



Implementation Team: Strengthening Policies and Systems to Increase Food Security and Reduce Hunger, 3:30 PM-5:00 PM, December 17, 2020

NEXT STEPS

1. Action Steps: Food & Ag Policy Council training was available.
2. December 18, presentation to Leg Educ Study Committee meeting tomorrow.
3. What is aligned to our work that we'll ask folks to support; what's in opposition we'll ask folks to speak out against these.
4. Next meeting, January 21, 2021 (3rd Thursday), 3:30-5:00. Roll up our sleeves and decide what we're going to work on together.

PARTICIPANTS

1. Melanie Sanchez Eastwood, New Mexico First, melanie@nmfirst.org
2. Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First, lilly@nmfirst.org
3. Wendy Wintermute, New Mexico First, Wendy@nmfirst.org
4. Erika Robers, New Mexico First, Erika@nmfirst.org.
5. Leslie Kryder, Leslie@SpringRainsLLC.com
6. CJ Slough, Office of Civic Engagement, Office of the Mayor of Albuquerque – VISTA cslough@cabq.gov
7. Dan Gerry, Agri Nature Center- Los Ranchos, DanJGerry@gmail.com
8. Elizabeth Leininger, elizabethleininger87@icloud.com
9. Jean Nichols, Peñasco Resident, Retired Food Bank,
10. Jessica Sarabia - Office of Civic Engagement, Office of the Mayor of Albuquerque – VISTA, jsarabia@cabq.gov
11. Martha Romero, New Mexico First Kitchen Angels Board Member, mgromero2@msn.com
12. Rasa Lila O'Donnell, Taos Land Trust & Taos Whole Health, drrosa@taoswholehealth.org
13. R .E. (Gene) Johnstone, Retired rejm@msn.com
14. Ophelia Hudson, NMDOH, Ophelia.Hudson@state.nm.us
15. Jessica Osenbrugge, Roadrunner Food Bank, Community Initiatives Manager, jessica.osenbrugge@rrfb.org
16. Roy Montibon, CEO + Chief Creative Officer, The Montibon Company, roy@montibon.com
17. mgromero2@msn.com
18. Chrysa Johnson, Office of Civic Engagement, Office of the Mayor of Albuquerque – VISTA, cjohnson@cabq.gov
19. Jackie Muncy, NMDOH, Jackie.Muncy@state.nm.us
20. Pam Roy, NM Farm to Table, pam@farmtotablenm.org
21. Jim O' Donnell, jim@taoslandtrust.org and www.taoslandtrust.org

- Leslie Kryder, something about working on food insecurity issues for some time.

- Elizabeth L. Interested in what's happening with food pantries during COVID. Calling in from ABQ
- Jean Nichols, Penasco, recently retired from Mas Comunidad food bank, working on reimagining food economy
- Melanie Sanchez Eastwood, NM First
- Dan Gerry, Los Ranchos, Agri-Food project, looking at food insecurity for the next five years
- Jessica Sarabia, CABQ Office of Civic Engagement, VISTA. New to N.M., eager to learn.
- Martha Romero, Santa Fe, Kitchen Angels, delivering food to homebound people. How can we support people who are in such need?
- Lilly Irvin Vitela, NM First, calling while much of the work at NM First is essential to me, my heart is very much into food security.
- Ophelia Hudson, NM DOH, Health Promotion, McKinley and Cibola Counties, I'm part of most implementation groups. We have a lot of areas we need to work on.
- CJ Slough, CABQ Office of Civic Engagement. Learning about food systems is exciting to me—my Mom's from Penasco.
- Jessica Osenbrugger, Health & Wellness Mgr for Roadrunner Food Bank. I enjoy these meetings, talking about local food systems, food insecurity.
- Roy Montibon, volunteer in Las Vegas, food distribution. How can we improve the food system to be more robust?
- Erika Robers, NM First, Ag Resilience. Calling from ABQ. The work I do involves ag resilience but involves the entire food chain, ending up feeding people. I care deeply that many people in our state are going hungry.
- Chrysa Johnson, AmeriCorps VISTA, CABQ Civic Engagement. I have a strong personal interest in food security. My research found other cities with food working groups, and some have created entire departments. I'm curious to dig into that idea more. Is that a possibility for ABQ? What are the challenges?
- Wendy Wintermute, SHARE New Mexico Program Director, NM First. I hear so many stories of dire hunger around the state.
- Rasa Lila O'Donnell Taos Land Trust & Taos Whole Health,
- Gene Johnston, MSW, Sandoval Health Council, Storehouse West Food Bank. Mainly interested in ag bills in the upcoming legislature.
- Pam Roy, NM Ag Policy Council, and N.M. Farmers Marketing Association.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Find the final Town Hall report and recommendations here: <https://nmfirst.org/event-details/covid19>

