



## NEW MEXICO Food & Agriculture POLICY COUNCIL

February 15, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Late Monday night, the Senate approved an amended \$8.48 billion spending plan for the state with an emphasis on funding for criminal justice initiatives, road projects, public health and nutrition, education, and environment. The proposed budget is the highest New Mexican's have ever seen, up by 14% over last year. **Within the budget is funding for the statewide Food, Farms and Hunger Initiative of \$24 million**, the largest investment ever toward focusing on in-state small farm business opportunities, coordination, and expansion of sales to institutions, double up food bucks, and funding for the agriculture workforce soil health programs.

As the state faces continued severe drought, water is the issue as the new State Engineer, Mike Hammon faces developing a 50-year water plan. At the same time major funding will be provided for water infrastructure projects across the state, \$15 million for drought mitigation projects that would pay farmers to fallow land, \$5 million for construction and repairs of acequias and community ditches, \$3 million for soil and water conservation districts, and \$32 million to the Indian water rights settlement fund to implement the state's portion of case settlements. Last minute negotiations provided for \$1 million for the chili labor incentive program and \$1 million to fund vineyard restoration and feedstock to produce wine by New Mexico wineries.

The budget bill will move to the House of Representatives for full concurrence by Wednesday.

### Food, Farms and Hunger Initiative

**Note from Kendal Chavez, Food and Hunger Coordinator, Office of Governor:**

I hope this message finds you well. While we all remain entrenched in the messiness of the legislative session, I come today with great news: the Food, Farm, and Hunger Initiative is on solid ground. **We are happy to report that the Senate Finance Committee amendment for HB 2 includes \$24 million for the Food, Farm, and Hunger Initiative.** Call, text, and email your legislators today and say THANK YOU for their ongoing support of this critical initiative. A special shout out goes to the [Senate Finance Committee](#), who helped prioritize increased funding in **HB 2. Reach out today and express your gratitude as a partner of the Food, Farm, and Hunger Initiative.**

Here is the [Food, Farms and Hunger Initiative Press Release](#) from the Office of the Governor.

### Acequias Decry Removal of Water Protections in Cannabis Bill

This February 15 press release is from our colleagues at the [NM Acequia Association](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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#### Acequias Decry Removal of Water Protections in Cannabis Bill

(Santa Fe, NM) - In a late night vote, the Senate narrowly defeated an effort by Senator Linda Lopez to ensure water rights verification is included in the cannabis licensing process. In a 20-19 vote, the Senate sided with Senator Cliff Pirtle to remove language in cannabis statutes that requires that water rights be validated before a commercial license can be granted to grow cannabis.

[Read more.](#)

### National Young Farmers Coalition Survey

The National Young Farmers Coalition is joining other agricultural justice organizations in launching the most inclusive survey of young and BIPOC farmers to date. The 2022 National Young Farmer Survey will gather the data needed to power our advocacy for equity, farmland justice, and climate action in the 2023 Farm Bill. [Take the survey.](#) [Spread the word!](#)

### Slow Food Santa Fe Out Loud on KSFR

Slow Food Santa Fe does a monthly spot on Public Radio Station KSFR. This month, the show featured an interview with Pam Roy, Director of Farm to Table and Coordinator for the NM Food & Agriculture Policy Council. [Check it out here](#), along with some other great broadcasts, including one with National Young Farmers Coalition Organizer and NMFAPC Governing Board Member, Zoey Fink.

Thanks for your interest and participation. More to come this week!

**Pam**

Pam Roy  
Executive Director, Farm to Table  
Coordinator, NM Food & Agriculture Policy Council

### NM Food & Agriculture Policy Council Membership

It's time to renew your Annual Membership - or join as a new Member! You can pay online or by check.

[Become a Member!](#)

[Visit our Website](#)



Photos: Seth Roffman

## WHO WE ARE

**The NMFAPC is a statewide coalition which focuses on policy initiatives that create healthy food and agriculture systems in New Mexico.**

The New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council is a statewide coalition of individuals, organizations, and agencies whose mission is to advocate for food systems which strengthen our food and farm economies. We achieve this through advocacy, education, and policy work. Through this process, we strive to enhance the health and wellness of New Mexico's people and communities.

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- Anthony Wagner**  
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