





New Mexico Food Banks: Challenges, Impacts, and the Path Forward

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ECHO
Empowering Our Community to Thrive!

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK OF NEW MEXICO

THE FOOD DEPOT
NORTHERN NEW MEXICO'S FOOD BANK

THE Community Pantry & HOPE GARDEN
"No Mother's Child Should Go Hungry"

Food Bank of Eastern New Mexico

NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATIONS AND ESSENTIAL LOCATIONS

NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION

- 63,615 Native American citizens, which represent nearly 12.4% of the state's entire population (2020 census data)
- 19 Pueblos: Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Pojoaque, Sandia, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, Zuni and Zia
- 3 Apache tribes: Fort Sill Apache Tribe, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Navajo Nation.

ECHO, INC.

Region: Northwest New Mexico
Headquartered in Farmington
Distribution: 1.9 million pounds of food

THE COMMUNITY PANTRY

Region: Western New Mexico
Headquartered in Gallup
Distribution: 2.2 million pounds of food

THE FOOD DEPOT

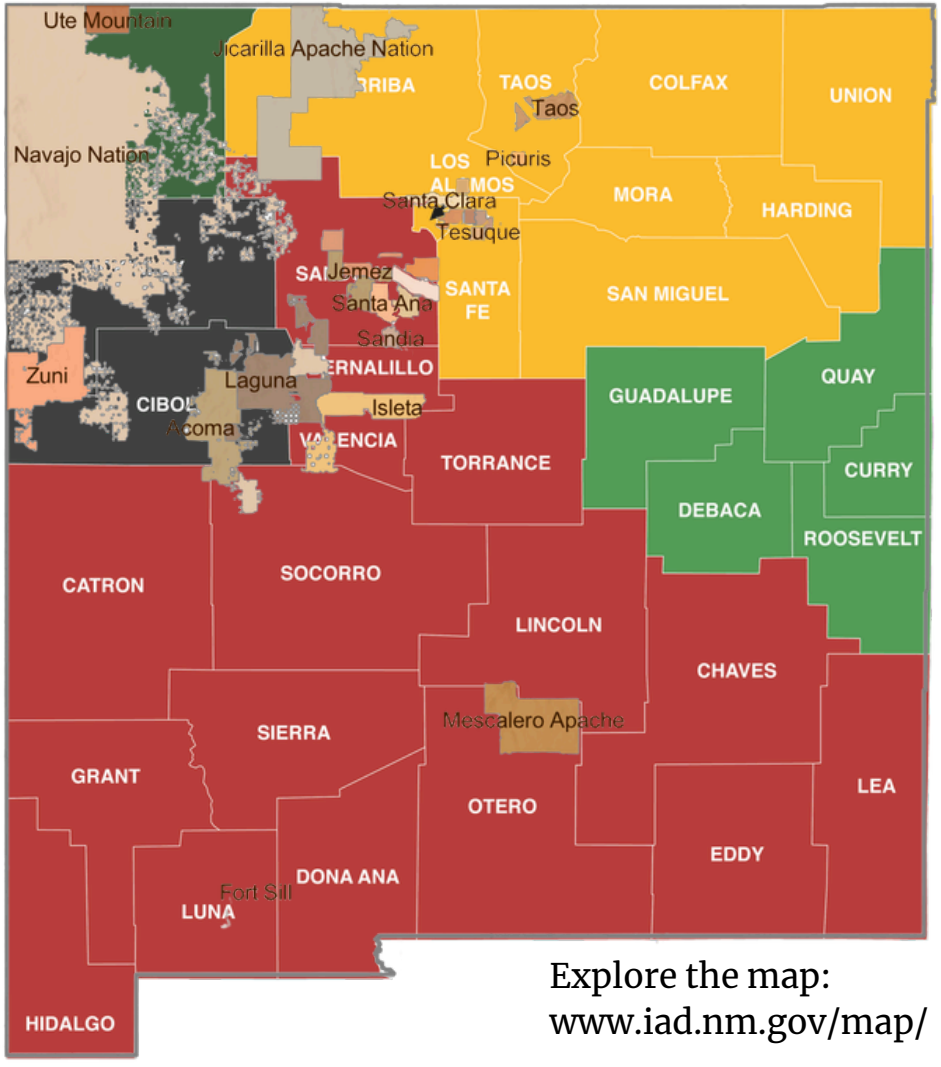
Region: Northern New Mexico
Headquartered in Santa Fe
Distribution: 11.7 million pounds

