



**NEW MEXICO**  
Food & Agriculture  
**POLICY COUNCIL**

**New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council**  
**New Mexico Food Charter**  
**REPORT CARD 2025**

As of November 1, 2025

**Nutrition & Food Security**

**Environment, Conservation & Climate**

**Government Support & Infrastructure**

[www.nmfoodpolicy.org](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org)



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Photo: Gabriella Marks

Dear New Mexicans, Policy Makers, and Partners,

We are proud to share the second annual **New Mexico Food Charter Report Card**—an update on progress toward the policy priorities, approaches, and outcomes outlined in the 2024 Food Charter. This report reflects not only a year of policy advancement but also the collective determination of communities, organizations, agencies, legislators, and the Governor to strengthen and protect our state’s food and agriculture systems.

At a time of national uncertainty, it is reassuring to be in New Mexico—a state with a strong economy, a growing local food sector, and a deep commitment to caring for our land, water, and people. In 2025, the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council (NMFAPC) and partners helped secure **\$10.8 billion in state funding, including more than \$81 million for local food access, farmers, ranchers, food hubs, markets, and retailers.** Significant investments also advanced conservation, acequia infrastructure, and healthy soils programs—recognizing the vital role of land and water stewards in building resilience.

Our work is needed now more than ever. With recent federal policy changes affecting food, agriculture, and nutrition programs, New Mexico must continue to lead with innovation, collaboration, and determination. The 2025 Report Card includes a brief overview of these changes and their impact on New Mexicans. We invite communities, partners, and decision-makers to use this tool to stay informed, educate others, and advocate for strong, equitable food and agriculture systems.

These policy wins reflect **coordinated advocacy** among partners, agencies, the Governor’s Office, and lawmakers. The Report Card highlights progress, identifies gaps, and celebrates success—strengthening the foundation for future policies that ensure every New Mexican has access to nourishing, locally grown food.

We invite you to explore the report, reflect on progress, and join us in shaping the future of New Mexico’s food and agriculture systems. Together, we can continue building a more just, resilient, and sustainable food system for all.

With gratitude and commitment,

Lawrence D. Gallegos, Chair  
National Grazing Lands Coalition, Latino and  
Farmers Ranchers International

Johannes Lencer, Vice Chair  
National Center for Frontier Communities

Melanie Kirby, Secretary  
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New Mexico Global; Latino Farmers and  
Ranchers International, Inc.

Coordinator: Pam Roy, Farm to Table

# What is the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council?

The New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council, (the Policy Council) a program of Farm to Table New Mexico, is composed of groups and individuals impacted by food and agriculture systems. The mission of the Policy Council is to advocate for food systems that strengthen the food and farm economies in New Mexico, and encourage and advance keeping food grown, raised, and processed in New Mexico, through support, education, and policy. The aim of its work is to enhance the health and wellness of people and communities, and to sustain natural resources. The Policy Council is the oldest continually operating food policy council in the country. For more information about the Policy Council visit our website at [www.nmfoodpolicy.org/new-mexico-food-charter](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org/new-mexico-food-charter).

## What is the NMFAPC New Mexico Food Charter?

The New Mexico Food Charter is a document that outlines the shared values, goals, and priorities of the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council to guide its policy work over the next three to five years. It provides a practice-based approach to address food security in an ever-changing climate, by investing in local production and consumption of food, with an emphasis on equitable and sustainable practices. You can access the New Mexico Food Charter at [www.nmfoodpolicy.org/new-mexico-food-charter](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org/new-mexico-food-charter).

## How Can We Use the New Mexico Food Charter?

The New Mexico Food Charter is designed to:

- **Set Priorities** to improve food security and access to nutritious food, promote practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change, and improve the food infrastructure through government support.
- **Guide Decision-Making** within the Policy Council, helping members align their actions with the shared values, priorities and goals outlined in the charter.
- **Advocate and Educate** policy council members, policy makers, community members, and others about the importance of food-related issues, the Policy Council's policy priorities, and expected outcomes. The Policy Council works to ensure information is available publicly through websites, interim committee presentations, reports, newsletters, social media and the Food Charter Report Card.
- **Build Partnerships** with governments, organizations and others that share similar values and goals, and strengthen our collective impact.
- **Monitor and Evaluate Progress** to hold government agencies, policymakers, and others accountable for the intended and unintended impacts of policy decisions and programs.

## Food Charter Report Card Purpose

The Policy Council aims to address food security in an ever-changing climate, by investing in local production and consumption of food, with an emphasis on equitable and sustainable practices. Its approach includes:

**3 Priorities:** 1) Nutrition and Food Security; 2) Environment, Conservation and Climate; and 3) Government Support and Infrastructure.

**4 Strategies:** state legislation, federal legislation, policy administration and rules & regulations.

**18 outcomes are monitored through 60 measurable indicators** to assess the Policy Council's progress in improving the food system within its three policy priorities.

The Food Charter Report Card shows the results and impact of this work. The Report Card will be updated periodically to show how the impact measures change over time. The version date is at the bottom of each page.

## Understanding Food Systems

Policy decisions influence our food systems, which affect the health of people, soil, plants, animals, the environment, and local economies. As climate change drives more frequent and severe extreme events, disruptions to food systems will hit hardest for those already most vulnerable - women, children, older adults, and low-income communities - threatening their access to nutritious and affordable food. Policymakers, governments, consumers, food producers, health advocates, and others must work together across sectors to create practices and policies that make our food systems healthy, sustainable, equitable, and economically sound in an ever-changing climate.

**“The Policy Council aims to address food security in an ever-changing climate, by investing in local production and consumption of food, with an emphasis on equitable and sustainable practices.”**



Photo: Helen Henry

# Key Terms and Frameworks

## New Mexico Food Initiative

Launched in 2022, the **Food Initiative** is a \$213 million, multi-year effort led by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham which focuses on expanding access to community-driven, sustainable food across New Mexico.

### 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-



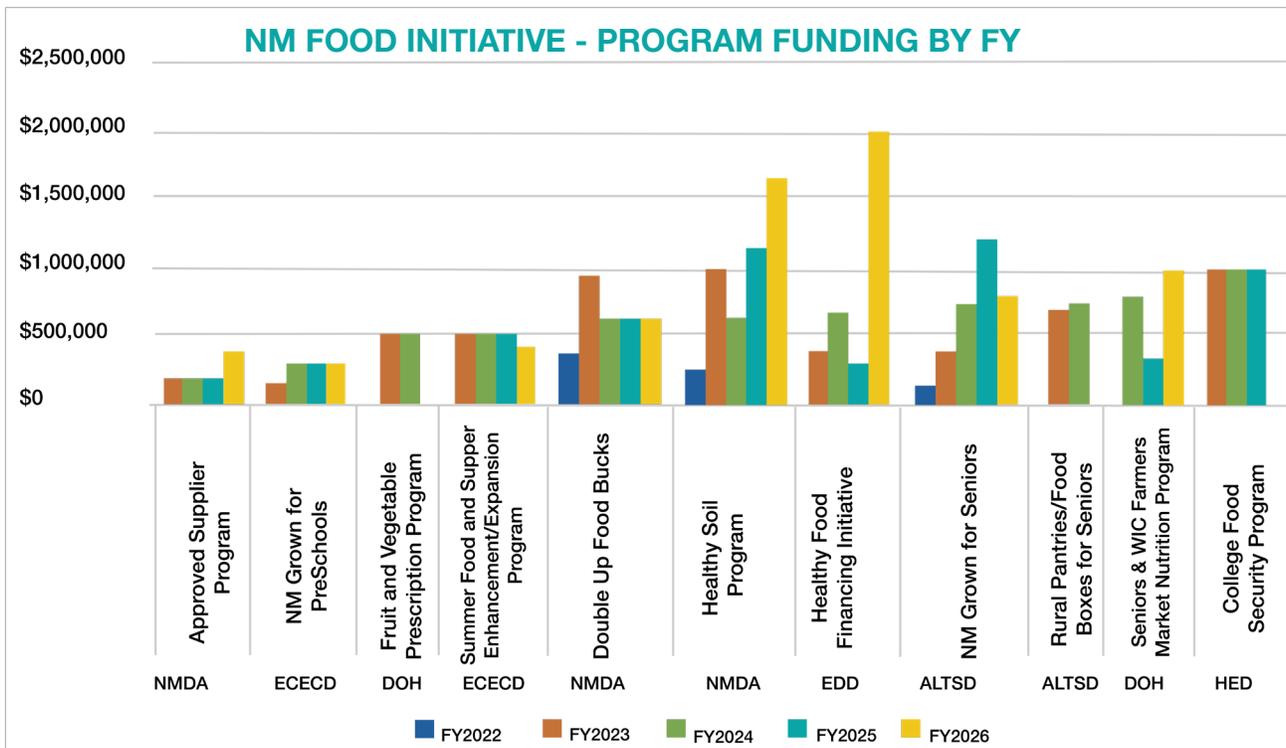
**1,643,833,029 Pounds of Food Provided**



