

# Musgrave pushes state's beans

## STAFF REPORTS

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., has petitioned Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns to consider dry beans from Colorado for a federal commodity purchase.

The beans would be distributed in the National School Lunch program and other Federal Food assistance programs. Colorado ranks



**Musgrave**

fifth in the nation for the number of dry bean farms, number of farm acres and amount of product, and more than half the dry beans are grown in Weld and Yuma counties. According to the Agriculture Census of 2002, there were more than 600 dry bean farmers in Colorado and the number is growing.

Last year's crop was valued at \$24 million.

Dry beans include kidney, pinto, lima, black, garbanzo, great northern, cranberry, pink and navy beans, as well as black eyed peas.

"We have a reputation as a leader in agriculture and grow quality dry beans. I talked to Secretary Johanns about these purchases and stressed how important it is for him to consider this for the farmers in eastern Colorado. Hundreds will benefit by a purchase and many more students and low-income families will benefit nutritionally," Musgrave said.