FOOD BANK OF EASTERN NEW MEXICO

Region: Eastern New Mexico
Headquartered in Clovis
Distribution: 1.5 million pounds of food

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK

Central and Southern New Mexico
Headquartered in Albuquerque
Distribution: 46 million pounds of food



Explore the map:
www.iad.nm.gov/map/

SCAN ME

DIVERSE, INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS SERVING NEW MEXICANS IN ALL 33 COUNTIES

Native Partnerships



Senior Centers



Military Partnerships



Public & Charter Schools



Hospitals & Clinics



Income-Based Housing



Religious Organizations



Homeless Shelters



Locker Systems



Rural Distributions



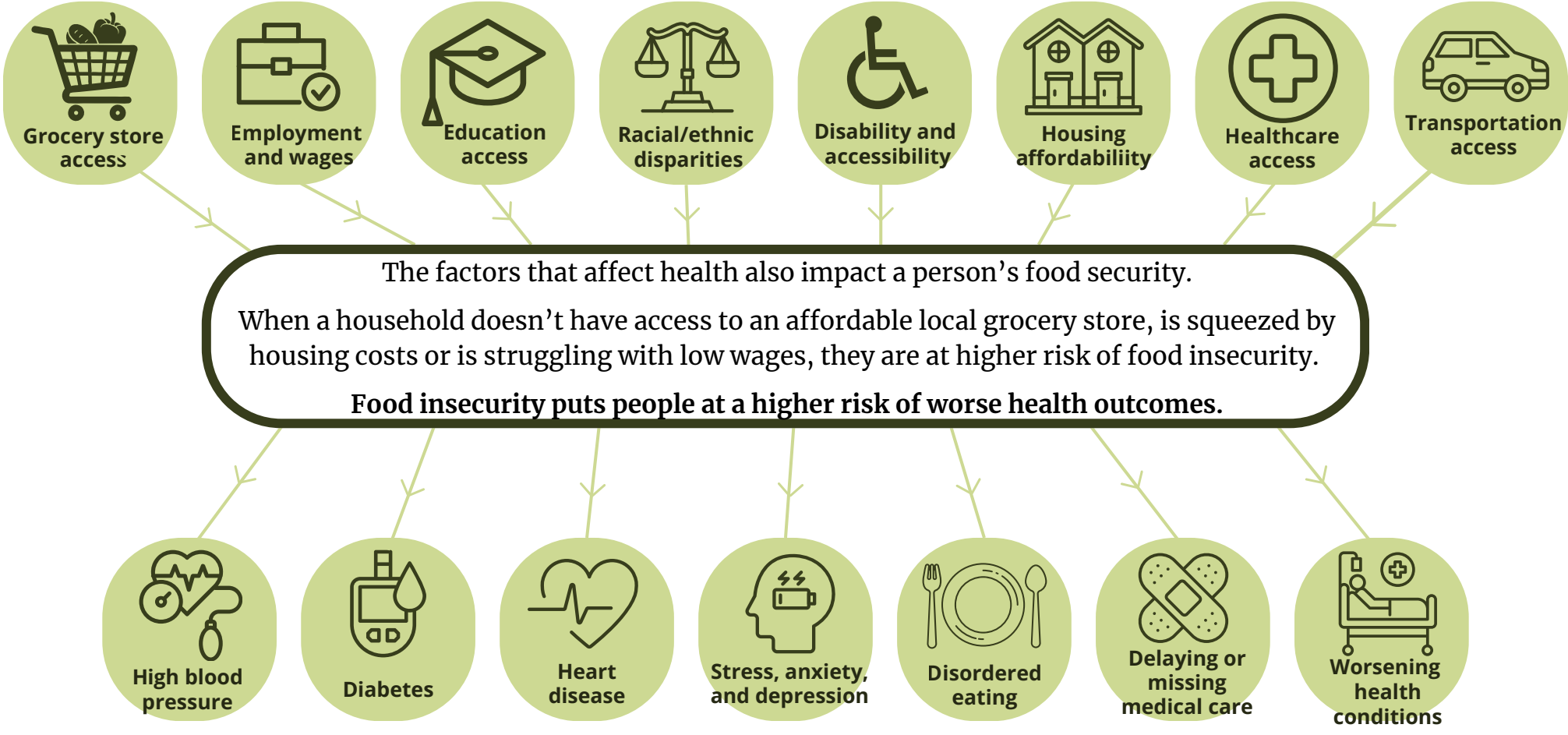
Mobile Grocery Units



Basic Needs



FOOD INSECURITY AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH (SDOH)



SDOH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age. SDOH have a major impact on people's health, well-being, and quality of life.

