Written by Kris Lancaster
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(Kansas City, Kan., Jan. 21, 2011) - EPA officials today hosted a meeting with the directors of state agriculture departments of Iowa, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. The meeting, held at EPA's Region 8 building in Denver, Colo., provided a forum for dialogue on EPA programs and regulations as well as specific issues, interests and concerns of the agriculture sector.

EPA staff participants in the meeting included: Jim Martin, Region 8 Administrator; Karl Brooks, Region 7 Administrator; Josh Svaty, Region 7 Senior Adviser; and Damon Frizzell, Region 7 Agricultural Adviser.

"The agricultural community should be credited with taking significant steps to protect the environment while finding innovative ways to feed millions," said EPA Region 7 Administrator Karl Brooks. "Because of the broad impact that America's farmers and ranchers have on everything from daily food prices to widespread environmental impacts to emerging renewable fuel technologies, it is important to have state agriculture directors as part of our decision making process."

EPA recognizes that agricultural producers are on the frontline of environmental stewardship and are affected by many EPA programs. Frequent meetings with state agriculture directors are a critical way for EPA to provide outreach and receive feedback on current issues and concerns. Specific topics of Friday's meeting included Clean Water Act permits for pesticides, oil spill prevention and countermeasure rules, and air quality standards for particulate matter. Additional subjects included nutrient management and water quality and concentrated animal feeding operations.

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