NEW MEXICO
Food & Agriculture
POLICY COUNCIL

NEW MEXICO FOOD CHARTER

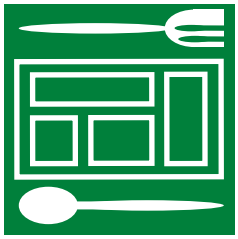
2026 Food Charter Report Card



Increased Food Access



Education Awareness



Healthier Food for Meal Programs



Increase in Participation in Food Programs



State/Federally Funded Food Programs



Reduce the Loss of Agricultural Land



Increase Family Farms



Restorative and Regenerative Practices.



Grow more Resilient Crops



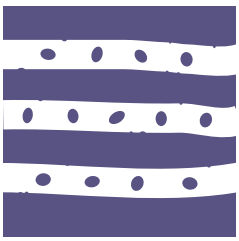
Ensure Better Water Quality for Growers



Prioritize Water for Food Production



Increase Pollinators in New Mexico



Increase Seed Preservation



Government Support for Disaster Relief



Investment and Support for Farmers



Resources for Disadvantaged Producers



Emergency Food Access



In-state Farm and Ranch Sales



Learn More

Farm to Table

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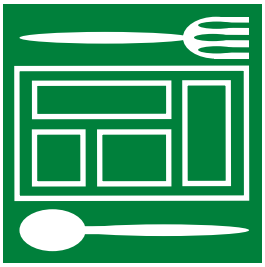
NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY



Increased Food Access



Education Awareness



Healthier Food for Meal Programs



Increase in Participation in Food Programs



State/Federally Nutrition Standards

Launched in 2022, the Food Initiative is a $325 million, multi-year effort by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham which focuses on expanding access to community-driven, sustainable food across New Mexico.

In 2020, the number of food insecure individuals was counted as 290,400. The Food Initiative is intended, in part, to address that gap.

In 2024, Farm to Table and the New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council created the New Mexico Food Charter. In its issue statement, the NM Food Charter lays out the underlying goals of the Food Charter and its subsequent annual report card, "State and federal policies need to address food security in an ever-changing environment by investing in local production and consumption of food, with an emphasis on equitable and sustainable practices." [1]

The NM Food Charter Report Card focuses most on state policy. Achieving nutrition and food security goals in New Mexico requires addressing five outcome areas:[2]

1. **Greater and easier access to culturally-appropriate and nutrient-rich foods, especially by those who are food insecure.**

Total Food Initiative Funds Across All Sources 2023–2026	**Federal Funds**	$1.13 billion
	State Funds	$325 million
	Other Funds	$27.4 million
	Grand Total	$1.49 billion

Food Initiative Dashboard, https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/, Self Reported Funding

2. **Increased education and awareness programs so more children and youth know and care about where their food comes from and understand the conditions that influence their access to food.**

3. **Reduced dependence by institutional meal programs on heavily preprocessed and manufactured foods.**

4. **Increased enrollment of eligible individuals and families in food programs with a nutrition focus** such as Double Up Food Bucks; the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; the Women, Infants, and Children Program; and Medicaid (1115) Food is Medicine Program.

5. **Established and updated nutrition standards for state and federally funded food programs that support the wellness, health, and development of children and older adults through the provision of nutritious foods.**

Each outcome has multiple indicators of success.

1 *https://nmfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/NM-Food-Charter-WEB.pdf*
2 *https://nmfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/NM-Food-Charter-WEB.pdf*



Increased food access. Greater and easier access to culturally appropriate and nutrient-rich foods, especially by those who are food insecure.

Among the indicators that measure New Mexico's success with this outcome are the number of meals provided through Healthy Universal School Meals, levels of funding for state agencies that participate in the Food Initiative, levels of funding for each program in the Food Initiative, the numbers of schools, senior centers, and early childcare centers participating in New Mexico Grown, and the funding provided to ensure that local food banks can access New Mexico Grown products. **As viewed through these measures, the state's support for increasing access to culturally-appropriate and nutrient-rich foods, especially for the food insecure, has increased fairly steadily since NM Grown and related programs began in FY22. However, many food insecure individuals still lack access to adequate nutrition**, and the continued expansion of state programs will be important to addressing the gap.