Just promoting healthy choices won't eliminate these and other health disparities.
Instead, public health organizations and their partners take action to improve the conditions in people's environments.

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK

- Distributes food to:
  - 8 Pueblos: Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Kewa/Santo Domingo, Laguna, San Felipe, Santa Ana, and Zia
  - 16 Navajo Nation Chapter Houses
  - The Mescalero Apache Tribe
  - Dine College
  - Lybrook Elementary
  - Navajo Tech University
  - Thoreau Navajo Outreach
  - Trinity Navajo Bible Church
- Total distributed from 2025-2026: 1.64 million pounds of food to 32,858 households

THE FOOD DEPOT

- Consistent monthly distributions in partnership with the Eight Northern Pueblos of New Mexico:
  - Taos
  - Picuris
  - Ohkay Owingeh
  - Santa Clara
  - San Ildefonso
  - Nambé
  - Pojoaque
  - Tesuque
- Agency partnership with Jicarilla Apache and the Santa Fe Indigenous Center.
- Food Mobile in Pojoaque open to public.

ECHO, INC.

- Serves households in San Juan County and the Navajo Nation.
- Conducts SNAP education and application assistance at the Sheep Springs, Nageezi, and Beclabito Chapter Houses and Senior Centers in the Navajo Nation (as an outreach partner of HCA).

THE COMMUNITY PANTRY

- Chapter Houses within the Navajo Reservation
- Laguna Pueblo, Acoma Pueblo, and the Zuni Pueblos within McKinley County and Cibola County.
- 30 nonprofit agency programs in the two counties that distribute food



DISASTER RESPONSE FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES

New Mexico's Food Banks are responding to the current severe flooding in San Juan County and the Navajo Nation, working with emergency services and San Juan United Way. They are delivering water, food, blankets, diapers, and hygiene kits to evacuees.

The Food Banks worked together to support communities on the Navajo Nation during the flooding in September. They worked with Sen. Muñoz's office to support the Native communities of Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Coyote Canyon, Tohatchi, Twin Lakes, and Sanostee. They also worked with the Zuni Pueblo to respond to flooding in July with emergency food and water.







National
Voluntary Organizations
Active in Disaster







UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE

March 2025

LFPA Terminated by USDA.
From 2023-2025, almost 1 million pounds of local food was purchased across NM.

April 2025

TEFAP CCC Cuts Hit NM Food Banks.
Lost over 20 truckloads of food and 2 million dollars worth of food for the food banks.

July 2025

President Trump signs H.R. 1 into law.
(Also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act")

October 1, 2025

The US Government shuts down for 43 days, the longest in US history.

October 1-2, 2025

NM Special Session
$66 million was provided to maintain SNAP benefits and support food access for New Mexicans

November 10, 2025

NM Special Session
Provided weekly payments to help New Mexicans maintain SNAP benefits during the shutdown.

November 12, 2025

Government Shutdown Ends
SNAP payments continue undisrupted.

January 1, 2026

H.R. 1 Goes into Effect, meaning new work requirements affect New Mexicans who recertify or sign up for SNAP

January 2026

HCA provides a one-time payment to eligible lawfully present immigraant households who can no longer be on SNAP

May 1, 2026

HCA implements a new documentation verification process for SNAP with the goal of reducing the state's error rate

May 20, 2026

New Mexico State Budget supports hunger-relief: $2 million for Regional Farm to Food Bank

May 20th, cont.

Expansion of Double Up Food Bucks, Senior Meal Programs, WIC, Universal School Meals, Approved Supplier Program

October 2026

SNAP Administration cost-shift goes into effect, a $37 million dollar expense for New Mexico

