

**Food, Hunger, Water, Agriculture Policy
Policy & Advocacy Action Team (General Action Team Special)
8.20.20 ± 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Meeting Notes**

Facilitator: Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First

Notes: Sharon Berman and Xavi Vallejo, New Mexico First

In Attendance:

- Carlos Navarro Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Sherry Hooper, The Food Depot
- Daniel Valverde, NM Appleseed
- Derek Lin, NM Voices for Children
- Emily Wildau
- Tsiporah Nephesh, New Mexico Thrives and Covenant Pathways
- Ellen Buelow, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Mag Strittmatter, Roadrunner Foodbank
- Valerie Rangel, New Mexico Foundation
- Jane Braithwaite, volunteer for Rep. Mealie Stansbury
- JoAnn Melchor, New Mexico Foundation
- Valerie Rangel, New Mexico Foundation
- Nelsy Dominguez, Con Alma Health Foundation
- Representative Melanie Stansbury
- Erika Robers, New Mexico First
- Navajo Family Voices
- Judy Messal, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Jonas Moya, Cattle Growers Association
- Roy Montibon, The Montibon Company
- Jason New, NMDA

1. What is keeping you inspired?

- People are smart, resourceful and come together.
- I am surrounded by a community of passionate and dedicated partners, collaborators who keep me inspired when things feel hopeless.
- Ideas keep me Excited and engaged. One idea I had today was if the state can commit to transitioning to 100% renewal industry, we can also commit to transitioning to regenerative agriculture.
- We are even more than the sum of our parts!

Lilly shared the draft [pandemic policy priorities document](#).



NEW MEXICO FIRST
People. Ideas. Progress.

Please contact Sharon Berman at sharon@nmfirst.org if we missed or misunderstood anything in these notes.

I. Pandemic Policy Priorities

Key:

Green = Move Forward

Yellow = Keep Developing (not yet ready for legislative action)

Orange = Action Item for NM First Staff

PRIORITY #3 – Invest in Local Food Systems & Resilient Local Agriculture

- Maintain NMSU base funding for Cooperative Extension for \$13,635,000 and for Agricultural Experimentation Stations for \$15,147,000 to provide support, leading-edge information, and technical assistance to agricultural producers.
 - 15 for, none opposed
 - No comments in chat
- Maintain and expand investments in agricultural literacy, and ag education including but not limited to 4-H, FFA, Ag in the Classroom, ag-based CTE pathways, and other local and regional Pre-K through 12+ agricultural education efforts. Develop a New Mexico agriculture education day in which all students in New Mexico public schools will spend one day a year focused on agricultural education.
 - 13 for, none opposed
- Support work by tribal farm boards to get waivers and exceptions that will facilitate greater ease in demonstrating qualification requirements for farm bill funding, take a page from applications and re-verifications in public benefits and simplify processes.
 - 14 for, 1 opposed
- Invest in and develop greater connectivity across data systems as well as broadband infrastructure to strengthen communication and coordination related to production, value-added opportunities and facilities/processing, storage, transportation, and distribution that could exist in an opensource data base similar to some of the functionality of SHARE NM.
 - 16 for, no opposed
 - Q: There are other initiatives to expand infrastructure. How does this relate? NEED FOR MORE CLARITY.
 - 1/3 of students in NM have no access to internet, Farmers in field have no access either to get satellite data. So, any broadband we can add to the state is hugely valuable.
 - Over 20% of new Mexicans, regardless of age, have no access to broadband. It's harder to get relief and recovery when that basic infrastructure isn't there.
 - Broadband access is universally critically needed... for this and all other. It is important to ensure the many Broadband access / infrastructure efforts are as coordinated and augment with one another. Even many of those that do have spotty connection.
- Capital funding for potential building projects targeted at creating or remodeling existing infrastructure to support food hubs – cold storage, loading docks, hubs – to bring networks into that region. It could be a two-way



distribution – food going into rural areas, and when it is produced rurally, bringing it to urban areas. Viability for growers, getting their produce into town in food safe way

- 15 for, no opposed
- Huge barrier; specially, remote/rural growers

• Maintain and expand investment to \$500K in ALTSD to support the Purchase of NM Grown Fruits and Vegetables for Senior Meals Programs.

- 13 for, no opposed

• Maintain \$400K commitment in PED budget for NM Grown Produce for School Meals.

- 12 for, none opposed
- This took more than two decades to make a reality... hugely important

• Maintain \$227K in NMDA for the Healthy Soil program and maintain \$200K in NMDA for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

- 15 for, none opposed

• Protect \$150K for program support to NMDA to develop New Mexico Local Food and Farming Systems including value chain coordination and food safety systems that Support the SNAP Double Up Food Bucks program and local producer sales to retail and institutional outlets.

- 14 in favor, none opposed
- Is there a way to add that access to electricity is important in addressing food and hunger?

