

**Food, Hunger, Water, Agriculture Policy Workgroup**  
**Policy/Advocacy Action Team**  
**10.15.20 ♦ 12:00 – 1:00**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Facilitator:** Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First

**Notes:** Sharon Berman, New Mexico First

**In Attendance:**

- Kathryn Anderson
- Zak Barela, NMDA
- Jane Braithwaite, Office of Rep. Melanie Stansbury
- Ellen Buelow, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
- Rep. Joanne Ferrary
- Judy Messal, Interfaith Hunger Coalition and Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-New Mexico
- Tsiporah Nephesh, NM Thrives
- Emily Wildau, NM Voices for Children
- Derik Lin, NM Voices for Children
- Kurt Rager, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-New Mexico
- Roy Montibon, The Montibon Company
- Karen Plawecki, NMSU
- Victoria Quevedo, La Semilla Food Center
- Bryan Crawford-Garrett, The Thornburg Foundation
- Erika Robers, NM First
- Bruce Hinrichs, NMSU Extension
- Molly Callaghan, Office of Congresswoman Deb Haaland
- Sherry Hooper, The Food Depot
- Tim Davis, Center for Law & Poverty

- I. **Check In/Icebreaker:** If you have a great metaphor for collaboration and consensus building, or a saying, please share.
  - a. Collaboration advances at the speed of sound.
  - b. Trust is a necessary foundation for all we do.
  - c. good back and forth communication to get at the heart of what someone means
  - d. looking for where we have common ground. Looking for the resources to make it happen.
  - e. Always humbled by working in collaboration. Continue to be humble in this work and know there are many different hardships and challenges that people have faced in their lives. Through that adversity we can come together and find common ground.
  - f. Peace of mind. Make time for naps!
  - g. Conflict resolution. Trying to understand differences and try to seek common ground. Not make assumptions about other people's viewpoints.
  - h. Appreciates Adrian Marie brown's book *emergent strategies*, moving at the speed of trust. Also Sonia Renee Taylor. It's a time to be our bravest selves. Business not as usual. We have a chance right now to rebuild our food systems.
  - i. Reminded of Tamarack Institute saying: "Nothing about us without us". Not making decisions for others. Focus on the we, more than the me. What we are trying to do together and our goal, rather than what's in it for myself and my organization.
  - j. The importance of drilling down to shared values. Basis for beginning of really good conversations. Also, if you're in a coalition and you're comfortable, you know it's not a broad enough conversation.
  - k. It's important to not get ahead of things. A synergistic response/solution is greater than any one person could come up with. Redoing a food system that works for everyone is a thrilling idea.
  - l. Talk about what we can do rather than what we can't.

- m. We have to constantly be listening. Our work is always dynamic, never static.
- n. Listening, making sure we are actually hearing, following through
- o. There are many different perspectives. We all have in common that we think food is a basic human right. “The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart, a revolution which has to start with each one of us?” -Dorothy Day.
- p. Learning from each other. We all have different perspectives. This collaboration has been illuminating. What makes this team exciting is that we are actually accomplishing things. Everyone’s creativity, brainpower and ingenuity.
- q. Being part of a coalition, communicate freely, express different ideas
- r. Impressed with the collaboration in this group. It’s a showpiece for how to get things to work with a variety of people with different agendas.
- s. Tim: Coalition work is hard work. Keeping putting the work in.

II. **Review consensus positions and provide requested feedback to Rep. Stansbury [policy outline](#)**

- a. Lilly noted that the deadline for pre-filing may have been changed to January.
- b. Rep. Stansbury won’t be able to get draft out to us until after the elections.
- c. Priority 1 a – maintain NMSU base funding. Keep it where it is? Bruce – it’s good. He noted that he put some stuff in google doc (as Anonymous) that may be helpful – they are in all the counties in the state. “We’re in all counties, scope of programs.” Lilly asked if inserting that info into the doc would be good. **YES**
- d. Next bullet – ag literacy, ag ed...Lilly noted that one of the ideas has been to also ask for a statewide ag education day or week. She added that for folks interested in having that conversation, it may be something we put in this legislation and/or be carried separately. Did they approach legislators? No, they didn’t. Their system is big and cumbersome. The budget items they get to work on start in June.
  - i. Bruce noted that that the funding line for CES contains funding for 4H and FFA. “We need to continue those funding lines. All of those are very important. If they maintain our base budget, we have the funding we need. Our programs are only limited by personnel.” Part of the omnibus last year was to get them more positions for some of those 4H Friday-type positions. Maybe a memorial or something could be useful. Bruce noted that they spend a lot of time in research on what some folks label as specialty. Hoop houses, small acreage farming. If funding comes to experiment station and extension within their budget, it will continue. **YES keep it in. It’s being worked on in broader budget – but highlighting to legislators about how cooperative extension fits in is important. 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet tied with first one.**
- e. Lilly asked Molly for her input on 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet, regarding supporting work by tribal farm boards. It looks like federal policy vs. something that would go in state farm bill. Molly said she would have to look at her notes but she knows the Congresswoman has worked hard to make sure that essential funding is available to Tribal farm boards or to Tribal farmers. It applies to federal legislation they’ve worked on to simplify the process, get through red tape. This would not go into state legislation, correct? Any



way to keep it long-term would interest stakeholders in the group. Molly said she would get back to us.