October 2028/2029

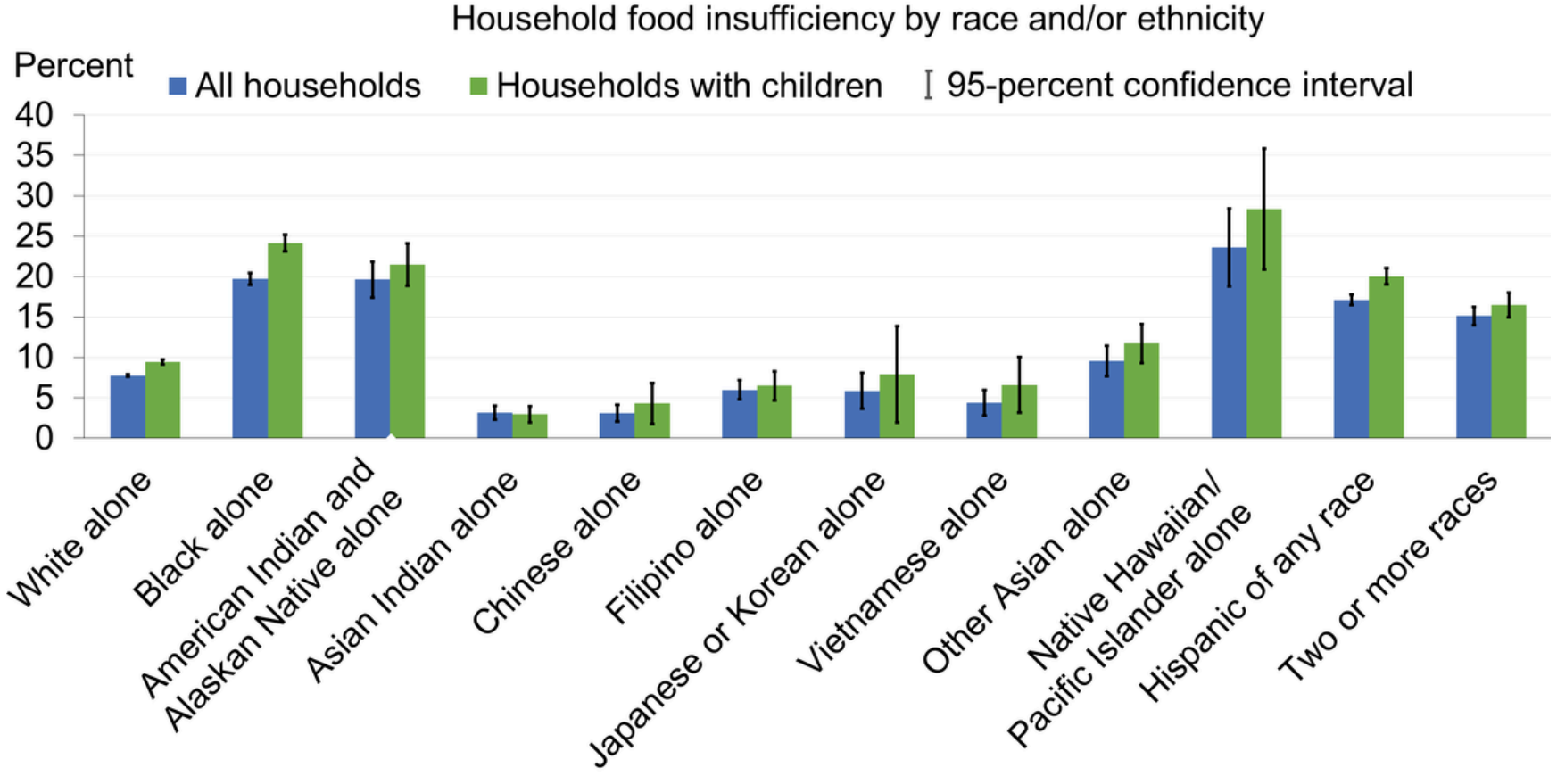
SNAP Benefit cost-shift goes into effect, requiring the state to pay 15% of benefits ($173 million)

FOOD INSECURITY RATES IN NATIVE POPULATIONS

Nationally, more than **45% of Indigenous/Native Americans** experience food insecurity every year, compared to about 10% of the general U.S. population.

More than **60% of Indigenous/Native American school-aged children** qualify for free school meals.

Food insufficiency rates in 2022 were higher among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households, Black households, and American Indian and Alaska Native households compared to other racial and ethnic groups



CHALLENGE:
SNAP, THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

BY THE NUMBERS



More than **128,400 Native Americans** across New Mexico participate in SNAP.

In 2025, **4,519 households** with a tribal affiliation received the state SNAP supplement for elderly and disabled households.

When New Mexico increased Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility from 165% to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, **645 additional Native Americans became eligible for SNAP**.

CHALLENGES

SNAP and FDPIR
Under USDA regulations, tribal members/households cannot participate in SNAP and FDPIR in the same month.

If a tribal member/household wants to switch from FDPIR to SNAP, their benefits will not start until the next calendar month.

SNAP Retailer Access
18 counties in New Mexico have high SNAP participation and limited access to retailers. These risk factors increase the impact of SNAP cuts on families and local economies.

FOOD BANK CONNECTION



For every meal a food bank provides, SNAP provides nine.

When a household's SNAP benefits decrease, or they lose assistance entirely, they turn to food banks and food pantries to fill the gap.