• Invest \$100K in DOH for the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

- 14 for, none opposed

• Invest in the Department of Agriculture to strengthen capacity in NM related to Beef Inspection and Processing to get more protein into the local food supply.

- Might be more appropriately housed at NM Livestock Board, Outreach housed and done through NMDA. Making sure the 2 agencies are supported, and that markets/channels/supply chain up and running and resilient. Long-term solution.
 - Add: – “invest in the department of agriculture or nm livestock board to strengthen”
 - Add – promotion of NM-raised beef.
 - State should support NM beef like it supports NM chile growers
- Might be more appropriately housed at NM Livestock Board, Outreach housed and done through NMDA. Making sure the 2 agencies are supported, and that markets/channels/supply chain up and running and resilient. Long-term solution.
- Tweak language to reflect the above – the two entities.
- Reach out to Deena Chacon Reitzel NM Beef Council (Jonas has contact info)
- 5 in favor, none opposed



- Invest in career pathways, sector strategies in the agricultural industry across the value-chain to recruit, develop, and employ a well-qualified and well compensated workforce.
 - 10 for, none opposed
- Fund NMDA to gather community and stakeholder input in an emergency relief and recovery plan for a pandemic, drought, other state or national emergency that addresses labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, and market fluctuations to protect local food systems and increase the reliability and durability of local agriculture.
 - 11 for, none opposed
 - Effectiveness of engagement and action based on feedback (2x)
- Recognize the local food production and processing industry as a public good and create pathways for public private partnerships to expand and strengthen local food systems.
 - 8 for, one opposed
- What we use water for is very big decision and we need ways to prioritize that are informed by the public and support our long-term well-being. Research emergent technology and what types of efficiencies we can gain in food quality, such as water sufficiency's and technologies. Research is going on in collaboration with Israel (similar arid environment) using little water.
 - A process for how we prioritize for how we use water, that also looks at research & emergent technology.
 - Q: Does this include new water infrastructure, or political/legal angle?
 - 7 for, none opposed
- Enhance marketing and development to promote the viability of agriculture in NM and strengthen in state value-added through value-added grants at State level.
 - Idea is that if we want viable NM ag, we need to market and promote ag better. We need resources invested in local food production, especially around value-added. Keeping it in state instead of exporting, let's do value-added.
 - This should be split into two things.
 - 8 for, none against
- Recognize and incentivize traditional ecological practices around ag and livestock rearing.
 - Q – traditional ecological practices is vague.
 - Maybe a principle that could be worked into many of the policies.
 - 2 for, none against. Revisit as a principle to work in
- Testing water soil and water quality and increasing regulatory capacity of the state to ensure the testing happens will keep food production safe.
 - 5 for, none against
 - Each county also has a role in water testing and maintaining

- Determine financing mechanism to augment cost of rainwater catchment and solar grids in extremely remote areas where people are food insecure to create infrastructure for home/local food production.
 - Can we incorporate idea – it’s also for food production **AND** storage - CIRCLE BACK WITH VALERIE R
 - There are communities where harvesting rainwater is prohibited. This is a great idea, though existing regulations will likely first need to be assessed. Just as city-farming.
 - 6 for, none opposed
- We need ways to build independent student/grant writing mentorship programs that matches students with expert grant writers to help farmers and producers write grants and deal with things such as GAP certification. Students would help grant writers with their grants and they team up with farmers/producers to secure grants.
 - This may not need policy change, it may be systems coordination
 - Benefits universities. Gives hands on, on the ground experiential learning opportunity for students.
 - NM is a philanthropic desert.
 - This is a capacity issue... and much needed. Can leverage federal resources for farmer training
 - 5 for, none against
- Exceed weight bearing limits on trucks without compromising safety to get food to those in need quickly and effectively. Federal limits need to be examined.
 - 2 for, no opposition
- Invest in regenerative agriculture.
 - It needs to be much stronger. Needs to be commitment from state to transition to regenerative ag for many reasons: water preservation and climate change.
 - Commitment by the State to transition to 100% regenerative agriculture in New Mexico by 2030. Regenerative agriculture rebuilds the soil by increasing carbon matter and the microbiome, thereby increasing the nutritional value of food produced. It increases soil’s ability to retain water. Regenerative agriculture decreases the use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, thereby protecting the environment. Regenerative agriculture significantly reduces agriculture’s impact on the climate crisis.
 - 2 for but not ready yet for vote. Need to discuss more.
- Build on Farm to School and Farm to Senior Center efforts and incentivize State, County, City governments to buy-local agricultural products.
 - 9 for, none opposed
- Propose that PED adopt a statewide Ag Day promoting a focus on NM’s continuing ag tradition and economy in all schools
 - Develop relationship with food and how food is raised at a younger age
 - 7 for, none opposed

We will add to the notes, comments submitted by those who couldn’t attend the meeting.