**1,370,424,106 Pounds of Food Provided**

FUNDS	Federal Funds	State Funds	Other Funds	Grand Total
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1.08 B</b>	<b>\$213 M</b>	<b>\$27.4 M</b>	<b>\$1.32 B</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$1.04 B</b>	<b>\$157 M</b>	<b>\$25.9 M</b>	<b>\$1.22 B</b>

Source: State of New Mexico, Office of the Governor. (2025). 2025 Food Initiative Progress Report. Santa Fe, NM.



Source: NM Food Initiative Dashboard. Self-Reported Funding, Detailed Budget Information by FY, State Agency, Awarding Entity and Appropriation. October 2025 <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/dfa-dashboards/food-initiative-dashboard/>

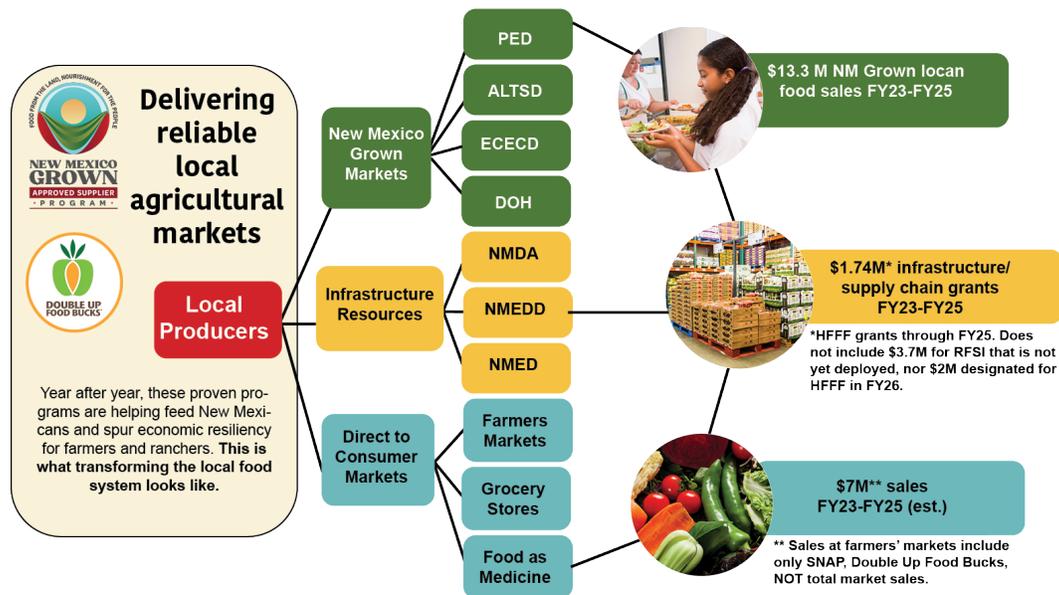
Through funding, policy and administrative actions, the initiative supports four key areas: community food security, economic resilience for producers, value chain stabilization, and long-term program sustainability. Although individual programs and funding may change from year to year, some of the core programs under the initiative have included New Mexico Grown, Double Up Food Bucks, SNAP improvements, the Healthy Food Financing Fund, and the Approved Supplier Program. A detailed account of the NM Food Initiative’s federal, state and other funding sources self-reported by state agency and program for 2023 through 2026 can be found at <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/dfa-dashboards/food-initiative-dashboard/> in the worksheet titled Self-Reported Funding by Funding Type.

## New Mexico Grown

For over a decade, the Policy Council and partners have worked with New Mexico’s legislative and executive branches to evolve New Mexico Grown as a values-based program that brings fresh, local food to schools, senior centers, early childcare centers and families across the state. By connecting farmers, ranchers, producers, food hubs, agencies, and food banks, New Mexico’s food system is strengthened. The program also ensures fair pricing for local producers.

## Local Food Systems

New Mexico is reforming its food systems by investing in programs that support local producers, strengthen small farms, and expand healthy food access for communities. Initiatives like New Mexico Grown and the Farm to Food Bank Program purchase fresh, local food for schools, senior centers, and food banks, the Approved Supplier Program further helps farmers meet food safety and procurement standards so they can sell to schools and other institutions. State infrastructure funding is improving cold storage, kitchens, and distribution networks, and programs like the WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program help families and seniors buy fresh local produce. Together, these efforts build stronger local food economies while improving access for children, seniors, and food-insecure families.



Source: Paisano, A., New Mexico Grown Approved Supplier Program. Transforming Lives From the Ground Up. Presented to the Water and Natural Resources Committee on August 18, 2025 (PowerPoint slides <https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/WNR%20081825%20Item%203%20NMFMA%20NM%20Grown%20Approved%20Supplier%20Program.pdf>)

# NM Food & Agriculture Policy Council

## ..... *Priority Areas* .....



### Nutrition & Food Security

Enhancing access to nutritious food and food security for populations throughout New Mexico, especially children, older adults and those who are food insecure.

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### Environment, Conservation & Climate

Air, water, soil, climate, pollinators and various other environmental factors significantly impact food production, food nutrition, and the economic well-being of food producers. If the land is not healthy and productive, the livelihoods of food producers are at risk. Growing food in an environment where access to clean water is threatened and the impact of the climate crisis is increasing requires implementing conservation and restorative practices.

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### Government Support & Infrastructure

The government plays a pivotal and multifaceted role in shaping a sustainable, equitable food system that meets the population's food and nutrition needs while minimizing adverse social and environmental impacts. Public policies and programs determine the funding and other resources available, who may benefit from those resources, and which aspects of the food system are deemed worthy of investment.

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# Nutrition & Food Security



## Outcomes We Track and Why It Matters

Improving access to culturally appropriate, nutrient-rich foods	Leads to better health outcomes, especially for food-insecure populations like children, older adults and people with low income.
Food education	Education helps foster healthier eating habits and reduce the appeal of unhealthy or harmful foods.
Shifting institutional meal programs away from processed foods toward scratch-made, nutritious meals	Supports better diets and wellness.
Expanding enrollment in nutrition-focused programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), WIC, and Food is Medicine	Enhances the availability and appeal of healthy foods.
Implementing strong nutrition standards in publicly funded food programs	Promotes the health and development of children, older adults and families

## 2025 OUTCOMES

### 2025 Legislation and Budget Priorities We Supported That Passed

**Budget Priorities**

Budget priorities listed below are for **State Fiscal Year 2026** and beyond, as stated in [HB2 Final](#) 4/11/25, unless noted otherwise.