- f. Connectivity across data systems (4<sup>th</sup> bullet). Lilly asked who could be a go-to person on this bullet. Bruce said there are a bunch of initiatives, and that the Secretary of Ag has made connectivity a big deal. “I know a lot of the smaller phone co-ops are able to get grants through those programs that USDA and others have.” “In Floyd NM, we’re fixing to have our house wired.” Bruce has a friend (named Leon Null -sp) who is a president of one of the co-ops, Yucca in Portales. Lilly and Bruce to follow up. Roy can also be a go-to person too. He agreed about preferring to support rural co-ops rather than gigantic national companies. Molly said in the chat: “My colleagues and I have some helpful contacts to inform broadband issues as well. Happy to help.”
- g. Capital funding bullet - This may want to be organized for appropriations.
  - i. Roy asked about what the level of detail should be in the bill. Lilly replied that it should demonstrate clear need and the cost of the solution, but not be too prescriptive.
- h. Regarding Farm to Senior Centers and \$400 k– the NM Food and Ag Policy Council is the lead on this.
- i. Healthy soil item – there are coalition members for whom this is essential.
- j. SNAP Double Up Food Bucks – want to keep this. Denise at NMFMA asking for additional \$500,000, which would result in \$6.2 million in federal funding, and a total ROI of \$19+ million.
- k. Beef processing – this is still in process. Many in the group felt this is vital. Lilly noted that we don’t have a full consensus on this in our coalition, but people were definitely paying attention. She asked people to contact her with additional clarifying information.
  - i. Lilly asked if there was any other information that Rep. Stansbury needs about meat processing and inspection or anyone else we should be connecting with? Jane said that Rep. Stansbury isn’t in need of more info.
  - ii. Bruce said to keep the Ag Econ department in the loop, find out how it develops out. It’s important it gets done but it can’t be done haphazardly. It’s more than a 1 year process. He added that we really need to take concentrated time getting people and politicians together to examine what is it we’re looking for, what it means, if it is sustainable. Of the processors that are in existence, how many of them would be willing to go through the steps to be certified? We need to do due diligence, look at all the issues, make sure it is done right.
- l. Career pathways. Lilly said, sector strategies continue, and whether it stays in this bill or not, it is being worked on. Workforce issues are important. Because we didn’t tip over into readiness (green). She asked people, given the challenges with and to labor, is there a bite of this issue that is ready even though the whole shebang may not be ready?
  - i. Roy said he thought it was connected to the above educational piece. That part needs to be thought through so it’s not just nutritional education. Workforce prep and ag entrepreneurs. There was agreement.



- m. Molly added more info in chat: Additionally here is a press release our office worked on to make sure farmers and ranchers have information they need on the disaster declaration and available resources: <https://haaland.house.gov/media/press-releases/haaland-encourages-local-farmers-ranchers-apply-water-shortage-loans>

### III. Next Steps

- a. Homework? Please do a crosswalk with the pandemic priorities outline our Policy and Advocacy Workgroup came up with and the online document. Let Lilly and Sharon know. We'll get together next Thursday with the General Action Team and can continue the process on the rest of the document.
- b. Lily asked that coalition members please [complete the 3-question survey](#), which asks about lessons learned in the food/hunger/water/ag area during the pandemic. She added that if you have more to say, they will be doing guided interviews and would love to chat. The survey provides a place for you to indicate your name/contact info in that case. Or contact Sharon directly at [sharon@nmfirst.org](mailto:sharon@nmfirst.org).
  - i. Lilly added that they would pull together a report to share with Thornburg, who has been funding this collaborative, and would share the information with everyone in this group as we're all learning from this work as we're doing it
- c. Carlos noted that tomorrow is world food day. He shared a link of an as-yet unpublished video. They will be adding background information about the presenters when they publish it. [https://youtu.be/Ulo4fpW\\_YFw](https://youtu.be/Ulo4fpW_YFw). For more information you can contact Carlos at [breadnm@gmail.com](mailto:breadnm@gmail.com)
- d. Sherry noted that the Food Bank Association set up meetings with legislators. 1 meeting down, 2 to go. They have been well-received and well-attended, and address hunger and how the pandemic has impacted hunger in our state.
- e. Lilly invited people to share their news and events with NM First and they will share with the broader network.



Please contact Sharon Berman at [sharon@nmfirst.org](mailto:sharon@nmfirst.org) if we missed or misunderstood anything in these notes.