One client shared that his SNAP benefits only cover the equivalent of about two bags of groceries each month. "It's hard. I need the extra help, which is why I attend your distributions," he said.

TRIBAL PARTICIPANTS IN SNAP

This table illustrates the number of Native American beneficiaries who self-attest to tribal affiliation and receive benefits from the New Mexico Health Care Authority.

Tribal Affiliation	Medicaid	SNAP	TANF
Alamo Navajo	2,425	1,779	44
Checkerboard Navajo	18,279	12,977	257
Jicarilla Apache	1,588	1,068	41
Main Reservation Navajo	34,979	24,148	627
Mescalero Apache Tribe	2,386	1,632	137
Ohkay Owingeh	810	566	19
Other State Tribe	129,560	73,270	2,364
Pueblo of Acoma	1,873	1,160	72
Pueblo of Cochiti	338	185	11
Pueblo of Isleta	1,214	719	46
Pueblo of Jemez	1,088	684	42
Pueblo of Laguna	2,386	1,471	88
Pueblo of Nambe	269	149	7
Pueblo of Picuris	121	81	
Pueblo of Pojoaque	179	104	7
Pueblo of San Felipe	1,697	1,106	73
Pueblo of San Ildefonso	199	120	12
Pueblo of Sandia	75	39	3
Pueblo of Santa Ana	227	138	8
Pueblo of Santa Clara	342	219	22
Pueblo of Santo Domingo	2,118	1,451	60
Pueblo of Taos	849	528	25
Pueblo of Tesuque	125	67	8
Pueblo of Zia	334	177	11
Pueblo of Zuni	4,916	3,180	73
Ramah Navajo	920	646	19
Southern Ute Tribe	45	40	2
To'Hajiilee Navajo	942	680	25
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	29	20	1

Source: NM HCA ASPEN Database July 2025 – May 2026

MEMBERS OF FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES ARE EXEMPT FROM HR1 SNAP WORK REQUIREMENTS

If an individual is a member of a federally recognized tripe, meets the definition of Indian, Urban Indian or California Indian, they are exempt from the SNAP Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work requirements put into place by H.R.1.

These groups are newly exempt from the 80-hour-a-month work requirements (for both SNAP and Medicaid) as advocated for by the National Indian Health Board (NIHB). The exemptions honor the federal trust and treaty responsibility for health care and preserve critical resources that support the Indian Health System (IHS).

The NIHB advocated for these exemptions due to the:

- negative impact on American Indian and Alaska Native beneficiaries
- more strain on IHS
- disproportionately high rate of unemployment among American Indian and Alaska Native communities
- burden of work reporting requirements (lack of documentation for different kinds of employment, lack of electricity and internet access)

CHALLENGE: USDA FEDERAL FOOD PROGRAMS

BY THE NUMBERS

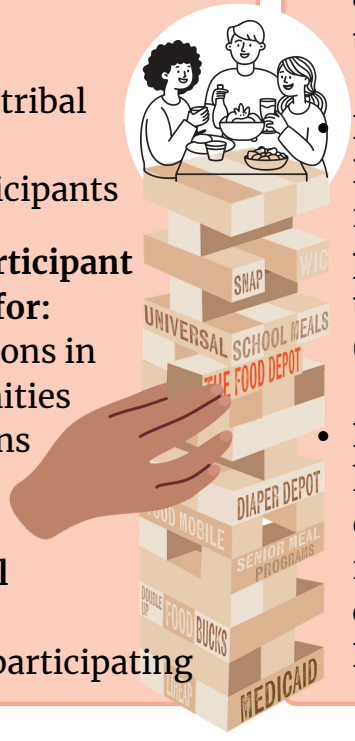


New Mexico Participation Data:

- **Tribal WIC:** 2,535 participants
- **FMNP:** 553 participants with tribal affiliation
- **SNAP:** 128,404 participants with tribal affiliation
- **FDPIR:** 1,193 participants

Tribal-affiliation participant data is not available for:

- **TEFAP:** Distributions in 28 tribal communities
- **CSFP:** Distributions in 17 tribal communities
- **Healthy Universal School Meals:** 35 tribal schools participating



PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

For most federal nutrition programs (besides SNAP), tribal members must meet the same requirements as non-tribal members. However, there are barriers for some programs:

- **WIC:** Income-eligible women, infants, and children up to 5 years old. **They cannot participate in Tribal WIC and state-administered WIC at the same time.**

Farmers Market Nutrition Program: Meet WIC eligibility requirements. **Tribal WIC participants can use FMNP only if their Tribal WIC office offers it (2 of 7 offices in NM).**

- **FDPIR:** Income-eligible households that include at least one person who is a federally recognized Tribe member. **They cannot participate in SNAP and FDPIR in the same month.**

FOOD BANK CONNECTION



Food banks across the country have experienced a 30% decline in TEFAP food, with an additional 25% decrease projected for FY27.