1. **Funding for each state agency participating in the Food Initiative.** Overall funding for the Food Initiative has grown from year to year, more than tripling from FY23 to FY24 and increasing by more than 20% between FY25 and FY26. The funding growth demonstrates the increasing reach of the local food programs. [3]

State Agency	FY23	FY26
Aging & Long Term Services Department	$1,173,100	$1,097,600
Department of Finance and Administration	$10,397,877	$606,700
Department of Health	$608,402	$1,095,420
Early Childhood Education and Care Department	$667,202	$1,785,500
Economic Development Department	$481,101	$2,110,500
Health Care Authority (formerly HSD)	$6,998,826	$40,100,266
Higher Education Department	$1,000,000	$1,550,000
New Mexico State University	$2,573,500	$5,000,000
Office of the State Engineer	$0	$7,500,000
Public Education Department	$800,000	$47,201,000
Total Food Initiative	**$24,700,013**	**$111,086,166**

https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/



Funding for each program in the Food Initiative.

Education & Awareness of where food comes from. Increase education and awareness programs so more children and youth know and care about where their food comes form and understand the conditions that influence their access to food.

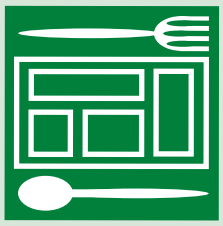
Future Farmers of America, 4-H, and the public-school curriculum all contain elements educating students about nutrition and the food system. Such awareness raising will benefit from continued funding and support.

3 *Food Initiative Dashboard, https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/*

Food Initiative Funding by Program		Grand Total FY23	Grand Total FY26
Agency Name	Programs	$43,389,840	**$111,086,166**
ALTSD	Food Security Coordinator FTE	$81,100	
	NM Grown for Seniors	$400,000	**$1,097,600**
	Rural Pantries/Food Boxes for Senior	**$692,000**	$0
DFA	Administrative & Operating Support	$397,875	**$606,700**
	Food Security Grant	**$10,000,000**	$0
	School Kitchen Capital Improvements	$0	$0
DOH	Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program	**$500,000**	$0
	Mobile Technology for Nutrition Incentive Programs	**$108,400**	$0
	Senior & WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program	$0	**$1,000,000**
	Senior & WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program Coordinator	$0	**$95,420**
ECECD	Enhanced Reimbursement for Child and Adult Care Food Program	$0	**$1,000,000**
	Food Security Coordinator FTE	$0	**$85,500**
	NM Grown for Preschools	$154,200	**$300,000**
	Summer Food and Supper Enhancement/ Expansion Program	**$513,000**	$400,000
EDD	Food Security Coordinator FTE	$81,100	**$110,500**
	Healthy Food Financing Initiative	$400,000	**$2,000,000**
HCA	8% retention bonus for Income Support Division case	$0	**$865,000**
	Community Food Assistance Program	$6,917,725	**$10,000,000**
	Food As Medicine	$0	**$4,758,666**
	Food Security Coordinator FTE	$81,100	**$93,300**
	Senior Supplement	$0	**$14,800,000**
	SNAP 200% FPL Increase	$0	**$382,000**
	SNAP System Enhancements	$0	**$1,493,400**

	Sun Bucks	$0	**$2,207,900**
	Vacancy rate decreases in the Income Support Division	$0	**$5,500,000**
HED	Veterinarian Loan Repayment	$0	**$1,550,000**
	College Food Security Program	**$1,050,000**	$0
NMDA	Administrative FTEs	$166,800	$166,800
	Agriculture Workforce Development Program	**$375,000**	$250,000
	Approved Supplier Program	$200,000	**$630,000**
	Double Up Food Bucks	**$956,700**	$633,000
	Healthy Soil Program	$100,000	**$1,609,380**
NMSU	Conserve Water in Agricultural Operations	$0	**$5,000,000**
OSE	Aquifer monitoring and groundwater characterization	$0	**$7,500,000**
PED	Healthy School Meals, Staff, NM Grown	$0	**$47,201,000**
	NM Grown for Schools	**$1,200,000**	$0
	Nutrition Support (NM Grown for Schools, Breakfast. . .)	**$1,460,000**	$0

https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/



More scratch cooking and fresh foods in institutions.