- HB2 and HB3 allow for \$7.848 million for the **Healthy Universal School Meals** for the fiscal year 2025 shortfall, \$3.054 million for the fiscal year 2024 shortfall, and \$5 million for fiscal year 2026, contingent on a budgetary shortfall due to growth in participation or meal rates.
- In FY25, PED set aside \$1,710,200 for **NM Grown K-12** purchases. In FY26, PED plans to set aside an additional \$2 million for K-12 NM Grown. NMFAPC supported a FY26 budget request for \$2.3 million in NM Grown additional funding.

- \$800,00 in FY25 for **NM Grown for Senior Meal Programs** from the Kiki Saavedra Fund at the NM Aging and Long-Term Service Department. No new funding was added to the agency’s budget for FY2026. NMFAPC supported recurring state funding specific to NM Grown for Senior Meal Programs.
- \$1 million for **WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program**, NM Department of Health
- \$2 million for the **Healthy Food Financing Fund (HFFF)**, Economic Development Department
- \$500,000 for **outdoor classrooms**, Public Education Department
- \$30 million for the **Community Food Assistance Program** over three years. FY26: \$10 million to support food banks statewide and to ensure access to nutritious food, with up to fifty percent of the first-year appropriation used for expanding capacity and the remainder for food purchases. FY27: \$10 million to support access to nutritious food, with up to twenty-five percent used for expanding capacity and the remainder for food purchases. FY28: \$10 million to support access to nutritious food through food purchases.
- \$3.3 million for **grants to assist state meat processors** in adapting to new meat processing technologies, for proper disposal of meat processing by-products and for equipment. Any unexpended balances remaining at the end of fiscal year 2026 from this appropriation shall not revert and may be expended through fiscal year 2029. NM Department of Agriculture.
- \$1 million **Early Childhood Education Department Scratch Cooking**.
- \$4.7 million **Food is Medicine Program** to benefit pregnant women and older adults enrolled in the community benefit program. This program is supplemented by about \$16.7 million in federal funds for a total investment of over \$21.5 million. In its Food Initiative Briefing Sheet for the 2025 Legislative Session, the Office of the Governor requested \$40.5 million to benefit over 50,000 homebound seniors and pregnant women.

 Legislation We Tracked

- **New Mexico Meat, Cheese and Produce in Schools (SM19)**. This memorial sets the stage for the NM Department of Agriculture and the Public Education Department to convene a work group to design a plan in which fifty percent of the beef, cheese and milk served to students in public schools originates from and is processed by New Mexico producers. The work group will report its recommendations to an appropriate interim legislative committee by November 1, 2025.



## Legislation and Budget Priorities We Supported that Did Not Pass or Was Not Funded

- \$4.5 million was requested by the Governor **to support higher education students** attending more than 20 institutions statewide with food and housing assistance and other basic needs. This initiative was not funded.

## Rulemaking and Regulations

The **Healthy Universal School Meals Act (SB4)** was passed in 2023. The new rule [6.12.16 NMAC, Healthy Universal School Meals](#) was approved by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) on September 24, 2024 and establishes the state's requirements for universal school meal programs. The rule includes two overarching standards for School Food Authorities (SFAs) to receive state reimbursement for providing healthy and freshly prepared meals. Schools must demonstrate that at least 50 percent of their weekly meal components are freshly prepared, and that they are taking steps to reduce food waste. Local sourcing is encouraged but optional, and counts as evidence of quality improvement for those who participate.

According to the NM Legislative Finance Committee's evaluation of Healthy Universal School Meals (August 2025), there were some challenges in implementing the new standards. In PED's informal 2025 statewide survey, 50 percent of respondents reported actively upgrading their kitchen facilities and equipment, and 77 percent said they are increasing scratch cooking efforts. However, many respondents noted that existing school kitchens need upgrades to support on-site meal preparation at current volumes, and more than 75 percent cited staffing shortages and a need for additional culinary training as barriers to implementing scratch cooking.

HUSM allocated a dedicated grant for SFAs to source food directly from in-state growers and producers. Schools are eligible for the greater of \$1,000 or 10 cents for every federally reimbursable free lunch served in the previous year, subject to available funding. Challenges cited by SFAs in purchasing locally grown food included availability (including properly processed and pre-cut foods), cost, delivery, and lack of staff time to process and prepare local foods.

## Policy and Budget Impact and Outcomes

**1. Healthy Universal School Meals (K-12)** PED agency staff confirmed the following information: personal communication, July 28, 2025:

- FY24:** 55,223,740 meals, 189 SFA's, 280,291 students served.
- FY25:** 56,139,940 meals, 195 SFA's, 305,565 students served. <sup>1</sup>

## 1. Healthy Universal School Meals (K-12) (continued)

### a. NM Grown:

**FY24:** 233,310 students served

**FY25:** 242,046 students served <sup>2</sup>

### b. HUSM staff positions dedicated to training school service workers:

**FY 24:** 4 HUSM Team Members (3 state, 2 federal)

**FY 25:** 5 HUSM Team Members (3 state, 2 federal). <sup>2</sup>

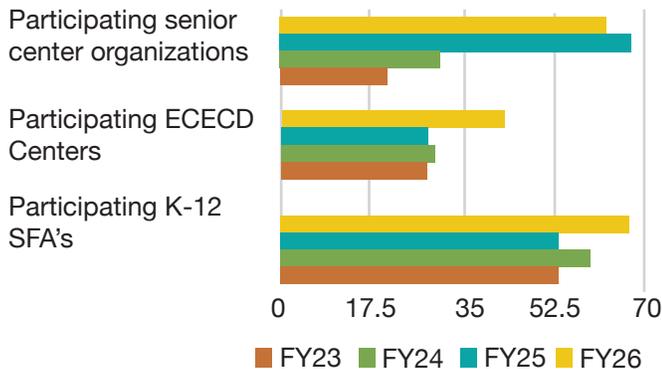
## 2. NM Grown for Seniors

a. In **FY25**, 4,191,156 senior meals were served to 50,680 seniors.<sup>1</sup>

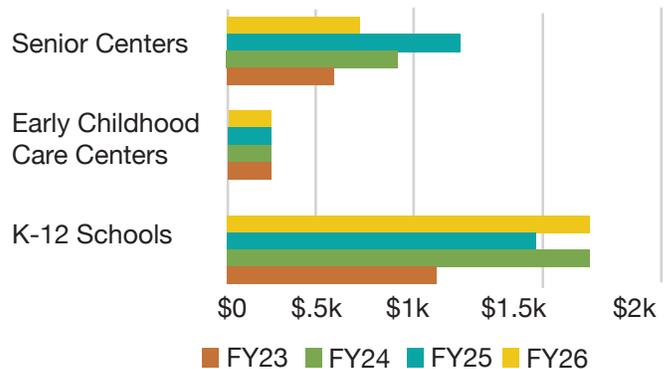
## 3. NM Grown for Early Childhood Centers

a. 7,530 early childhood students ages 0-5 served.<sup>1</sup>

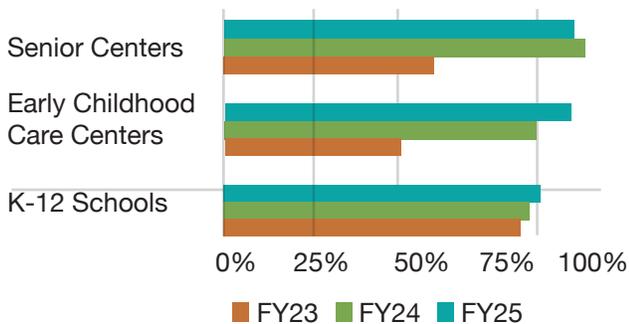
NM Grown Participation K-12 Schools, Childcare Centers and Senior Centers Fiscal Years 2023-2026



NM Grown Award Amount K-12 Schools, Childcare Centers and Senior Centers Fiscal Years 2023-2026



NM Grown Percentage of Funds Expended K-12 Schools, Childcare Centers and Senior Centers Fiscal Years 2023-2026



Healthy Universal School Meals

The enactment of Healthy Universal School Meals will begin in July 2024. The numbers below report School Breakfast and National School Lunch Program data.