In New Mexico, The Community Pantry has received 70% less TEFAP food since 2024.

Roadrunner Food Bank's TEFAP food is down almost 50% from two years ago.

The Food Depot's TEFAP food is also down 50% from two years ago.

CHALLENGE: FOOD ACCESS

BY THE NUMBERS



Nearly ⅓ of New Mexicans live in a food desert, the 2nd highest percentage of a population in the nation.

In 2023, NM had the fewest full-service grocery stores per capita (13.7 stores/100k residents).

Retailers in 72% of New Mexico counties are at high risk of financial hardship due to declining SNAP participation.

Clients living in rural communities have to travel considerable distances to visit food distributions.

FOOD BANK CONNECTION

GRO Funds have supported expanding food distributions in tribal communities, including:

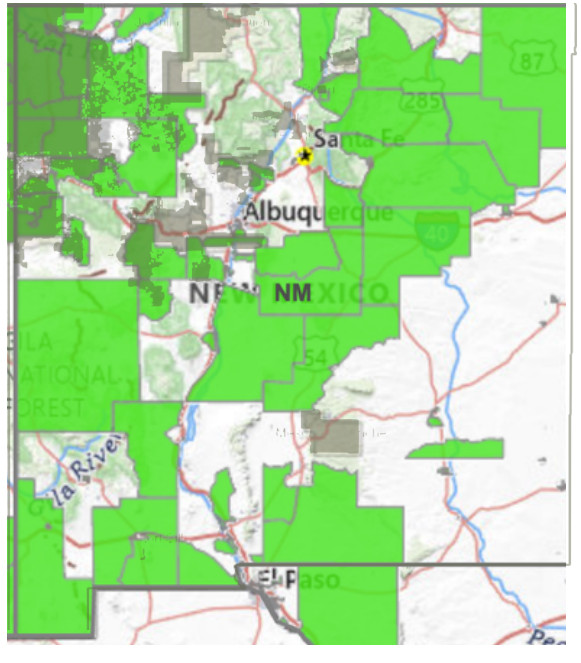
- Roadrunner added a 500-square-foot cooler with pallet racking and electrical infrastructure in Mescalero.
- ECHO added 2 refrigerated cargo vans to serve rural and tribal communities in San Juan County and the Navajo Nation.
- The Food Depot purchased 3 custom food distribution trailers and established a new partnership with Tesuque Pueblo.
- The Community Pantry expanded operational capacity at their Gallup and Grants locations for mobile distributions to rural and tribal communities.

FOOD DESERTS IN NEW MEXICO

Food desert as defined by the USDA

Tribal lands

USDA Food Desert definition: More than 1 mile to a grocery store in urban areas and more than 10 miles in rural areas.



CHALLENGE
COST OF LIVING: FOOD AND FUEL

BY THE NUMBERS



- Almost 40% of Native Americans said they had "serious problems affording food."
- 58% said they do not have enough emergency savings to cover one month of expenses
- More than 20% said affording medical care or prescription drugs was a serious problem for them.
- Gasoline prices have increased by 32.4% over the past year. This increase impacts trips to the grocery store and doctor's office.

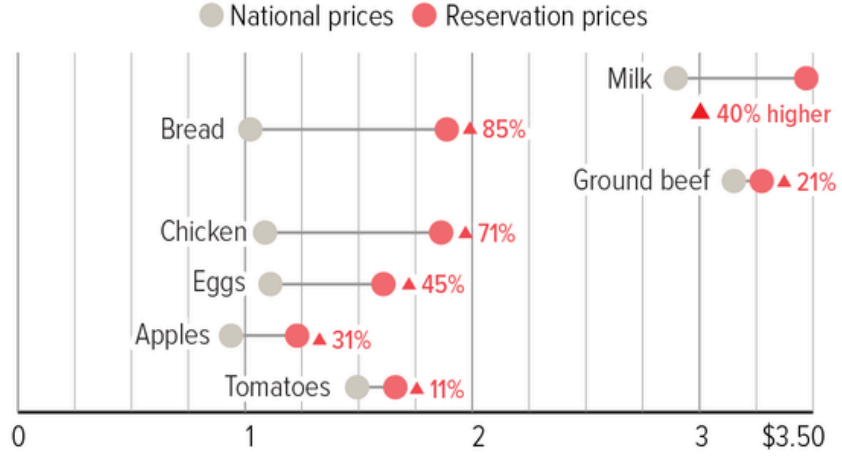
FOOD BANK CONNECTION

Trucks for Roadrunner Food Bank and The Food Depot log over 1 million miles each year.

