

# Food Initiative Briefing Sheet

## 2025 Legislative Session



**2,946** \*  
 unique program offerings statewide



**\$11,562,461** \*  
 state dollars for food grown and raised by New Mexico agricultural producers



**1.2 billion** \*  
 meals provided to community

\* Based on data collected from the beginning of Food Initiative in state fiscal year 2023 to the present.

### Invest in healthy, high quality, and locally sourced meal programs

#### Brighter Bites

Enhanced reimbursements for excellence in childcare meal quality, which incentivizes the adoption of higher meal preparation standards – including scratch cooking and locally sourced ingredients – for more than 10,000 children attending childcare settings statewide.

#### Executive Recommendation:

- \$1 million
- Early Childhood Education and Care Department

#### LFC Recommendation:

- \$0

#### New Mexico Grown

Allows 282,647 New Mexicans to eat locally produced fruits and vegetables, meat, and other foods in hundreds of schools, senior centers, and preschools. Over 277 farmers and ranchers access institutional markets through the New Mexico Grown Approved Supplier Program.

- \$1.5 million
- Aging and Long-Term Services Department

- \$0

- \$2.3 million
- Public Education Department
- \$430,000
- New Mexico Department of Agriculture

- \$0

#### Healthy, Universal School Meals

Fully funds implementation of the healthy hunger free students' bill of rights act, 22-13C-1 NMSA 1978.

- \$9.7 million
- recurring increase

- \$1 million
- recurring increase

- \$15.8 million
- nonrecurring
- Public Education Department

- \$10.8 million
- nonrecurring

### Expand community access to nutritious foods

#### Emergency Assistance Support for Regional Food Banks

Funds critical infrastructure – including mobile grocery units, cold storage, and refrigerated transportation – and emergency food for communities statewide.

- \$10 million
- Health Care Authority



#### LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FOOD INITIATIVE

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## Food is Medicine

Funds nutrition interventions for more than 50,000 homebound seniors and pregnant individuals. Interventions include medically tailored meals, fruit and vegetable prescriptions, protein box prescriptions, and healthy food vouchers.

### Executive Recommendation:

\$40.5 million  
Health Care Authority

### LFC Recommendation:



## Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

Expands farmer's market nutrition incentives for more than 23,162 individuals through the Senior and WIC Farmer's Market Nutrition Program. Over 555 individual farms benefit from the program.

\$1 million  
Department of Health

\$0

## Higher Education Student Retention Funds (Basic Needs Initiative)

Offers innovative food interventions to support up to 21,700 food insecure students attending more than 20 Higher Education Institutions statewide. It also supports initiatives like housing assistance to enhance student outcomes.

\$8 million  
Higher Education  
Department

\$0

## Invest in New Mexico farms, ranches, and food businesses

### Agricultural Water Resilience Program

Funds regionally appropriate projects that improve agricultural producers' ability to manage, conserve, and efficiently apply limited water resources for agricultural production.

\$10 million  
nonrecurring

\$0

### Aquifer Monitoring and Groundwater Characterization

Funds the Bureau of Geology to map the State's fresh and brackish water aquifers to help us better understand and protect the complex aquifers our communities rely on.

\$28.7 million  
New Mexico Institute of  
Mining and Technology

\$19 million

### Healthy Food Financing Fund

Foundational to the development of financial tools for food and agricultural enterprises to grow, raise, process, aggregate, distribute and sell local, fresh, healthy food through expanded retail and institutional in-state market channels in rural and underserved communities. Program expansion will create 70 new jobs, building on the 75 jobs created since its inception.

\$2 million  
Economic Development  
Department

\$0

### Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program

Offsets student loan debt for veterinarians committed to treating food animals in rural New Mexico. After completing the first year of service, the veterinarian is eligible for loan payments of up to \$15,000 for the first and second years, \$25,000 for the third, and \$25,000 for the fourth year, totaling up to \$80,000. Payments are made directly to the student loan issuer.

\$5 million  
Higher Education  
Department

\$0