Source: PED agency staff personal communication, July 28, 2025

Above three graphs: Source: Anichini, L., NM Grown in K-12, Early Childhood, and Senior Centers. Presentation to the Water and Natural Resources Committee on 8/18/25 Power Point slides <https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/WNR%20081825%20Item%203%20PED%20NM%20Grown%20Programs.pdf>

## 4. The New Mexico Regional Farm to Food Bank (RF2FB) Program Update

The New Mexico Regional Farm to Food Bank (RF2FB) Program was a state initiative funded by the USDA's Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program that connected New Mexican

farmers and ranchers with food banks to purchase locally grown foods for food-insecure communities. RF2FB was coordinated by The Food Depot on behalf of the New Mexico Association of Food Banks. RF2FB supported local economies by providing fair prices to producers, enhancing the availability of healthy, culturally appropriate foods in food banks, and strengthening regional food systems. Since its inception, RF2FB has been a significant purchaser of local foods, accounting for 34% of all NM Grown institutional purchases from small and midsize producers in 2024 This program received one-time federal funding for \$4,094,608 for May 2023 to June 2025. In March 2025, USDA terminated this program, effective June 2025. Food Depot staff reported that an additional investment of \$600,000 from NM Food Banks helped to carry the program from July through October 2025.

**5. Amount of NM Grown produce distribution by program and county.**

Since 2023, over 1,100 farms, ranches, co-ops, processing facilities and other agricultural businesses from all of New Mexico’s 33 counties have helped to provide local produce to the New Mexico Food Initiative programs, valued at \$15,328,437. In FY25, **the value of locally grown food sales increased by more than \$1 million from FY24 local sales.**<sup>3</sup>

Local Food Sales	
FY23	\$5,006,304
FY24	\$4,483,472
FY25	\$5,538,961
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,328,437</b>

Source: Food Initiative Dashboard, HI-02 NM Grown, Local Produce Distribution Summary. Retrieved September 1, 2025.

**6. Sales direct to consumer, retail, institutions, food hubs and value-added**

a. 10.8% in 2022, up 2.3% from 2017. <sup>4</sup>

**7. Build strong and resilient food systems that respond to food shortages, especially in emergencies.**

a. The **Emergency Food Assistance Program’s (TEFAP)** federal allocation to the state decreased significantly over the past 3 years, with only \$415,442 received in FY25, \$1,737,240 in FY24 and \$3,416,990 in FY23. <sup>5</sup>

b. **Food Bank/Community Food Assistance Funding** - The 2025 legislative session approved \$30 million for the Community Food Assistance Program, distributed at \$10 million per year for FY26, FY27 and FY28, to support NM’s 5 regional food banks. The appropriation allows capacity improvement up to 50% in FY26 and up to 25% in FY27, with the remaining funds going to ensure access to nutritious food. ([HB2 Final](#) 4/11/25)





## Impact of the Federal Changes on Food & Nutrition Security in New Mexico

With one of the highest per capita rates of federal funding in the nation, the proposed federal budget cuts will have a devastating impact on food and nutrition programs in New Mexico over the next decade. Here are some of the major food and nutrition programs the Policy Council is tracking:

### 1. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- a. In FY24, nationally, New Mexico ranked 2nd out of 51 based on the share of its population receiving SNAP benefits. [6](#)
- b. There were about 459,500 monthly SNAP recipients during August 2025. That is 21.5% of the state's population, according to federal Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) data. [6](#)
- c. LFC staff reported the following to the New Mexico Federal Infrastructure Funds and Stability [Interim] Committee. [6](#)
  - i. Beginning in FY27, the state would pick up 75% of SNAP administrative expenses at a cost of approximately \$18.9 million annually. This investment could take away from other state investments.
  - ii. In FY29, the state cost to fund the current federal share of SNAP benefits is estimated at up to \$200 million.
  - iii. The projected cost to implement 100%state-funded SNAP for newly ineligible clients is estimated at \$109 million in FY27, \$114 million in FY28, and \$120 million in FY29.
  - iv. HCA reports that an estimated 16,220 New Mexicans could lose SNAP benefits due to their immigration status.
  - v. HCA states that about 55,750 New Mexicans receiving SNAP will be newly subject to work requirements, with 20,070 New Mexicans likely to lose SNAP benefits due to work requirements.
- d. HCA reports approximately 20,077 New Mexicans could see a reduction in SNAP benefits due to changes in deduction allowances. [7](#)
- e. Nearly \$1.3 billion in SNAP revenue is at stake for 1,700 NM grocery stores, farmers markets, gas stations, and convenience stores. [7](#)
- f. NM has the highest rate of child food insecurity in the U.S. (23.3%), which is likely to worsen with downstream impacts on school attendance and academic performance. [7](#)
- g. Investments in NM's safety net have reduced child poverty from the worst in the nation (27.4%) to 17th in the nation (8.9%); federal changes are likely to reverse this positive trend. [7](#)

## 2. Impact on K-12 school meals

a. **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** In school year 24-25, NSLP provided breakfast, lunch, and nutritious snacks to 225 school food authorities in New Mexico serving 294,657 students, totaling \$169,482,657.54 in federal claims. The number of NSLP-eligible students may decrease due to federal eligibility and documentation changes, resulting in lower federal NSLP income. [8](#)

b. Potential federal funding cuts are likely to affect the status of students directly certified through SNAP or Medicaid beginning January 1, 2027, which may lower the identified student percentage (ISP) for some SFAs. Analysis indicates about 2.9 percent of students (approximately 8,783 statewide) may lose direct certification, which could result in an estimated 20 schools losing CEP eligibility and 60 additional schools no longer qualifying for full federal reimbursement of meals. To mitigate the impact of these changes, PED is certifying ISP rates for all schools, which will be maintained for four years starting in SY30. [9](#)

c. **Sun Bucks/Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)** As of July 2025, the state received over \$35 million in benefits for eligible students and families. Over 275,000 students were automatically eligible through TANF, SNAP, Medicaid-Free and McKinney-Vento and other eligible categories such as foster, migrant and runaway students. Students who will no longer receive these benefits or do not meet the eligibility requirements under these programs will need to complete free/reduced applications, which may reduce the number of students receiving benefits. [8](#)

d. **Community Eligibility Program (CEP)** 858 New Mexico schools are eligible for the CEP, which provides maximum federal reimbursements to schools that are high-poverty to serve meals free to all students without collecting household applications and alleviating the paperwork burden. In SY25-26, 100 percent of eligible schools participated in the CEP. [8](#)

e. **Local Food for Schools and Child Care Cooperative** Immediate cuts for school year 25-26 include \$5.6 million earmarked for New Mexico to support Local Food for Schools and Child Care Cooperative for the PED and Early Childhood Education & Care Department over a three-year period. [8](#)

f. **SNAP-Ed and Healthy Kids Health Communities (HKHC)** According to USDA, New Mexico received about \$5.2 million in federal SNAP-Ed funding in FY25, administered by HCA and shared among several agencies. The SNAP-Ed funding was cut as part of the July 2025 reconciliation bill. HKHC, a project of the New Mexico Department of Health, partners with local communities to create healthy environments that allow children to eat healthily and live well. With an annual budget of about \$770,000, HKHC depends in part on the SNAP-Ed funding to support HKHC programs throughout New Mexico communities. The future of New Mexico's HKHC program is unknown at this time. [10](#)