NM Food Banks are spending 70% more on fuel in 2026.

GRO Funding has helped New Mexico's food banks purchase more food as costs continue to rise.

Reservation Residents Pay Higher Food Prices Than Other U.S. Consumers



Note: Prices were collected for the following units of food: a gallon of milk, a loaf of bread, a pound of ground beef, a whole chicken, a dozen eggs, a pound of apples, and a pound of tomatoes.

Source: Yadira Rivera and Raymond Foxworth, "Indian Country Food Price Index: Exploring Variation in Food Pricing Across Native Communities – A Working Paper II," First Nations Development Institute, 2018, Table 20.

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ASKS FOR LEGISLATORS

1) Consider supplemental support to food banks beyond GRO to mobilize continued expansion of services in an uncertain environment.

2) See the positive impact food banks created by leveraging GRO funds in FY26.

3) Continue engaging with food banks as knowledge experts about community needs.



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Appendix

Slide 2
"Map of Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes in New Mexico." New Mexico Indian Affairs Department. Accessed October 27, 2026. https://www.iad.nm.gov/map/.
Slide 4:
"Healthy People 2030 - Social Determinants of Health." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed August 18, 2026. https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health.
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Appendix continued

Slide 13:
"Food Access Research Atlas - Large Retailer Access Map." USDA Food and Nutrition Administration, July 27, 2026. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/mapping-tools/large-retailer-access-map
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GRO Funds Year ONE
Roadrunner Food Bank

- Sourced 9,092,602 pounds of food, 70% of which was produce
- Added 10,557 cubic feet of refrigerated space and 7,557 cubic feet of freezer space to their partner agency network
- Purchased eight vehicles for food rescue and home delivery for partner agencies
- Added six semi-tractors and 14 semi-trailers to launch and support the Fresh Stop Mobile Market program (92 new sites)
- Upgraded a cargo van for a street feeding program in southern NM
- Added 600 square feet of dry storage space in Carlsbad, a 500-square-foot cooler with pallet racking and electrical infrastructure in Mescalero, and nearly 150 square feet of walk-in freezer space and pallet racking in Albuquerque
- Launched a refrigerated locker pilot program in Albuquerque
- Purchased produce, protein, and eggs from the Frontier Communities Frontier Food Hub to provide to partner agencies in Catron, Luna, and Grant counties
- Purchased a refrigerated cargo van and a refrigerated box truck for Frontier Food Hub





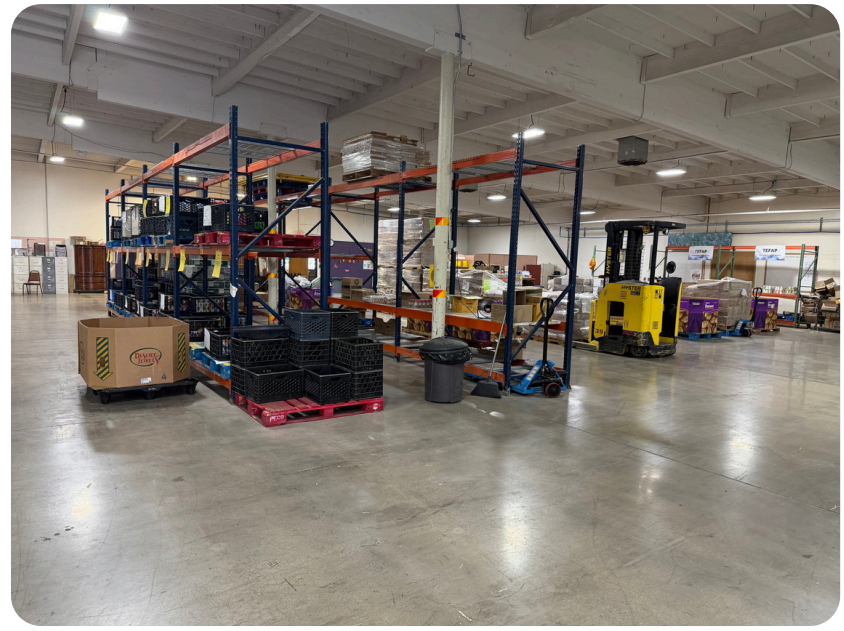




GRO CAPACITY FUNDS	GRO FOOD FUNDS
$2,405,000	$3,521,000

GRO Funds Year ONE
ECHO, Inc.

