

Food, Water, Hunger, Agriculture Policy Workgroup General Action Team Meeting

Facilitator: Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First

Notetaker: Xavier Vallejo, New Mexico First

Attendees:

- Jane Braithwaite, Rep. Stansbury Office
- Carlos Navarro, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Kurt Rager: Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of NM
- Erika Robers, NM First
- Rosalie Nava, NM Appleseed
- Brie Sillery, NM Coalition to End Homelessness
- Ellen Buelow, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Judy Messal, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Jackie Francke, First Nations Development Institute
- Michael Venticinque, NM Farmer's Marketing Association
- Gerry Fairbrother, The Food Depot
- Karen Plawecki, NMSU Extension Program
- Katy Anderson, Road Runner Food Bank
- Jonas Moya, NM Cattle Grower Association
- Emily Wildau, NM Voices for Children
- Yvonne Diaz, La Semilla Food Center
- Pam Roy, Farm to Table
- Tsiporah Nephesh, NM Thrives
- Tyler Eshelman, NM Coalition to Enhance Working Lands
- Etti Behar Novat, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Bryan Crawford-Garrett, Thornburg Foundation
- Isabelle Jenniches, NM Healthy Soil Working Group
- Paula Garcia, NM Acequia Association
- Valerie Rangel, NM Foundation
- Victoria Quevedo, La Semilla Food Center
- Molly Callaghan, Rep. Halaand Office
- Anna Rondon, NM Social Justice and Equity Institute
- Tim Davis, NM Center on Law and Poverty
- Andrew Baker, Health Action NM
- Rep. Stansbury

When editing the Food and Ag Bill Outline, do NOT delete anything from the document. Editors can only add to the document, as an honor system housekeeping rule.

Food and Ag Bill Outline Review

- Bill would be introduced in January.
- Bill would not have jurisdiction over Federal Gov. or Tribal Lands. Only State Gov. Agencies.

- State is experiencing budget cuts, due to oil price changes related to the pandemic.
- Budget staff are revisiting this year's budget and working on next year's budget (FY21 & FY22)
- Big constraint for FY22 is reducing statewide budget. Some funding is in reserves, but there will be a shrinking in operational funding. However, there may be opportunities for one-time emergency funding. All agencies are having to cut their budgets.

Appropriations

- Current total amount of appropriations is \$150M. This will have to be a much smaller amount to request, due to the state's fiscal situation. Create one competitive fund as an appropriation and specify the uses of the fund.
- Talked to LFC & DFA about food bank funding. Most streamlined process.
- If folks have other bills, introduce as standalone bills.

Agricultural Supports

- Meat inspection process was dismantled and is an important issue to address within the state and is important to NM Acequia Association.
- We don't have a road map to modernize our food and ag system. We don't have the data and technology platforms to share information about how to build infrastructure.
- We could direct NMSU to work with stakeholders to develop roadmap, database, other resources.
- There seems to need to be an economic evaluation to establish economic sustainability.
- There is enough cattle in NM to meet needs for meat in the state. USDA certified slaughterhouses are extremely difficult to meet with for custom meat. This then shuffles our food into the industrial food system and our meat then goes out of state. State-based meat inspections would provide a healthy alternative. Would allow for legal, in-state meat sales.
- Ranchers are in crisis.
- NM Brand Board has previously housed in-state meat inspections. The NMDA would serve as a resource as well. One challenge would be finding inspectors to fill job requirements and there's currently a shortage of meat inspectors.
- Jonas to provide literary resources on this.
- Typically, there are multiple stages of the supply chain. Cattle are traded to grow yard, finishing yard, then turned to box beef. Will that demand still be there as we look into the future.
- Review Dow and Fajardo Bill: <https://nmlegis.gov/Sessions/20%20Special/bills/house/HB0009.html>
- Deep dive needed.

Ag and Food Infrastructure

- How can we support food hubs and commercial kitchens in NM?
- One commercial kitchen in Abiquiu and one in Sandoval County. Thoughts to create more food hubs.
- Commercial kitchens are difficult to get enough funding to properly operate them. We don't need to make more food kitchens, we need to focus our resources on maintaining existing food kitchens. It's better to make something work efficiently at a smaller scale before expanding. and expand locally before trying to expand everything at once.
- Is there federal funding to support these?
 - Federal grants come and go. There could be.
- Is there a role for the state to expand and maintain food hubs and kitchens? If so, what is that role?

