

GOVERNOR MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
FOOD INITIATIVE
CULTIVATING A NEW FOOD SYSTEM

2025 Food Initiative Progress Report

Feeding New Mexico's Future: A Transformative Investment In Health, Agriculture, And Economic Wellbeing

The Food Initiative, launched as the Food, Farm, and Hunger Initiative, is a **$213 million,** three-year, multi-agency effort led by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and established during the 2022 New Mexico Legislative Session. It aims to expand access to community-driven, environmentally responsible food to all New Mexicans.

Developed by a diverse Steering Committee of over 230 members — including farmers, ranchers, nutrition professionals, state agencies, legislators, and other stakeholders — the initiative builds on existing strengths and identifies innovative solutions for food security. Since mid-2021, the Committee has worked with the Governor's Office to shape a community-informed roadmap to transform New Mexico's food system.

The Food Initiative targets four areas: community food security; economic resiliency for farmers and ranchers; value chain stabilization; and long-term financial and administrative viability. Nested within each of these pillars are 56 tactics, developed in collaboration with the Steering Committee to drive coordinated, cross-sector action. The Governor's Office has since built on this foundation, adding new priorities and actionable tactics in response to emerging needs, opportunities, and continued stakeholder engagement. Informing the Governor's policy agenda and decision making, these pillars and tactics address major food system challenges, particularly in Tribal, rural, and underserved urban communities. By aligning human and financial resources under a unified strategic vision, the initiative seeks to build a statewide, integrated food system that includes historically excluded communities. With sustained investments, New Mexico is building a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable food future.

This is not just food assistance. This is systems change.

Rooted in Values

Integration Over Isolation

New Mexico is moving beyond one-off solutions and is instead thinking critically and investing in interconnected strategies. These investments create the conditions for long-term healthy food economies, and open new markets for local farmers, ranchers, and food producers. Strengthening institutional demand and logistical pathways, increases locally grown and raised food in New Mexico — feeding our people, not export pipelines. When systems work together, outcomes multiply. This integrated strategy is creating ripple effects across education, healthcare, agriculture, and local economies.

Prevention Over Reaction

A resilient food system is proactive, not reactive. New Mexico's investments are shifting focus from emergency response to prevention — using smart food policy to lower long-term healthcare costs, improve quality of life, and strengthen the entire system.

Investing in Our Land and Producers

Farmers, ranchers, and food producers are the backbone of our food economy. Supporting them keeps farmland in use, uplifts beginning and Indigenous farmers, and creates rural jobs. These investments localize our food supply chain, reduce reliance on out-of-state distributors, ensure fresh culturally-relevant food, and are better for the environment.

Relief and Resilience, Together

Emergency food programs are a vital lifeline. New Mexico has made critical investments in food banks and mobile pantry infrastructure to ensure families facing crisis get immediate support. But relief alone isn't enough. The state's broader strategy invests in systems that reduce the long-term need for emergency food over time — expanding SNAP eligibility, making school meals universal and healthy, and upgrading institutional infrastructure. It's a both/and approach: meeting today's urgent needs while building tomorrow's solutions.

2023 - 2025 Food Initiative Milestones

Food Initiative programs are not solely state funded, with many supported by federal and private funding. The data below is from State Fiscal Year 2023-2025.



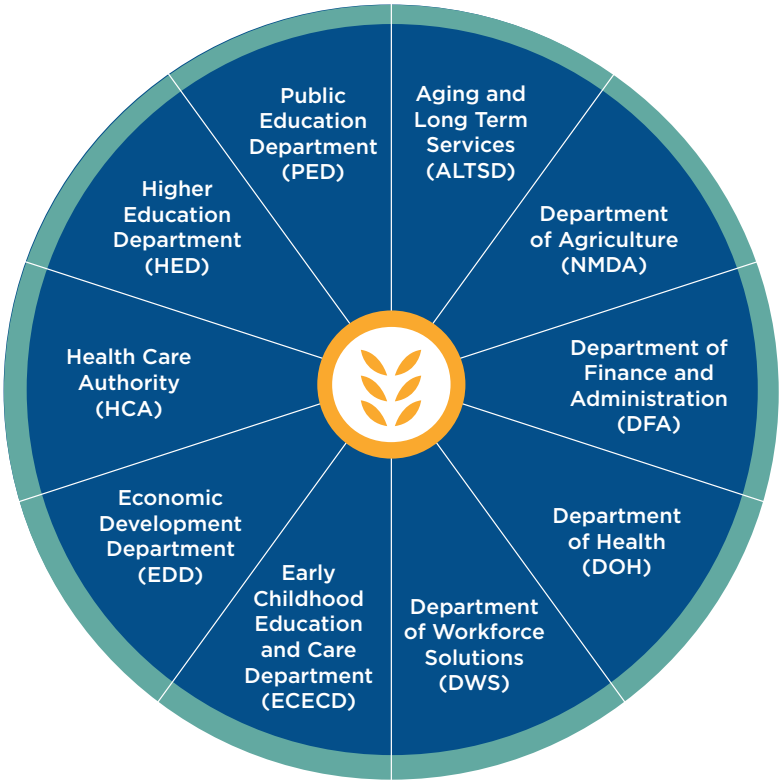
1,643,833,029 Pounds of Food Provided



1,370,424,106 Meals Provided

Funds	Federal Funds	State Funds	Other Funds	Grand Total
Total	$1.08 B	$213 M	$27.4 M	$1.32 B
Expenditure	$1.04 B	$157 M	$25.9 M	$1.22 B

