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SENATE MEMORIAL 16

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018

INTRODUCED BY

Howie C. Morales

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING JANUARY 23, 2018 "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND FARMS DAY" IN
THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has a vibrant food and farming culture that is significant to the rural economy and provides employment opportunities on farms, such as wholesale and retail opportunities and in food processing, distribution and value-added business; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that for every one dollar (\$1.00) that goes to local agricultural producers, one dollar eighty cents (\$1.80) is circulated in the local economy; and

WHEREAS, if New Mexico consumers purchased only fifteen percent of their food from the state's farmers and ranchers, it would increase annual farm income by three hundred ninety-two million dollars (\$392,000,000); and

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1 WHEREAS, an investment in children's health will help stem
2 the rise in childhood obesity in New Mexico, where thirty-two
3 percent of children are overweight or obese; and

4 WHEREAS, increased investment from the legislature enables
5 schools to feature New Mexico-grown produce and to meet federal
6 nutrition requirements, serve more fresh fruits and vegetables
7 to children and support economic development opportunities for
8 local farmers, entrepreneurs and communities; and

9 WHEREAS, over the last five years, more than fifty-one
10 school food authorities have purchased New Mexico-grown produce
11 for school meals with state funds, enhancing the diets of three
12 hundred forty-seven thousand students, promoting healthier
13 lifestyles and increasing academic achievement, while more than
14 one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1,200,000) has
15 benefited New Mexico's farming economy; and

16 WHEREAS, seventy-five farmers are providing New Mexico
17 products to forty-five thousand people each week in thirty-one
18 counties by direct sales and through the supplemental nutrition
19 assistance program, the special supplemental nutrition program
20 for women, infants and children and senior farmers' market
21 nutrition programs, creating fresh food access for low-income
22 individuals and resulting in annual gross sales to farmers of
23 seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$7,500,000) in
24 2017; and

25 WHEREAS, eighty double up food bucks outlets, including

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1 farmers' markets, grocery stores, farm stands and mobile
2 markets, are making it more affordable for supplemental
3 nutritional assistance program participants across the state to
4 increase the amount of fresh, New Mexico-grown produce that
5 they eat while providing eight hundred New Mexico farmers with
6 more than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in electronic
7 benefits transfer sales during 2017; and

8 WHEREAS, a healthier population will help to save the
9 state an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars
10 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an
11 additional one billion two hundred million dollars
12 (\$1,200,000,000) for diabetes; and

13 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and
14 distribution centers and community kitchens could accelerate
15 the growth of farmers and rural food entrepreneurs; and

16 WHEREAS, the growing number of New Mexico community and
17 school gardens provides an important way for children and
18 families to engage in growing food and provides a way for
19 children to learn about nutrition and life sciences; and

20 WHEREAS, to achieve these goals, agricultural, health and
21 education-related organizations and agencies help coordinate
22 programs and make the connections among health, the built
23 environment and policies through the support of organizations
24 such as food policy councils, health councils, health equity
25 partnerships, foodcorps, americorps, 4-H, farm-to-school

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1 programs and others;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
3 OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize that the time has come to
4 invest in New Mexico's children, economy and future; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that January 23, 2018 be declared
6 "New Mexico Food and Farms Day" in the senate; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
8 transmitted to the executive director of the New Mexico
9 farmers' marketing association.