Scratch cooking is the focus of this outcome. New Mexico's school kitchen capital improvement spending in 2024 and 2025 gave this return to whole foods a jump start. In senior centers, early childcare centers, and K-12 schools, spending on New Mexico Grown products further contributes to an increase in nutritious foods.

Further, 61 early childcare centers now engage in scratch cooking programs.[4] In short, New Mexico is making strides in reducing the dependence of institutional meal programs on heavily pre-processed foods.

Continued technical and financial support for institutions adopting New Mexico Grown and more spending for kitchen infrastructure would all ensure more institutions can continue to improve the nutrition of their meals.

4 *Personal communication. Laura Spencer, Oct. 2, 2026.*



Increased participation in nutrition assistance programs by eligible individuals:

Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

and the Medicaid (1115) **Food is Medicine Program**

DUFB provides reduced-cost access to fresh foods at farmers markets. **State support for DUFB has steadily increased**, improving the ability of eligible individuals and families to access nutrient-dense local products at reduced rates using their SNAP benefits. The program also benefits New Mexico's farmers and ranchers who are selling the products, as they still receive full value for their products.

SNAP and WIC provide nutrition assistance for families in need, and **New Mexico has also stepped in to ensure that our state's families continue to receive necessary benefits.** However, the removal of some federal support for DUFB and SNAP puts a heavier burden on the state to ensure that eligible individuals are fed, and some individuals are simply no longer eligible for these programs since federal guidelines changed. The SNAP burden falls increasingly on the state going forward due to provisions in 2025's HR 1.



State and federal nutrition standards. State and federally funded food programs have nutrition standards that support the wellness, health, and development of children and older adults through the provision of nutritious foods.

This outcome is measured in terms of updated U.S. dietary guidelines, updated School Nutrition Standards, and the Older Americans Act Nutrition Standards Incentive Program (NSIP).

New nutrition standards in the form of new U.S. Dietary Guidelines can present an opportunity to update our current understandings based on the latest research. **Experts suggest that the 2026. Dietary Guidelines do include some useful new research, but that the new pyramid offers a number of misconceptions in the prioritization it gives to fats and proteins.**[5] Neither the School Nutrition Standards nor the NSIP have been recently updated, so there is no progress for children or older Americans since the last Report Card.

5 *https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/2026/01/09/dietary-guidelines-for-americans-2025-2030/*

ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE



Reduce the Loss of Agricultural Land



Increase Family Farms



Restorative and Regenerative Practices



Grow more Resilient Crops



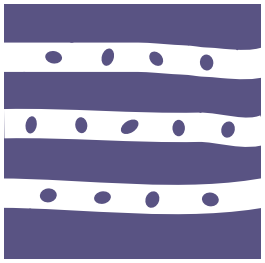
Ensure Better Water Quality for Growers



Prioritize Water for Food Production



Increase Pollinators in New Mexico



Increase Seed Preservation



Government Support for Disaster Relief

The New Mexico Food Charter Report Card's second priority area is Environment, Conservation, and Climate. It lists nine outcomes[6] as goals needed to provide necessary conservation approaches for the food and agricultural system in New Mexico:

1. **Reduce the loss of agricultural land.**

2. **Increase the number of family and individual farms to honor generational farmers. Develop new farmers and ranchers.**

3. **Increase use of restorative and regenerative practices.**

4. **Grow more resilient crops that need less water, are climate adapted, and are not GMOs.**

5. **Ensure better water quality for growers.**

6. **Secure and prioritize water for food production.**

7. **Increase the number of pollinators in New Mexico.**

8. **Increase seed preservation and reduce GMO seed contamination.**

9. **Ensure government support for disaster relief and climate resilience.**

6 *https://nmfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/NM-Food-Charter-WEB.pdf*



Reduce the loss of agricultural land.

From 2021 to 2025, the number of New Mexican Farms and the acres of New Mexican farmland declined—a decline of 2,400 farms and 1,000,000 acres.[7] Consolidation, retirement, water, and challenging economic forces all play a role here.



Increase the number of family and individual farms to honor generational farmers. Develop new farmers and ranchers.

