



April 25, 2017

Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Cory Gardner
354 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

**BLM Methane Rule: Protecting Colorado's air, farms and businesses
with common sense regulations**

Dear Senators Bennet and Gardner:

As Colorado agricultural operators, family farmers, and ranchers, we join the Valley Organic Growers Association (VOGA), Slow Food Western Slope (SFWS), and the Colorado Farm & Food Alliance (COFFA) to urge that you vote to uphold the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Methane and Waste Prevention Rule, which only makes common sense.

VOGA represents over 100 farmers and agriculture-related businesses, and networks the region's organic, sustainable growers and family farms to secure and promote the benefits of sustainable agriculture. SFWS—part of Slow Food USA and the global Slow Food network of over 150,000 members in more than 150 countries—links the pleasures of the table with a commitment to protect the community, culture, knowledge and environment that make this pleasure possible. COFFA works to network Colorado farm-to-table businesses and stakeholders as conservation advocates.

We recognize that without this rule in place, oil and gas operations are often marked by a tremendous amount of waste. This waste of America's energy resources is not only a problem itself and potentially impacts our livelihoods and operations, it is a hit in the pocketbook of every taxpaying American as well.

Uphold the BLM Methane & Waste Prevention Rule

The BLM methane rule would prevent waste and would make the public whole for the resource oil and gas companies are profiting from off our public lands. The cost to business to fix this problem is not even a penny on the dollar.

Meanwhile calculations are that the waste for 2013 alone had a sales value of \$330 million, and over the next decade would mean additional royalties of \$800 million. That is lost revenue that could have, and should have, been returned to taxpayers—from the federal to state and local levels.

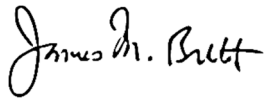
Farming and ranching is a business with tight profit margins. We know not to waste. And the connection to the land and the work, being outside in our beautiful state, are benefits. Protection of the land, the air, and clean, abundant water matters to us. Oil and gas companies can afford to do it right. We can't afford to have them not to.

We urge that you lead the way with your colleagues in the U.S. Senate and act to preserve the BLM's methane and waste prevention rule.

Sincerely,



Emily Hartnett, Valley Organic Growers Association



Jim Brett, Slow Food Western Slope



Pete Kolbenschlager, Colorado Farm & Food Alliance

NOTE: Additional signers follow.

Uphold the BLM Methane & Waste Prevention Rule

These comments are also submitted on behalf of the following individual agricultural operators and food and drink proprietors.

Les & Catherine Barley

Wayne Wiitanen, PhD - Small Potatoes Farm

Monica Wiitanen - Bakery at Small Potatoes Farm

Alison Gannett & Jason Trimm - Holy Terror Farm

Brent Helleckson - Stone Cottage Cellars

Leslie Bracewell - Bracewell Farms

Ty & Helen Gillespie - Azura Cellars & Gallery

Elena Goldstein - Pissing Monkey Ranch

Andrea Robinsong - Hoedown Farm

Jelsma Schuyler - Pristine Valley Farm

Eugenia McGuire - Desert Weyr LLC