- Added 840 cubic feet of refrigerated space, 840 cubic feet of freezer space, and 6,400 cubic feet of dry storage space to the Farmington warehouse
- Added 2 refrigerated cargo vans to serve rural and tribal communities
- Provided six partner agencies with additional equipment, including refrigerators
- Purchased more produce and proteins to increase healthy options for clients









GRO CAPACITY FUNDS	GRO FOOD FUNDS
$605,000	$304,000

GRO Funds Year ONE
The Food Depot

- Expanded the capacity of its Food Mobile program with the purchase of three custom food distribution trailers
- Renovation of The Food Depot's no-cost market in Española
- Purchased a refrigerated semi-trailer, adding 22 pallets of space
- Increased its investment in local food by 518%, with over $420,000 in local food purchased over the course of the fiscal year, through a combination of GRO funding and privately raised dollars
- Purchased culturally familiar foods at distributions, including foods for the Food Mobile specifically requested by partners in the northern Pueblos
- Established new partnerships with NM Highlands University, Tesuque Pueblo, and Casa Milagro, extending food access to college students, Native communities, and adults with mental health challenges
- Purchased more food as demand surged more than 20% in fall 2025









GRO CAPACITY FUNDS	GRO FOOD FUNDS
$810,000	$651,500

GRO Funds Year ONE
Food Bank of Eastern New Mexico

- Modernized operations, including expanding their warehouse to include 64 additional pallet racks
- Increased storage capacity to support larger food purchases and more effecient inventory management
- Allowed FBENM to leverage additional public and private investments to create Eastern New Mexico's first refrigerated mobile market, expanding food access in rural and underserved areas. The "Mobile Mercado" will launch in 2027
- Purchased nutritious food to supplement donated and USDA foods, including 33,477 pounds of local beef and eggs
- Site improvements for the "La Puerta Pantry Pickup" area where the food bank will install it's self-service food locker system in Fy27













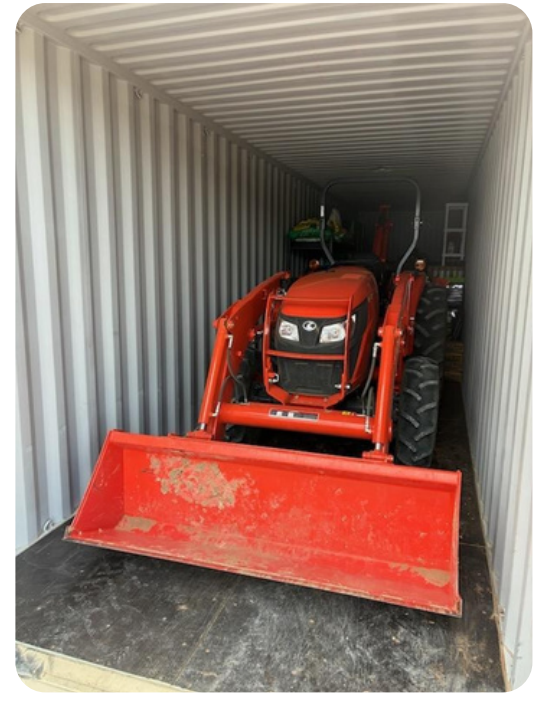
GRO CAPACITY FUNDS	GRO FOOD FUNDS
$575,000	$206,500

GRO Funds Year ONE
The Community Pantry

- Expanded operational capacity at their Gallup and Grants locations for mobile distributions to rural and tribal communities
- Increased partner agency capacity through cold and hot storage, food safety and food preparation equipment
- Purchased equipment for the farm that helped clear land, construct raised beds and a hoop house, and create opportunities for community engagement in hands-on agricultural activities
- Increased nutritional value and variety of distributed food















GRO CAPACITY FUNDS	GRO FOOD FUNDS
$605,000	$317,000

FY2027 State GRO Food Bank Funding	GRO Capacity Building 25% of Funds	GRO Food Purchase 75% of Funds	Total for FY027
The Community Pantry	$158,500	$475,500	$634,000
Roadrunner Food Bank	$1,760,750	$5,282,250	$7,043,000
The Food Depot	$325,750	$977,250	$1,303,000
Food Bank of Eastern New Mexico	$103,000	$309,000	$412,000
ECHO, Inc.	$152,000	$456,000	$608,000
Totals	$2,500,000	$7,500,000	$10,000,000