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of family or individual farms declined from 21,391 to 17,593.[8] The number of farms under 10 acres declined from 8,554[9] to 6,934.[10] The message is clear: more support is need to attract and keep farmers and ranchers on the land.



Increase use of restorative and regenerative practices.

In 2025, the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund included $2.81million for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture programs that support conservation, including the Healthy Soil Program and Soil and Water Conservation Districts.[11] In FY25, SWCDs funded 31 projects with a total of $1.04 million. Healthy Soil funded 39 projects.[12] In addition, in 2025 U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs brought $21.1 million to New Mexico farms and ranches.[13] However, New Mexico will need growing support for regenerative practices to address climate change challenges.

7 *https://www.nass.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Statistics_by_State/New_Mexico/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/2025/2025-NM-Ag-Statistics.pdf*

8 *2022: https://www.nass.usda.gov/sites/default/files/publications/agcensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/New_Mexico/st35_1_074_074.pdf*
2017: https://www.nass.usda.gov/sites/default/files/publications/agcensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/New_Mexico/st35_1_0074_0074.pdf

9 *https://www.nass.usda.gov/sites/default/files/publications/agcensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/New_Mexico/st35_1_071_071.pdf*

10 *https://www.nass.usda.gov/sites/default/files/publications/agcensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/New_Mexico/st35_1_071_071.pdf*

11 *The Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund 1st Fiscal Year Report (FY25)*

12 *NMDA FY26 Budget Presentation, Legislative Finance Committee, Dec. 11, 2025*

13 *https://farm.ewg.org/region.php?fips=35000&progcode=total&yr=2025*



Grow more resilient crops that need less water, are climate adapted, and are not GMOs

No data were available for this indicator at time of publication.



Ensure better water quality for growers.

In FY26, legislators introduced and regulators discussed regulations around produced water, including oilfield produced water. In May 2026, the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) voted to allow the most recent petition by oil and gas companies to move forward to a hearing, but as of publication, that hearing has not been held.[14] No legislation emerged from the 2026 session. The WQCC is also undertaking rulemaking around stormwater to replace EPA regulation, but rules are not finalized.[15] In the 2026 session, legislators allocated $5 million to the Acequia and Community Ditch Fund (ACDF), doubling past funding. While the ACDF funding provides much-needed support, **the issues around produced water and stormwater are worth continued attention to ensure that New Mexico maintains high agricultural water quality.**



Secure and prioritize water for food production in New Mexico.

The New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council created a water policy statement in 2024.[15] In addition, the 50-Year Water Action Plan[16] is paving the way for statewide conversations about agricultural water conservation in the face of shortages. In FY26, the legislature also allocated $10 million for the Agricultural Water Resilience Program, assisting farmers, ranchers, and the entities that support them to implement water conservation measures. More is needed, in both planning and funding, but these are all important steps forward.

14 *Personal communication, Sandra Stulberg, Oct. 7, 2026*
15 *https://cloud.env.nm.gov/resources/_translator.php/N2NlOTIyY2M3NzVkNjUyYzJlZWE5YTZlYV8yNDgzMTQ~.pdf*
16 *https://nmfoodpolicy.org/water-policy-statement/*



Increase seed preservation and reduce GMO seed contamination.

Data was not available on this priority at the time of publication.



Ensure government support for disaster relief and climate resilience.

In 2025, New Mexico farmers received $83.6 million in crop insurance subsidies. However, across all federal agricultural subsidies, 86% of New Mexican farms received no subsidy payments at all.

The top federal programs subsidizing New Mexico's agriculture were the Emergency Livestock Relief Program ($31 million), Supplemental Disaster Relief Program ($22 million), Livestock Forage Disaster Program ($22 million), Conservation Reserve Program ($20 million), and the Non-insured Disaster Assistance Program ($20 million).[18] As has long been the case, subsidies tend to flow to producers who already have the most resources. How-ever, subsidies do help bolster rural economies in the face of disasters.



Increase the number of pollinators in New Mexico.