Recommendation 4A. Increase partnerships with the health sector, including Food Rx (nutritious food as a prescription,) public-private partnerships, school-based health centers, and food insecurity screening. Align public health strategies to address food insecurity. Consensus Percentage: 91%

Recommendation 4B. Reduce food waste and increase food rescue and distribution. Consensus Percentage: 95%

Recommendation 4C. Increase opportunities for New Mexico entrepreneurs, community-based organizations, and worker-owned businesses to address food system challenges broadly defined and ensure equity in supports in terms of racial/ethnic/gender/geography. Consensus Percentage: 93%

Recommendation 4D. Strengthen local access and regenerative food production and value-added processing. Consensus Percentage: 91%

Recommendation 4E. Increase income security and improve food access for all N.M. residents. Consensus Percentage: 86%

EXISTING RELATED PUBLIC POLICY EFFORTS

- Pam Roy on [N.M. Food and Ag Policy Council](#). We look at specific policies coming to the next state legislative session. We frame it through the lens of racial equity. [N.M. Grown Program](#) is getting fresh produce to schools,

senior centers, early childhood centers. Early Childhood Bill sponsored by Rep. Dow; Senior Center bill sponsored by Sen Stefanics, Rep Gail Armstrong. We are looking at food programs across institutions. Bring in fresh food to New Mexicans, support local farmers. We are also working at the local level with Las Seminas, food hubs, and ensuring that underserved communities prioritize food distribution. [Double Up Food Bucks](#) doubles the buying power of SNAP at farmers' markets and Lowe's grocery stores.

- Lilly reported on the [Food, Hunger, Water, Agriculture Policy Workgroup](#), a large, comprehensive group working on an integrated approach to address the emergency needs and address the root causes, which can transform systems. People are working together in new ways and building new, sustainable relationships. You are advocating for resources to address hunger issues. Special session allocated \$5 million for food banks to meet immediate needs. Roadrunner Food Bank is finalizing the distribution plan and hopes to begin distributions by December 30. NM First will be tracking legislation during the session, updates, and action alerts so that you can provide your input to your reps. If you would like to help the COVID-19 food and water emergency efforts by joining any action team, please email Sharon Berman at sharon@nmfirst.org.
- Jim O' Donnell, jim@taoslandtrust.org with the Taos Land Trust, is working with Vista Grande HS on an Emerging Farmers Program, hires four students to work in a large vegetable garden at Rio Fernando Park. That food has gone to Questa Food Pantry, Shared Table, St. James food pantry. About 3,000 lbs this summer, fresh organic vegetables. We signed the families at Vista Grande HS into a CSA to get fresh garden vegetables. Two prongs: (1) get the food out immediately; (2) grow the next generation of farmers.
- The Youth Conservation Corps crew built 80 4'x8' garden boxes. I went into communities with hunger issues and asked people would you be interested in growing some of their vegetables this summer. We supplied boxes, shade covering, irrigation systems, and seeds. They hired a local young man who will start working with the 50 families in Taos (30 boxes went to Taos Pueblo). They will do 60 more garden boxes for 2021.
- Working with local acequias and farmers to try to get traditional lands back into production. Working Lands Resilience Initiative. Native Plants Society to start plants in a greenhouse. Taos Land Trust has a two-part video seminar on healthy soils. <https://taoslandtrust.org/nm-healthy-soils-program/>.
- How to Support Legislation. Go to <http://nmlegis.gov> and get acclimated to the site. info@farmtotablenm.org, N.M. Food & Ag Policy Council will be hosting an action advocacy training session on Jan 14th, 5-7 PM. Tomorrow, December 18, Lilly and others will be presenting to the Education Study Committee, sharing the town hall's recommendations. Rep Dow will introduce an early childhood food bill.

What issues do we want to keep an eye on that may be detrimental to food in N.M.?

- Pam: Seed pre-emption, driven by the corporate seed industry. The legislation would give authority to the Dept. of Ag over seeds being brought into N.M. You don't want seeds coming into N.M. bringing disease, but sovereign communities were opposed to this, fearing that their seed saving programs would be decimated.
- Jean Nichols: I know this may be controversial, but I would think all the orgs working on food systems would also be willing to speak out or be part of the resistance against the expansion of nuclear weapon pit production at Los Alamos Nat'l Lab. It doesn't make sense that 10 billion -30 billion will be spent on weapons when our current national security issues are involved with climate change. There are starting to be cracks in D.C. around the funding, but there needs to be more outcry. Yes, we need jobs, but we need them in life-sustaining jobs, not hazardous nuclear work. If we could cut our military budget enough, it could cut the nuke funding. I know lots of folks remain silent on this, but you aren't alone if you at least sign on to the "Call for Sanity" (on lasg.org website). What if we could find funding to offer people an incentive to put their land into food production?
- Expect another effort to pass a food tax.

