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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SIMPLOT COMPANY GIVES 1.1 MILLION SQUARE FEET
OF INDUSTRIAL SPACE TO IDAHO COMMUNITY**

HEYBURN, ID – March 12, 2004 -- In a significant and generous corporate gesture, the J.R. Simplot Company said yesterday it will give its former potato processing facility and surrounding site in Heyburn, Idaho to the neighboring city of Burley.

Simplot's gift is a 276-acre site including over 20 buildings and more than 1.1 million square feet of industrial space valued at more than \$15 million.

"This gift gives the Mini-Cassia (Minidoka and Cassia counties) region the perfect economic development tool – a ready-made industrial park," said Bob Shepard, executive director of the Mini-Cassia Economic Development Council. The property straddles property in both Minidoka and Cassia counties.

Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne and numerous state and local dignitaries were on hand for the formal announcement at the Simplot plant. "Thank you to the Simplot family for this \$15 million launch pad," Kempthorne said. "This is a fantastic day for the entire state of Idaho."

The city will use the new Mini-Cassia Regional Industrial Park as a marketing tool to attract potential new businesses and encourage expansion from local businesses. Simplot will be one of the tenants as they plan to lease back its still operational frozen food distribution center there.

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“This is the largest single contribution the J.R. Simplot family has ever made,” said Fred Zerza, vice president of public and government relations at Simplot. “This is the best option for filling the economic and employment void left by our departure.” Simplot announced closure of this facility in May 2002 that resulted in 650 lost jobs and a negative impact to the community and surrounding region.

“It is important to find a way to replace these lost jobs and build back the tax base for the Mini-Cassia area,” said Denny Curtis, a Mini-Cassia native and Burley city councilman who spearheaded a 22-month effort with Simplot to donate the site. “This facility and all its infrastructure is now available to any employer looking for a ready-made industrial park that can be immediately staffed by hundreds of available, qualified workers.”

The site includes: a food processing facility, industrial wastewater treatment plant, ethanol plant, refrigerated storage space, truck repair shops, general office space and additional unimproved land.

“Simplot has so generously given these communities an opportunity for significant job growth and a strong economic future,” Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor Director Roger Madsen said. “These people have turned a defeat into a victory.” According to his department analysts, if the Industrial Park is filled with similar businesses and complimentary dairies, the Mini-Cassia economy could generate an additional \$94 million annually or about \$1 billion in economic benefits per decade. “This is truly a win-win scenario for Mini-Cassia and Southern Idaho,” Madsen said.

Simplot is a privately held food and agri-business company based in Boise, Idaho.

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