House Memorial 33 created a state working group on pollinators in 2025. The group has been meeting since, but the state still needs to fund research to establish New Mexico's baseline numbers of pollinators and to pass a plan for long-term pollinator increases.[19]

17 *https://www.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/New-Mexico-50-Year-WaterAction-Plan.pdf*
18 *https://farm.ewg.org/region.php?fips=35000&progcode=total&yr=2025*
19 *Personal communication, Melanie Kirby and Jen Rose Silverman, Oct. 2, 2026.*

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Investment and Support for Farmers



Resources for Disadvantaged Producers



Emergency Food Access



In-state Farm and Ranch Sales

The New Mexico Food Charter Report Card's third priority area is Government Support and Infrastructure. It lists four outcomes[20] as goals needed to provide necessary government support and infrastructure for the food and agricultural system in New Mexico:

1. **Education, training, and investment in infrastructure and equipment.** Expanded infrastructure and support for farmer education, safety practices, aggregation, processing, and distribution for New Mexico Grown, Raised, and/or Processed products.

2. **Resources for socially disadvantaged producers.** More state, federal, and tribal resources are made available to New Mexican growers who experience disparities/discrimination, or groups who have been historically underserved.

3. **Emergency food access.** Build strong and resilient food systems that respond to food shortages, especially in emergency situations. (e.g. access to enough food).

4. **In-state farm and ranch sales.** Increase the value of food sales by NM farmers and ranchers who participate in NM Grown programs.



Education, training, and investment in infrastructure and equipment.

Through training and support, the New Mexico Grown Approved Supplier Program ensures that food sold to schools, early childcare centers, and senior centers comes from farms and ranches using sound practices. The number of suppliers grew to 288 in FY26, up from 253 the year before. Supporting more producers in the program means enabling more production of nutrient-rich foods and supporting strong local agricultural livelihoods.

In addition, as of September 2026, the federal Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program has provided 17 awards in New Mexico worth a total of $3.476M. The program focuses on building out the middle of the food system supply chain, building out value added products, and ensuring fair wages and prices. Project details are available at https://bit.ly/4imsEd6.

20 *https://nmfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/NM-Food-Charter-WEB.pdf*



Resources for socially disadvantaged producers

Federal and state funds provide support to New Mexico's socially disadvantaged [21] agricultural producers. From 2014 through 2025, federal agricultural conservation funds, for example, socially disadvantaged producers received. 57% of Farm Bill Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts and 67% of Inflation Reduction Act EQIP contracts. [22] These federal dollars improve the long-term environmental health and economic sustainability of farms and ranches.

In FY24, sixty-seven percent of New Mexico's 18 Healthy Food Financing Fund recipients identified as minority owned. In FY25, fifty-seven percent of seven recipients identified as minority owned. [23]

In addition, more than half of the suppliers to the New Mexico Grown program identify as socially disadvantaged. [24]

Funds provided to minority owned businesses and socially disadvantaged agricultural producers contribute to reducing historical disparities and to increasing economic resilience but much work remains.



Emergency Food Access

Community Food Assistance Program funding is a key metric here, and has increased over the past four years, landing at $10M in state funding in FY26.[25] It has expanded food bank capacity and enabled additional food bank food purchases, helping to fill the gaps from decreases in federal programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.



In-state farm and ranch sales.

In FY26, across all New Mexico Grown programs, the value of produce sold was $6,532,236, an increase of 18% over FY25.[26]

While sales to senior centers went down somewhat from FY25 to FY26, sales to early childcare centers rose by 11% to $193,272, and sales to public schools rose from FY25 to FY26 by 25% to $1,699,831.[27]

The New Mexico Grown Program provides fresh New Mexico farm and ranch products directly to our children and seniors via institutional purchases, simultaneously supporting the state's farms and ranches. Continued increases in funding across all New Mexico Grown programs will bolster New Mexico's agricultural economy while also increasing access to nutrient-dense, local foods.

21 *https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-13/chapter-I/part-124/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR4ef1291a4a984ab/section-124.103*
22 *Data prepared by Becky Schewe, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, based on data from USDA.*
23 *Personal communication, Jayme Chester, October 16, 2026.*
24 *https://newmexicogrown.org/suppliers/resources/research/*
25 *https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/*
26 *https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/*
27 *https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/food-initiative-dashboard/*