado Centennial Farms were established between 1880 and 1895; and

16 WHEREAS, Weld County has more than 60 designated Centennial
17 Farms – the most in Colorado; and

18 WHEREAS, More than 200 Centennial Farms have received the
19 Historic Structures Award; and

20 WHEREAS, Colorado farmers and ranchers understand that
21 hardships are part of the agricultural lifestyle, but they hope future
22 generations will embrace the hardships with the rewards; and

23 WHEREAS, Many of these farmers and ranchers struggle to
24 survive in present times due to an unstable economy; and

25 WHEREAS, Farmers and ranchers faced with the uncertainty of
26 the current economy must overcome adversity by adopting a more urban
27 lifestyle, often requiring them to work multiple jobs; and

28 WHEREAS, Urbanization and commercialization threaten the
29 existence of Colorado Centennial Farms; and

30 WHEREAS, While centennial farmers and ranchers continually

1 work to keep their operations up-to-date, they must also attempt to
2 preserve their century-old traditions; and

3 WHEREAS, Many Colorado Centennial Farms are working
4 toward conservation efforts by utilizing environmentally conscious
5 farming and ranching methods to ensure the vitality of cultivated land in
6 Colorado; and

7 WHEREAS, Today, 97% of all farms in the United States are
8 family-owned, and every year each American farmer produces enough
9 food for nearly 155 people in the United States and abroad; and

10 WHEREAS, Colorado's food and agriculture industry ranks
11 among the state's most important economic drivers, generating more than
12 \$40 billion in economic activity annually and supporting more than
13 170,000 jobs; and

14 WHEREAS, Colorado Centennial Farms help feed the nation,
15 support the state economy, participate in conservation programs that
16 prevent soil erosion, improve air and water quality, enhance wildlife
17 habitat, and play a major role in providing feedstock for the production
18 of renewable fuels; and

19 WHEREAS, The Colorado Centennial Farms program recognizes
20 how vital these properties are to the overall economic and environmental
21 well-being of our state; and

22 WHEREAS, Family farms in Colorado that turn 100 years old
23 deserve recognition; now, therefore,

24 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventieth General Assembly*
25 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

26 That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

27 (1) Recognize centennial farms and ranches as a vital component
28 of the history of Colorado;

29 (2) Recognize the 30th anniversary of the Colorado Centennial
30 Farm and Ranch program and hope that over the next 30 years more
31 farms and ranches will join and receive this recognition;

1 (3) Recognize those Coloradans who have contributed to the
2 economic vibrancy of this state through their involvement in agricultural
3 enterprises; and

4 (4) Acknowledge that it is through those individuals that future
5 generations of Colorado farmers and ranchers can find inspiration to
6 make our state's agricultural industry continue to prosper.

7 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
8 to the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Colorado State Fair, Colorado
9 Tourism, and History Colorado.