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From: Colorado Coalition Opposing Mandatory 4-H and FFA Premises I.D.

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## Coalition Disputes Credibility of CSU Cooperative Extension's Survey on Mandatory 4-H Premises Registration

Ordway, Colo. (June 29, 2007) - The Colorado Coalition Opposing Mandatory 4-H and FFA Premises Registration says a survey being conducted by Colorado State University's (CSU) Cooperative Extension Service is flawed and is designed to justify Cooperative Extension's implementation of mandatory premises registration for 4-H youth across the state.

Reportedly, the survey was introduced during the state 4-H conference last week and is currently being circulated to Extension 4-H Agents throughout the state. Deadline to complete and return the survey to CSU's Cooperative Extension headquarters in Fort Collins, Colorado is July 6.

"It's ironic that CSU is interested in their constituents' opinion about mandatory premises registration for youngsters months **after** the institution announced the program would be made mandatory. This can be likened to slamming the barn door after the horse is already trotting over the horizon," said John Reid, Coalition Chairman, Ordway, Colorado.

"County Extension Agents have only been given about two weeks to respond to this survey, and that's certainly not enough time to get adequate information from clubs and leaders in each county. The survey asks agents to 'estimate' how many families oppose this program and it's also asks for the agents' estimate of how many youngsters will not enroll again in 4-H because of mandatory premises registration. The lack of information and outreach flowing from CSU on this subject precludes most agents and 4-H families from formulating an informed response, particularly in such a short time period."

"The Colorado State Fair rule book has been published and distributed and the rule implementing mandatory premises registration for 4-H youth who want to exhibit live animal projects this year is in place. Those who are impacted by this highly controversial rule should have been asked for input before the program was implemented, not after the fact," said Reid.

"4-H families across the state who are impacted by this decision weren't given a chance to offer input prior to this scheme being implemented," noted Kimmi Lewis, coalition member, LaJunta, Colorado. "CSU Cooperative Extension Service touts the fact that it is a teaching and outreach institution, yet no curriculum has been developed to coincide with premises registration in an effort to teach youngsters about animal health issues. The survey being conducted is a ridiculous attempt to validate the actions that have been taken on campus by administrators who sit in air-conditioned offices and take it upon themselves to foist their policy decisions on people in the country. This has upset many, many producers who may not be so quick to defend the land grant university when they are asked to rise to the university's defense during times of cutbacks. Documents obtained provide evidence that funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the form of a cooperative agreement designed to enhance premises registrations in Colorado is flowing into the Colorado State Department of Ag and to CSU. This is not about our kids. This is about money, and as a long-time 4-H leader and a taxpaying resident of Colorado that appalls me. Heads need to roll at CSU and that should begin with program administrators who implemented this decision without appropriate public input."

The Colorado Coalition Opposing Mandatory 4-H and FFA Premises Registration is calling on CSU Cooperative Extension to redesign its premises registration policy as a voluntary program, and the coalition urges CSU to develop appropriate curriculum to teach youth about animal disease prevention and mitigation.