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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/24/11

SPONSOR Rodriguez LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Santa Fe Community Farms Support Approp SB 487

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY11	FY12		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 487 appropriates \$100 thousand dollars from the General Fund to the Higher Education Department for operating a program at Santa Fe Community college to support community farms in Santa Fe County that teach farming skills and donate produce to low-income persons.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100 thousand dollars contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of any fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

The HED notes this request was not submitted by SFCC to the HED for review. HED's funding request for higher education from November 2010 recommended a 3% reduction for all existing line item appropriations for FY12.

The HED states While SB487 proposes funding to be recurring, it is to be noted that a new program at a postsecondary institution should be self-sustaining after three years. At that time the state's funding formula to postsecondary institutions for *instruction and general* would include funding to support the then established program. Therefore, it is recommended to limit funding of a new program endeavor to three years instead of a continuous recurring line item appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The HED reports:

SB487 would create a new program not previously funded at SFCC. According to the Dean of Economic and Workforce Development at SFCC, Randy Grissom, SFCC would utilize the appropriated funds as seed money to apply for federal grant monies, such as those made available through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in order to develop and establish a sustainable agriculture program.

SFCC envisions establishing a one year certificate program as well as an associate of applied science degree program. The Dean indicated that the sustainable agriculture program was one of the institution's top two priorities for new program development.

According to Dean Grissom, the institution would likely partner with the Santa Fe Community Farm, a non-profit organization and one of the oldest and last remaining farms in Santa Fe, which was established 60 years ago. The Executive Director of the farm, Carolyn Stephenson, confirmed the intentions of developing such a partnership.

The Community Farm serves as an agricultural education center. It offers opportunities to develop hands-on skills and capabilities in sustainable agriculture practices and natural resource conservation to a wide variety of community groups of all ages and abilities. The farm fosters a deeper understanding of the role of agriculture for food security and community. Volunteers come from a wide variety of groups including schools (elementary through graduate school), elderhostel, inter-faith groups, the shelters, private citizens, and individuals fulfilling court-ordered community service.

The Community Farm has been and continues to be a regarded model of small-scale urban food production, farmland preservation, agricultural education and charitable giving. Applying appurtenant water rights to 11 agricultural acres, the farm produces diverse fruits and vegetables, which are donated to local charities for distribution to the hungry, homeless and disabled of Santa Fe. These charities include: Food for Santa Fe; Kitchen Angels; Food Depot; Salvation Army; St. Elizabeth's Shelter; Bienvenidos; St. John's Soup Kitchen; and La Luz Shelter.

GH/svb