## 3. Impact on senior meals

a. 64,460 seniors (age 60+) in New Mexico received SNAP benefits in fiscal year (FY) 2022. [11](#)

b. Over the past 2 years, ALTSD has transferred \$2,750,000+ to HSD to support seniors receiving SNAP. [10](#)

c. During the SFY 2025 legislative session, HCA was appropriated funds to supplement elderly and/or disabled SNAP cases to issue no less than \$100/month. It is anticipated that

the senior and disabled SNAP caseload will grow by 81% by SFY27. Due to this growth, additional state funding is needed to maintain a \$100 supplement, as Federal minimum SNAP benefits may drop from the current minimum of \$23 per month to \$18 per month.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. Impacts on Families

a. **New Mexico Women, Infants and Children (WIC).** New Mexico WIC was the first in the nation to build an integrated interface system between SNAP, Medicaid and TANF. Participation grew over 34% between 2022 and 2025, averaging between 300 and 700 new families per month. In the original House federal budget (summer 2025) the House proposed to reduce federal fruit/vegetable benefits from \$52 to just \$13 for breastfeeding moms and from \$26 to \$10 for young children.

#### 5. Food Assistance Programs

a. New Mexico's **Regional Farm to Food Bank (RF2FB)** program was created under the American Rescue Plan Act in 2021, and funded through the USDA Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Cooperative Agreement. The LFPA was terminated in March 2025, bringing the USDA funds for RF2FB to an end as of June 2025. RF2FB has been instrumental in connecting New Mexico farmers, ranchers, and food producers to the state's food bank network. The termination of \$6.3 million in federal funding creates uncertainty for local food producers who sell to food banks and reduces access to locally grown food statewide.

Since its inception, RF2FB has been a significant purchaser of local foods, accounting for 34% of all NM Grown institutional purchases from small and midsize producers in 2024. The Food Depot administered the program for the NM Association of Food banks and staff reported that during the last three years, New Mexico's RF2FB program has been a national standout, spending more than \$4.6 million with local producers on healthy and culturally appropriate food and 82% of sales benefited socially disadvantaged and historically underserved producers. Over 250 distribution sites have received local foods in all 33 counties in New Mexico. The Policy Council supports making LFPA a permanently funded program through state and federal funding, including administrative support. This would ensure stability for small and midsize farmers and ranchers, stabilize the local food supply, and bolster regional economies nationwide.

#### b. **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**

Because TEFAP is a cornerstone of the emergency food network, any reduction in SNAP, WIC, or related programs forces food banks and pantries to absorb the growing need—something they cannot sustain. TEFAP's supply of entitlement and "bonus" (commodity) foods hinges on federal appropriations and USDA procurement decisions, and recent cuts and delays have already disrupted deliveries. The loss of USDA's Local Food Purchase Assistance program further weakens local and tribal food supply chains that had helped keep food dollars in New Mexico communities. While state emergency funds have provided temporary relief, they cannot replace consistent federal support. Without restored TEFAP and USDA investments, food banks, rural producers, and families across New Mexico will continue to bear the cost of federal disinvestment.

# New Mexico Legislature Special Session Responds to Federal Changes

In October 2025, New Mexico's governor and state legislature took "swift and proactive action" to address the immediate fallout from the federal cuts and stabilize the state's food security network. Actions taken in the 2025 emergency legislative session and reflected in HB1 (10/01/2025) include:

- **Emergency funding:** The legislature approved \$162 million in emergency funding, which includes more than \$16 million to maintain the minimum federal supplemental nutrition assistance program, including \$4.6 million for elders and people with disabilities, and \$12 million for lawfully present residents.
- **Increased state capacity:** The state is funding additional Health Care Authority staff and technology upgrades to help New Mexicans navigate complicated new rules and assist with SNAP applications.
- **Local support:** The legislature funded \$8 million to support food banks, food pantries, regional distribution organizations and partner agencies in the state to ensure access to nutritious food, including \$2.5 million for capacity building, transportation, logistics and operational expenses. It also provided \$2 million to restock food pantries at childcare centers, public schools and universities.

## New Mexico Legislature Special Session Responds to Federal Changes



### EMERGENCY FUNDING

\$162 million in emergency funding, including more than \$16 million to maintain minimum federal supplemental nutrition assistance program

- \$4.6M for elders and people with disabilities
- \$12M for lawfully present residents



### INCREASED STATE CAPABILITY

Additional Health Care Authority staff and technology upgrades to help New Mexicans navigate complicated new rules and assist with SNAP applications



### LOCAL SUPPORT

\$8 million to support food banks, food pantries, distribution organizations and partner agencies \$2 million to restock food pantries at childcare centers, public schools and universities



# Environment, Conservation & Climate



## Outcomes We Track and Why It Matters

Preserve Agricultural Land	Maintaining farmland ensures space for local food production and food security.
Support Family and Small Farms	Small farms are essential to NM's economy, cultural heritage, and environmental stewardship. Support helps retain generational knowledge and foster new farmers.
Promote Regenerative Farming	These practices improve soil, biodiversity, and climate resilience, benefiting both people and the environment.
Grow Climate-Resilient Crops	Crops that need less water and are non-GMO protect natural resources and adapt to changing climates.
Ensure Clean and Sufficient Water	Access to quality water boosts crop health, nutrition, and yield.
Prioritize Water for Food Production	Reliable water access strengthens local food systems and sustains agriculture.
Protect Pollinators	Pollinators are critical to increasing crop yields and maintaining biodiversity.
Preserve Seed Integrity	Reducing GMO contamination safeguards cultural seed traditions and improves soil and crop health.
Provide Disaster Relief for Growers	Governmental aid helps farmers recover from climate-related losses and supports long-term viability.

## 2025 OUTCOMES

### Legislation and Budget Priorities We Supported That Passed

#### Budget Priorities

- **Agriculture Water Resilience Program**, \$5 million to New Mexico State University, New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute, for grants to local governments to implement

projects that improve farmers' and ranchers' ability to manage, save and efficiently apply limited water resources for agricultural production. (HB2 Final 4/11/25) production. (HB2 Final 4/11/25)

- \$1.2 million **Acequia and Community Ditch Fund**, NMDA (HB2 Final 4/11/25)
- \$9 million in state general funds to NMDA for **soil and water conservation districts**. Any unexpended balances remaining at the end of fiscal year 2026 from this appropriation shall not revert and may be expended through fiscal year 2028 for soil and water conservation districts, NMDA. (HB2 Final 4/11/25)



### Legislative Priorities

- **Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Act (SB21)**

Aligning with the NMFAPC's Water Statement, this Act takes urgent steps to address New Mexico's ability to manage its surface water. It is landmark legislation that empowers New Mexico to take charge of its own water quality permitting, ensuring stronger protections for waterways and communities.

## Legislation and Budget Priorities We Supported that Did Not Pass or Were Not Funded

- **Land Grant-Merced & Acequia Infrastructure (HB330)** This bill would establish a land grant-merced and acequia infrastructure trust fund (trust fund) and two related project funds, the land grant-merced infrastructure project fund and the acequia infrastructure project fund. LFC staff conclude that there is no revenue source for the trust fund, absent a separate appropriation into the trust fund of at least \$5 million each.
- **Pollinator Research (HB459)** received strong and positive support during the 2025 legislative session, but did not get ratified. Meanwhile, NMDA told the Water and Natural Resources interim committee (09/11/2025) that it aims to have a protection plan draft for external review in late spring 2026. Melanie Kirby, NMFAPC member, also testified at that committee, highlighting the urgent need for pollinator research and planning by the state. The Policy Council acknowledges that the increasing challenges of pollinator stewardship can no longer be ignored and will help negotiate a path through the legislative process to help local to regional food production and security.