WENDY/MELANIE GROUP

- Question about community coordination and collaboration around food and other assistance. How can food pantries (and others) refer people to the range of resources they need? Or how do food pantries let folks know that they have other resources, e.g., Storehouse provides clothing and utility assistance? How can we use technology to do this? There are a couple of options for resource & referral systems operating in N.M., one simple, one more complex. One can contact Wendy@nmfirst.org for more information. Wendy noted that she shared a referral system internet based that closes the loop. Referral service gets more details on this. Two orgs that are doing using some vendors that can track health outcomes.
- City's Office of Civic Engagement can help get information out through social media and offer the use of their volunteer platform.
- What happens when the COVID-19 funding runs out?
- What will it take for N.M. or for Albuquerque to commit to provide enough food to everyone who needs and want it? Feeding American says the food gap before COVID could be addressed at the cost of \$150 million. How about issuing residents a card like SNAP to use at grocery stores? The 100% Community Initiative may provide a framework for this work. Expanding the SNAP program. Double Up Food Bucks is a step in the right direction. Pam Roy mentioned Santa Fe CONNECT, a city/county navigating system that helps connect resources like food, housing, and health resources. <https://www.santafenm.gov/connect>. Snap double up. It gives folks double the food for the price.
- Also, SNAP Under 18 program. Rasa pointed out a good organization that is doing something similar, <https://www.annaageeight.org/>.
- Jessica Sarabia - Office of Civic Engagement, Office of the Mayor of Albuquerque – VISTA office offered to share resources that will benefit Albuquerque folks. Feel free to coordinate with her at jsarabia@cabq.gov.
- Work across populations, providing food to seniors, students, children, and families—farm to schools and senior centers, 100% free food for schools.
- Importance of community college programs re agraponics, suitable for water-scarce communities. Watch out for food tax. Tips for advocacy: how to talk to legislators. Importance to N.M. farmers of reinstating meat inspection in N.M.

LILLY/ERIKA GROUP

- Lilly: What policies have you heard about coming up in the 2021 legislative session that you think we might support or that might concern us?
- Jean Nichols: I think that there's a bill, something like "La Vida Act" that may be coming up. It would give more money and resources to frontier communities.
- Chrysa: I'm pretty new to the policy arena, so I'm here to learn.
- Erika: In one of our Ag Resilience meetings this week, we heard from N.M. Farm and Livestock Bureau that Rep Dowe and Rep Purdell (sp?) will be sponsoring a Meat Inspection bill that would aim to reinstate meat inspection within the state of N.M. It would allow local ranchers to expand their capacity and aid many of the supply chain issues we've heard about. It would be either housed in NMDA or at the Livestock Board.
- Lilly: That's great. We've been hearing from so many people that meat inspection is a big issue.
- Martha Romero: This isn't about policy, but I know that many community colleges are working on agroponics. It's a growing system that uses a significantly less amount of water. It could be essential for N.M. communities that are water-scarce.
- Lilly: So true. I know that Sen O'Campos has been very supportive of the Ag Experimentation Stations. Also, this is the reason that at NM First, we've been focused on continuing to support Ag Education like 4H, FFA, and community colleges, knowing that those ed programs are crucial to continuing to create resilient agricultural systems in our state. We need to make sure not to forget behavioral health during this difficult time when so many people's mental health is also suffering.
- Martha: I think we should watch out for new Food Tax legislation.
- Lilly: The key legislator that continued to support food tax is no longer in the legislature.
- Martha: No, but some of the other supporters of food tax bills are still here.
- Lilly: Do you have any hot tips regarding ways we should be engaging legislators during virtual sessions?
- Martha: Well, it's going to be hard because everything is virtual, and face to face is so much more effective.
- Lilly: Indeed. While sometimes we have deep cynicism about our politicians, we also know that at times the fact that our legislators are all volunteers means a deep passion and commitment to the issues they are trying to

advance. Last year we saw an example of this with NM Appleseed and getting funding for free school lunches. Also, I'd say it's important to remember that legislators are human beings and have lived experiences that shape them. Speak to that. They want to do the right thing.

- Martha: On the flip side, we know that since we are in a virtual space, perhaps people that usually couldn't travel to the roundhouse can make calls to legislators or be on zoom from all over the state. Maybe more people can get involved. It would be great for people to tell short stories to humanize these issues.
- Lilly: If you go to the committees on the nm legislature page <https://www.nmlegis.gov/>, and you click on the committees, it shows what each one is working on. You can listen or choose to speak. Different links are depending on which you'd like to do. The schedule always has the links to speak. We will do our best to share the links so that they are ready and accessible to you.
- Jean Nichols: I wondered if anyone has made a history of how our traditional agricultural sector came to be broken. Like how did so many farmers in N.M. leave farming- what pushed them out? What are their stories?
- Lilly: I can think of a handful of scholars who have written on that topic. However, you're right to think about collecting those stories and making sure to continue our storytelling traditions.