



May 15, 2025

Research to Practice in Rural New Mexico: Modern Role for Agriculture Research and Cooperative Extension

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Background

- The Agriculture Experiment Stations (AES) and Cooperative Extension Services (CES) are budgeted as research and public service projects (RPSP) in the New Mexico State University (NMSU) budget.
- AES supports fundamental and applied science and technology research and is the principal research unit of the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES). AES is not a physical site, but rather the system of scientists who work on the Las Cruces Main campus and at the 12 agricultural sciences centers statewide.
 - AES consists of over 350 faculty and staff located on NMSU main campus and at centers in Alcalde, Artesia, Clayton, Clovis, Corona, Farmington, Los Lunas, Mora, Tucumcari, and three sites in Las Cruces.
- CES is also housed in the College of ACES and has staff in all 33 counties and many tribal areas in New Mexico. The staff focus on work including youth development programs such as 4-H, health and wellness programs such as cooking classes, agricultural technology programs such as virtual fencing, and conservation programs such as soil improvement.
 - CES employs around 330 faculty and staff at NMSU’s main campus and at extension offices in all 33 counties.

Comparison of General Fund Appropriations, FY22-FY26
(in thousands)

	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	5-year Change
AES	\$14,968.7	\$16,387.0	\$19,388.9	\$20,735.1	\$21,460.8	43%
CES	\$13,481.3	\$15,095.6	\$16,370.4	\$17,489.0	\$18,064.0	34%
Total	\$28,450.0	\$31,482.6	\$35,759.3	\$38,224.1	\$39,524.8	39%
University I&G GF	\$438,260.6	\$497,742.5	\$546,001.3	\$590,407.1	\$610,088.8	39%

Source: LFC Files

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- Appropriations to AES and CES increased at roughly the same rate as overall general fund appropriations for university instruction and general over the past five years.

2018 Evaluation

- The LFC conducted an evaluation of AES and CES in 2018 and made several recommendations for program modernization including:
 - AES administrators should consider eliminating up to one-third of agricultural science centers to bring the university closer to the median of its peer institutions.
 - No agriculture science centers have been closed. The John T. Harrington center in Mora will be co-located with the reforestation center but is likely to remain an independent center focusing on forest research.
 - Consider centralizing administrative functions, where feasible, at a regional or statewide level, bringing administrative ratios closer to university average.
 - Consider how to strengthen relationships between CES and other Colleges outside of the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences to improve outreach and action on local economic development and other interdisciplinary issues.
 - Incorporate the capital needs of agricultural science centers into university master facilities planning and, where necessary, include improvements for centers in capital outlay requests.
 - Capital outlay requests currently include agricultural science center needs, estimated at \$90 million statewide.