- We need to figure out how to shore up our cold storage network. We would need to make resources available through the state to improve maximization of cold storage use.
- Role of the state should be to empower, encourage, and give some funding to local efforts. Clauses related to regenerative agriculture should include soil health. NMDA and NMSU have been working on this topic.
 - <https://www.nmhealthysoil.org/2020/06/17/economics-study/>
 - <http://www.crcworks.org/nmfood20.pdf>
 - Soil Health Bill is important to include, but this conversation should be focused on agriculture.
- Cold storage could be one of the few eligible programs for expansion within the state. We need to look at identifying existing agencies and resources without spending a lot of money. We could utilize old warehouses, etc.
- Multiple initiatives to map out cold storage. Santa Fe County is working on developing a GIS map.
- Would use of facilities be established as joint agreements? Who would be in charge?
- Need for transportation for production side of things, but food distribution programs as well. PED and HSD have trucking capabilities that are underutilized and could be used for cold storage and distribution.
- **Deep Dive Needed**

Ag Ed, Extension, Workforce Development

- Potential to direct PED to give school districts more guidance.
- NMSU Extension Program covers all of the work specified within the bill. University resources are available if needed and could apply for grants. We are a statutory agency, but we just need to maintain funding and personnel.
- The program has the needed networks throughout the state. Would be good to recognize within the bill to notify folks that there is a network within the state.
- **NMSU Extension Program to provide some recommendations on the actions of this bill.**
- **Will need to review program enabling legislation to properly identify role in the bill.**
- For workforce development, is there something we can direct our resources to do to promote workforce development. NMSU Extension Program created a training program with Secretary McCann. COVID-19 got in the way, but we have the capacity to do that and create an educational piece. We were going to put together a job fair.
- **Bruce to send workforce development plans.**
- Learning on the job for agriculture is key. You can only learn so much in the classroom.
- Meeting an apprenticeship requirement is different than internship requirements. Look into more flexibility with JTIP requirements.
- An amendment to JTIP could be a way to support workforce. JTIP can be hard to work with because a lot of documentation is required. Lots of work done by Young Farmers Coalition.
- NM Acequia Association also has a program for training. Maybe training projects would be able to access some of that funding. The program might be worth revisiting.
- There needs to be more infrastructural support for this program.
 - <https://nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Legislation?Chamber=H&LegType=B&LegNo=315&year=19>
 - <https://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/awd-applications/>
- We need to 1. Look at what workforce development and planning has been done. 2. Work with higher ed to come up with a better plan. 3. Make JTIP more flexible.

Direct Agencies

- Is there something we need to do to make programs that source local producers, stronger? What can we direct state agencies to increase state uptake in local produce?
- We can look at the state procurement code that requires state entities to purchase 5% locally. We can strengthen that to provide flexibility and resources for purchasing local.
- **Sen. Keller's bill should be built on.**
- Amidst crisis, procurement can be difficult. Maybe we could implement something to accommodate relief if needed. If local gets too expensive, agencies could buy out of state.
- Some dietary requirements can lead to wastes of food. Kids don't always eat everything on the plate. Many providers have doubled home delivery and we expect this to continue. With polit programs, seniors liked getting fresh produce in a bag. They preferred fresh produce to premade meals. PED wants to make sure the funding in their budget stays in their budget.
- We can add other appropriations to the bill.

Farm Workers Right and Wages

- **Touch Base Needed with La Semilla Food Center and NM Center on Law and Poverty.**

Additional Review Needed for Titles II & III

- Federal programs administered by the state could eliminate state requirements to minimize barriers.
- State should come up with a plan to prioritize vulnerable communities.
- Role of extension in helping to organize and support state efforts.
- Need to develop programs for gleaning and food repackaging workgroups.

Next Steps

- Review Bill Outline.
- Bring Resources or Answers to Key Questions.
- Next meeting to focus on Title II.
- September 23, group presenting to Interim Committee on Health and Human Services. Folks should speak during public comment.