## Rulemaking and Regulations

In May 2025, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) adopted a rule that bans the discharge of "**produced water**" from oil and gas operations into the state's ground and surface waters. This decision came after 18 months of hearings, research and public comment. The decision reverses a previous allowance for pilot projects that would have permitted some discharge of treated produced water. The ban applies to "pilot projects" and both treated and untreated produced water and will remain in effect until the rule sunsets in five years. However, in July 2025, the Water Access Treatment and Reuse Alliance (WATR Alliance) filed a petition

with the WQCC to propose a rule change that would allow for the discharge of treated produced water for various purposes, including agriculture, tree growth, and manufacturing. The WATR Alliance argues that advancements in treatment technologies now allow for the safe reuse and discharge of produced water. The Santa Fe New Mexican reported that on September 23, 2025 the WACC Commissioners ultimately rejected requests from environmental groups to dismiss the petition from the WATR Alliance and set some requirements for the process, that would include holding a hearing in summer 2026, establishing an advisory committee and a schedule for public participation. Additionally, the Commissioners voted in favor of a recommendation for the WATR Alliance to “implement a formal outreach program” concerning their proposal.

## Policy and Budget Impact and Outcomes

### 1. Farms in New Mexico

- a. There were a total of 20,900 farms reported in 2023, a decrease from 25,000 farms reported in 2017.<sup>12</sup>
- b. Total Farm Acreage in NM - 2017: 40,700,000 acres of farmland; 2023: 39,100,000 acres of farmland.<sup>13</sup>
- c. NM Farms Under 10 Acres - 2022: 6,934 or 33% of all producers.<sup>13</sup>
- d. Family/Individual Owned Farms. New Mexico farms are primarily owned and operated by families or individuals, with 17,593 family farms as of 2022 (84%). Corporations account for 1,129 farms, (5.4%), while partnerships own 982 farms, (4.7%). Other farms, such as estates or trusts, prison farms, grazing associations, American Indian Reservations, etc., make up about 6% of farms in New Mexico.<sup>13</sup>

### 2. NMFAPC’s Water Statement

The Policy Council believes that planning for all water use in New Mexico now and in the future must prioritize providing adequate clean water for local food production by New Mexico farmers, cultivators, and growers. By doing so, these producers are economically and environmentally resilient and can continue providing healthy foods. Consequently, the Policy Council adopted a water statement in May 2024. View the full statement at: [www.nmfoodpolicy.org/water-policy-statement](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org/water-policy-statement).

### 3. Acequia & Community Ditch Fund

For FY25, the New Mexico Legislature appropriated \$1.5 million from the state's general fund to the Acequia and Community Ditch Fund (ACDF), to cover legal costs for water rights adjudication. The fund is administered by NMDA. The \$1.5 million figure represents an increase from the fund's previous recurring revenue of about \$830,000. This allocation differs from the separate Acequia and Community Ditch Infrastructure Fund (ACDIF), which supports physical irrigation projects.

### 4. New Mexico’s 50 Year Water Plan (Selected Outcomes)

- a. **Agricultural Water Resilience Program** The \$5 million in funding for FY26 supports implementation of Action A2 of the New Mexico 50 Year Water Action Plan to maintain the resilience of New Mexico agriculture and provide food security in a future with less

available water. The program is administered by the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute (NM WRI) at New Mexico State University. For FY26, 61 applications were submitted, totaling \$8,574,210. Funded projects include infrastructure upgrades (gates, distribution and delivery), evaporation reduction, modern irrigation, acequia and watershed restoration, technology for efficient water management (solar pumps and system), and other miscellaneous projects. NM WRI will monitor and assess the impact of projects on water efficiency and resilience; an assessment will be completed by June 30, 2027.<sup>13</sup>

## 5. Agriculture Workforce Development

a. **Agricultural Workforce Development Program [NMDA]** This workforce development program was created through the Agricultural Workforce Development Act in 2019. Recurring funds are administered through NMSU, allowing agricultural businesses to apply for up to 3 interns per calendar year. NMDA pays up to 50% of the actual cost of the internship, including wages, workers’ compensation, and directly related incidental costs. In FY25, NMDA received \$125,000 (5% for administration), awarding 8 businesses to hire 12 interns.<sup>14</sup>

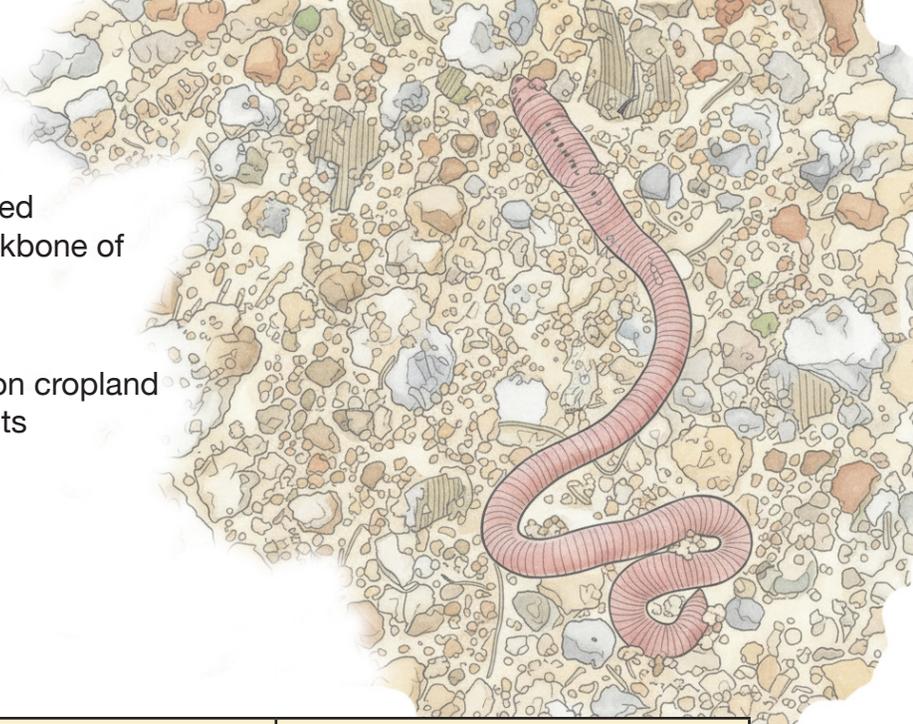
	Funding Awarded	Total Interns	Participating Businesses
<b>FY23*</b>	\$87,689	23	14
<b>FY24</b>	\$201,148	25	13
<b>FY24</b>	\$119,048	15	10
<b>FY25</b>	\$119,038	12	8
<b>FY26</b> (as of August 2025)	\$174,000	19	NA

\* FY23: Received additional Food Initiative funding

Source: Henkels, M. (2025). New Mexico Department of Agriculture. NMDA’s Agricultural Workforce Development Program. Presented to the Water and Natural Resources Interim Committee on August 18, 2025. [PowerPoint slides].