State Agencies Driving the Food Initiative









From Roots To Fruition: Highlighted Food Initiative Wins

Pillar 1: Community Food Programs

Integrate and innovate New Mexico's hunger relief and nutrition security efforts so resources can be optimized for health, equity, and efficiency.

Total State Investment: $168,169,260 | Total Federal Dollars Leveraged: $1,118,658,653

Tactic	Budget	Policy	Administrative
☑ Establish mobile food pantries in all 23 Tribal nations	X		X
☑ Pilot and scale innovative approaches to addressing college hunger	X		X
☑ Incentivize scratch or semi-scratch cooked meals that utilize fresh, healthy ingredients in early childhood and K-12 settings	X		X
☑ Pursue federal waivers and administrative pathways that allow healthcare providers to code food assistance as a reimbursable Medicaid cost (Food is Medicine)	X		X
☑ Establish a SNAP outreach plan in partnership with the New Mexico Association of Food Banks (NMAFB)	X		X
☑ Expand SNAP impact by increasing Senior Supplement, eligibility threshold, and deploying SUN Bucks	X		X
☑ Guarantee Healthy Universal School Meals for every New Mexico child	X	X	X

Pillar 2: Farmers, Ranchers, and Food Entrepreneurs

Invest in New Mexico producers through the values-based expansion of New Mexico's locally sourced food security programs and intentional resourcing of land, water, and other inputs needed for fair market access.

Total State Investment: $9,613,965 | Total Federal Dollars Leveraged: $9,675,489

Program	Budget	Policy	Administrative
☑ Expand the New Mexico Grown program to include value-added products and meat			X
☑ Expand the New Mexico Grown program to early childhood and food banks	X		X
☑ Develop or expand grant and loan programs to support food producers that are engaged in regenerative agriculture	X	X	
☑ Work with the Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) to develop a New Mexico Food Finance Landscape Map			X
☑ Develop a water conservation incentive program for agricultural producers feeding food insecure New Mexicans	X		
☑ Work with community-based partners to implement culturally responsive food safety and marketing support programming for New Mexico producers	X		X

Pillar 3: Supply Chain

Inventory and measurably improve food supply chain infrastructure to eliminate gaps, address weak linkages, and mitigate regulatory roadblocks.

Total State Investment: $31,975,000 | Total Federal Dollars Leveraged: $7,628,304

Tactic	Budget	Policy	Administrative
☑ Secure state and federal funding for infrastructure investments that benefit food insecure communities and the agricultural sector	X		X
☑ Increase the number of grocery stores and food retailers in rural and Tribal communities	X		X
☑ Secure state, private, and federal contributions for the Healthy Food Financing Fund	X		X

Pillar 4: Sustainability

Work with the Legislature and other partners to create a sustainable financial model to support the Food Initiative mission.

Total State Investment: $1,136,005

Tactic	Budget	Policy	Administrative
☑ Monitor impact through the creation of the Food Initiative dashboard	X		X
☑ Develop interagency budget request and shared performance measure reporting to secure recurring state funds			X
☑ Work with community partners to help inform the Food Initiative			X

The Path Ahead: Cultivating Resilience in New Mexico's Food Systems

- Establish a state-funded program that supports food security and food systems priorities of Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos located in New Mexico
- Develop a Community Supported Agriculture food box program for low income New Mexicans
- Increase public sector investments in food and agriculture startups, incubators, and accelerators
- Develop a slate of grant and loan programs to support food producers that are engaged in regenerative agriculture
- Create a single application system where child nutrition organizations can apply for multiple nutrition programs at the same time
- Recommend property tax legislation that creates and supports conditions that grow the number of producers, ranchers, and food businesses feeding food insecure New Mexicans
- Develop a state-supported agriculture workforce program based on the Bernalillo County Grow the Growers Incubator Program
- Support student loan repayment options for young and beginning farmers, ranchers, and food entrepreneurs

Appendix

Tactic plan - 56 tactics developed in mid-2021 through a collaborative process with community stakeholders.

Learn More About the Food Initiative

Contact Kendal Chavez, Office of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, Food and Hunger Policy Advisor at Kendal.Chavez@exec.nm.gov or by calling (505) 670-2178

