As the premier outreach unit of Colorado State University, Cooperative Extension takes our land-grant responsibility seriously—that of providing research-based information and practical educational to Coloradans where they live. Colorado citizens look to Cooperative Extension for information they can trust, the essential element of Extension education. Just as Colorado State University creates, delivers, and instills in its students, a wealth of “knowledge to go places,” Cooperative Extension takes that knowledge from the campus and around the country and focuses on “putting knowledge to work.” We do that through effective partnerships within the university and among local communities, organizations and individuals. Important to our knowledge delivery is our connection to the Agricultural Experiment Station, five colleges, 15 departments, and a number of institutes and centers at Colorado State University, including the Center for Rural Assistance, Family and Youth Institute, Public Policy Institute, and the Rocky Mountain Institute for Biosecurity Research. Vital also to our outreach mission and funding are our collaborations with Colorado’s counties, and our state and federal government partners.

Our reputation for “trustworthy information” stands out—based on our successful work with communities, families and youth over the past 89 years. Our successes, strong community connections and local visibility have allowed people to discover Cooperative Extension. We continually work to provide the one-on-one contact and local involvement that is a hallmark of Cooperative Extension work, while adding the efficiencies that technology provides to help deliver our educational information to Colorado citizens. Our Web site www.ext.colostate.edu provides access to Extension’s electronic resources, and we recently created “AnswerLink” www.answerlink.info, an Internet service available 24-7, to provide a more efficient, effective way to respond to the myriad of questions that come to our local and state offices. It features both a “Frequently Asked Question” and an “Ask the Expert” component and provides a ready supply of information to Coloradans on virtually any topic that is within our basic mission.

As we look to the future and contemplate new and effective strategies for “putting knowledge to work,” I like to think about our challenges in terms of relevance and excellence. Critical questions for us to answer are: “What should we be doing?” “Who should we be serving?” “How can we do it better?” Continually redefining the answers is important in order for us to define our strengths, communicate our priorities, market our accomplishments, and be accountable for the public investment in us. This 2002 Annual Report--Putting Knowledge to Work showcases a diverse sample of the strengths, priorities and accomplishments of Cooperative Extension faculty and staff. I look forward to any opportunity to discuss Cooperative Extension programs with you.
Milan A. Rewerts, Director