## 6. Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund

The **Conservation Legacy Permanent Fund (permanent fund)** and the **Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund (distribution fund)** were created in 2023 (SB9) to provide recurring revenue for preservation and conservation-focused programs in six agencies. Since 2022, the Legislature has appropriated \$350 million into the permanent fund, including \$50 million in 2023 and \$300 million in 2024. In 2023, the Legislature also appropriated \$50 million in the distribution fund. The first round of allocations from the distribution fund to the six state agencies was in FY25. NMDA receives 22.5% of the fund to administer 3 programs. The Policy Council is monitoring 2 of NMDA’s 3 programs: the Healthy Soil Act and funding to Soil/Water Conservation Districts.<sup>15</sup>



**a. NMDA’s Healthy Soil Program**

The five soil health principles named in the Healthy Soil Act are the backbone of the program:

- Keeping soil covered
- Minimizing soil disturbance on cropland and minimizing external inputs
- Maximizing biodiversity
- Maintaining a living root
- Integrating animals into land management

**Grants Awarded FY2020 to FY2026**

Fiscal Year	Eligible Entities	Individual Applicants
2020 (pilot)		19*
2021		26*
2022	5	12
2023	13	37
2024	11	34
2025	15	38
2026	13	3

\* NMDA didn’t distinguish between Eligible Entities and Individual Applicants these years.  
 Source: Colin, A. (2025, October 10). Data from the Healthy Soil Program [Email communication].  
 New Mexico Department of Agriculture.

Planting cover crops is the most widely adopted practice supported by NMDA’s Healthy Soil Program. Cover cropping protects land during fallow periods, improves biodiversity, maintains living roots, and supports integrated livestock management. It also moderates soil temperature, increases organic matter and fertility, reduces erosion, and enhances water infiltration.

Statewide use has deepened understanding of species selection, timing, and management. Combined with the five soil health principles and technical assistance from USDA-NRCS, cover crops are now successfully implemented across cropland, orchards, vineyards, rangeland, and market gardens.

**b. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD).** For FY25, there was a little over \$3.5 million in requests, and only a little over \$1 million available. NMDA awarded 24 SWCDs and 1 watershed district to implement 31 projects consisting of 10 capacity-building, 8 community outreach and education, 7 landscape-scale restoration, and 6 conservation planning.<sup>16</sup>



## Impact of the Federal Changes on New Mexico Conservation Programs

### 1. Socially Disadvantaged Producers

USDA's July 2025 rule, "Removal of Unconstitutional Preferences Based on Race and Sex," ends long-standing remedies for historic discrimination within Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development, and Farm Service Agency programs. This change could disproportionately harm the roughly 20,300 New Mexico farmers and ranchers who identify as members of socially disadvantaged groups, undermining decades of progress toward equity in federal agricultural support.

### 2. Commodity Safety Net

While national ARC/PLC reference prices and acreage coverage will expand, New Mexico is projected to receive no new base acres under the revised formula, leaving local producers at a disadvantage. Payment limits rise to \$155,000, but because most large operations are located outside of New Mexico, they stand to gain the most from this change.

### 3. Conservation Programs

Major conservation programs - Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) --are now part of the Farm Bill baseline through 2031, with significant funding increases (EQIP +55%, CSP +36%). However, the removal of the Inflation Reduction Act climate guardrails weakens their environmental impact, risking diversion of funds away from regenerative and climate-smart practices that New Mexico producers rely on.

### 4. Livestock Programs

The expanded Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) now covers unborn livestock losses and doubles Livestock Forage Program (LFP) payments in D2 droughts, providing needed relief amid New Mexico's worsening climate conditions.

### 5. USDA Reorganization

Pending USDA restructuring could reshape local program delivery and technical assistance in New Mexico, emphasizing the need for strong state advocacy to ensure rural, tribal, and socially disadvantaged producers are not left behind.

For more information, see [Field Notes: Agri-Policy Briefs](#).

# Government Support & Infrastructure



## Outcomes We Track and Why It Matters

<b>Expanded and supported infrastructure</b>	Investments across the food value chain that can deliver more sustainable, healthy, and affordable food to New Mexicans.
<b>More state, federal, and tribal resources are available to New Mexican growers</b>	Enhanced equity, justice, well-being, and dignity for farm and ranch owners, workers, and business owners aim to increase the viability of enterprises owned and managed by minority and previously excluded populations.
<b>Build strong and resilient food systems</b>	Responding to food shortages, especially during emergencies (e.g., ensuring access to enough food), aims to reduce food insecurity, malnutrition, and related health conditions and developmental impacts.
<b>Increase the value of food sales by NM farmers and ranchers participating in NM Grown programs</b>	Growing and purchasing food locally helps preserve food self-sufficiency, reduce rural poverty, and boost community well-being.

## 2025 OUTCOMES

### Legislation and Budget Priorities We Supported



#### Budget Priorities

- \$430,000 for the NM Grown Approved Supplier Program, NM Department of Agriculture. (HB2 Final 4/11/25)
- \$1.55 million Veterinary Loan Repayment Program (SB8) NM State University enacts the Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program that provides veterinarian students with an incentive to practice in New Mexico.

# Policy and Budget Impact and Outcomes

**1. Approved Supplier Program (ASP).** The ASP is the infrastructure backbone for NM producers. It supports safe, traceable local food sourcing while helping NM producers connect with schools, institutions, and buyers to meet growing demand for local agricultural products.

- a. Annual state funding for ASP - Since state fiscal year 2023, the ASP has received \$430,000 per year in non-recurring funds. The Policy Council supports recurring funds at the current or a greater level in the future. [17](#)
- b. Number of ASP growers - As of October 1, 2025, there were 127 approved farmers and ranchers in the ASP. [18](#)
- c. Location of ASP growers - As of August 2025, APS-approved producers were located in 27 of NM's 33 counties. [18](#)
- d. 55% of ASP growers self-identify as socially disadvantaged. [18](#)

## Approved Supplier Program



\* as of October 1, 2025 Source: <https://newmexicogrown.org/asp/vendors/>

## 2. Food Producer Participation in NM Grown Initiative

a. Since 2023, 1,132 farms have participated in the NM Grown Initiative. The counties with the most food producer participation include: Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, San Juan, Santa Fe, and Valencia. [19](#)

## 3. Value of local goods distributed for NM Grown in FY25 [20](#)

- a. **All Food Initiative Programs** In FY25 the value was \$5,538,961; a 24% increase over FY24. All 33 counties reported local goods distributed in FY24 and FY25.
- b. **NM Preschool** In FY25 the value was \$172,645 across 12 counties compared to FY24 with a value of \$102,797 across 14 counties.
- c. **NM K-12 UHSM** During a meeting with PED, agency staff confirmed that in FY25 the value of NM Grown for K-12 was \$1,580,358, a slight decrease from FY24 at \$1,790,951. (NM Public Education Department personal communication, July 28, 2025)
- d. **NM Senior Centers** In FY25, the value was \$1,154,280 across 29 counties, up from \$970,245 in FY24 across 24 counties.
- e. **Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program** The FY25 value was \$1,250,528 across 29 counties, a 50% increase in value from FY24 (\$830,122 across 28 counties).

#### 4. Amount of NM Grown produce distribution by program and county

For a table showing NM Grown distribution by program and county, see: NM Food Initiative Dashboard. New Mexico Grown: Local Farm Participation and Food Distribution by County. September 2025. <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/dfa-dashboards/food-initiative-dashboard/#et-main-area>.]

#### 5. FY24 School Kitchen Capital Improvement

During a meeting with PED, agency staff confirmed that the total amount allocated in FY24 was \$20 million. In FY24, \$15 million was spent by 65 SFAs and in FY25 the remaining \$5 million was spent by 22 SFAs. All FY25 requests were from Charter Schools, and many were for basic school equipment. Construction, equipment, and property were the top requests. [21](#)

#### 6. Food Hunger and Agriculture Infrastructure Support (Economic Development Department)

a. **Healthy Food Financing Fund (HFFF)** This grant program prioritizes support 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. In FY23, FY24 and FY25, a total of 41 grants, totaling nearly \$1,735,000, were successfully administered through this program. [22](#)

b. **New Mexico Food Pathways** helps local food businesses take the next step with tailored support to become SNAP-authorized, expand their operations, and increase access to healthy, affordable food in underserved communities. [23](#)

c. **Resilient Food System Infrastructure (RFSI)** This is a cooperative agreement between NMDA and USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, which provides financial tools, resources, technical assistance and capacity support for project implementation. RFSI is designed to address middle-of- the-supply-chain needs—including aggregation, processing, storage and transportation-- for locally and regionally produced foods. Investments are targeted for small and mid-sized operations to grow their capacity to serve emerging markets. [23](#)

RFSI includes:

- \$ 4.6 million for 4 years (ends 2027), \$1million for Equipment Only Proposals
- \$2.7 million for Full Infrastructure Proposals
- Of the 18 Projects proposed to USDA:
  - 12 are equipment only (no match component) -refer trucks/vans, blending and fermentation tanks, walk-in coolers, washers, baggers, kettles, freeze dryers, dehydrators, millers, presses, shellers, etc.
  - 6 are for full infrastructure (with a match component) - 1 distribution project, 2 capacity expansion projects for aggregating and processing, 2 incubator projects, and 1 aquaponics project.



## Impact of the Federal Changes on New Mexico Infrastructure and Local Food Economies

**Small farm states like New Mexico** stand to lose the most from the deep cuts now being proposed in Congress—cuts that echo the administration’s budget. These reductions would undo years of progress in strengthening local food systems and supporting small, family-run farms. Instead of historic disinvestment, we should be seeing record investments in programs like Local Agriculture Marketing Program (LAMP) Farmers Market Nutrition Program, (FMNP) Gus Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) - programs that fuel rural economies, improve access to healthy food, and keep local agriculture strong.

We need USDA leadership that stands with all farmers, not just the largest, and remains true to its promises. We will work with our legislators to ensure that Congress fully funds these vital programs and expands mandatory funding in the next Farm Bill to protect small farmers and nutrition security across America.

### Take Action!

- Become a member of the NM Food Policy Council [www.nmfoodpolicy.org/membership](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org/membership)
- Talk to your elected officials and legislators about the importance of New Mexico’s food system and the New Mexico Food Initiative.
- Sign on to letters of support sponsored by the Policy Council.
- Provide public comment at hearings or committees regarding proposed rule changes.

[www.nmfoodpolicy.org](http://www.nmfoodpolicy.org)

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# A Preview of NMFAPC's Policy Priorities for the 2026 New Mexico Legislature

- **Food Assistance Gap** – \$1,000,000 to include \$635,000 for the SNAP Double Up Food Bucks program (recurring) and \$250,000 for a Meat/Protein Pilot for Veterans (proposed by the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association). These programs will serve nearly 50,000 SNAP participants and approximately 12,500 veterans, extending food budgets while supporting New Mexico farmers.
- **Approved Supplier Program** – \$430,000 to sustain the New Mexico Grown family of programs, ensuring food safety, value chain stability, long-term viability, and economic opportunities across the state.
- **Local Food Purchasing Agreement Replacement** – \$2,800,000 to continue the work of the Regional Farm to Food Bank Program (RFFB) after USDA canceled federal LFPA funding.
- Between FY23–FY25, The Food Depot purchased \$4.64 million in food from New Mexico farmers and ranchers. Other states, such as Minnesota, have replaced canceled federal programs with state support—New Mexico must act now to sustain these vital **investments in small - and mid-scale agriculture, hunger relief, and community health**.
- **Public Food Utility Policy Development** to strengthen statewide food distribution and transportation, ensuring New Mexico-grown foods reach every community. This would provide a funding and infrastructure framework for community-based food hubs and distributors, reducing barriers in remote areas and linking trade routes across the state. Key elements include:
  - **A capital-outlay process** engaging local governments and community-based organizations to plan and build aggregation, cold storage, processing, and distribution facilities accessible to small and mid-sized producers.
  - **Strategic identification** of statewide aggregation/distribution hubs to serve food-insecure and rural communities.
  - **Operating funds** for community-based organizations, tied to deliverables such as mileage, pounds delivered, and economic impact.

# A Preview of NMFAPC's Policy Priorities for 2026 Federal Legislation

**Local Food Purchase Assistance** At the federal level, the Strengthening Local Food Security Act of 2025 (S. 2338) and the Local Farmers Feeding Our Communities Act (H.R. 4782) were introduced in July 2025 to enhance local food systems. They direct USDA to collaborate with state and local governments to increase local food purchases for schools and community programs; prioritize small, beginning, veteran, and underserved producers; and invest in critical infrastructure and distribution systems. Both bills allocate \$200 million in mandatory funding and \$200 million in discretionary funding through the appropriations process. They emphasize principles and policies similar to LFPA, to establish LFPA as a permanently funded program through the Farm Bill, including administrative support funding. [24](#)

**Nutritional Food Programs** NMFAPC will continue to support programs like WIC, Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (SFMNP) and Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB) as effective programs to increase access to fresh, healthy, and locally grown fruits and vegetables for low-income seniors, women, and children. This helps improve the health outcomes of New Mexicans and encourages healthy eating.

## The Farm Bill

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the federal Farm Bill connects the food on our plates, the farmers and ranchers who produce that food, and the natural resources – our soil, air and water – that make growing food possible.

The Farm Bill covers programs ranging from crop insurance for farmers to healthy food access for low-income families, from beginning farmer training to support for sustainable farming practices. The Farm Bill sets the stage for our food and farm systems. As individuals and groups working together, it's our job to make sure that the important Farm Bill is good for farmers, consumers, and for the natural environment.

The federal budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 1) that passed by the House of Representatives July 4th, 2025 by a vote of 218-214 after the Senate had passed it by one vote days before. The implications for New Mexico affect everything from food access and agricultural markets, to wind and solar energy.

What are the implications for New Mexicans if a Farm Bill is not passed soon? In FY2024, our state received close to \$430 million in federal funding to support food, agriculture, and conservation programs. The federal cuts, roughly \$90 million, may force New Mexico to absorb significant additional costs. More than 459,000 low-income New Mexicans who benefit from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) could begin feeling the effects early in November 2025. Farmers and ranchers are experiencing delays in program payments and lack of access to agency staff due to government downsizing across food, nutrition, and natural resource conservation services.

Farm to Table and the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council (NMFAPC) have been closely tracking these developments and analyzing the potential effects on our farmers, ranchers, families, and food system as a whole. Reporting and information can be found at [Field Notes: AgriPolicy Brief](#) and [Implications of Federal Funding Cuts](#).

# Acknowledgements

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The NM Food Charter and Report Card are a commitment by the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council, which is a program of Farm to Table. A special thanks to the members of the Governance Committee for their dedication, commitment and support.

## Acronyms

ACEP - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

ASP - Approved Supplier Program

ALTSD - Aging and Long-term Services Department

CSP - Conservation Stewardship Program

DOH - New Mexico Department of Health

ECECD - New Mexico Early Child Education and Care Department

EDD - New Mexico Economic Development Department

EQUIP – Environmental Quality Incentive Program

FMNP - Farmers Market Nutrition Program

FSA - Farm Service Agency

GusNIP - Gus Nutrition Incentive Program

HB - House Bill

HM – House Memorial

HCA - Health Care Authority

LAMP - Local Agriculture Market Program

LIP – Livestock Indemnity Program

LFP - Livestock Forage Program

LFPA – Local Food Purchase Assistance

NMDA - New Mexico Department of Agriculture

NRCS - Natural Resource Conservation Service

NMFAPC – New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council

NSLP - National School Lunch Program

PED - New Mexico Public Education Department

RCPP - Riparian Conservation Protection Program

RFFB/RF2FB - Regional Farm to Food Bank Program

SB - Senate Bill

SFA – School Food Authority

SM – Senate Memorial

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