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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/22/08

SPONSOR Beffort LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Sustainable Agriculture Research Center SB 42

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

No Response

New Mexico State University (NMSU)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 42 appropriates \$100.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to provide education, outreach and research to be conducted by the Sustainable Agriculture Research Education Center.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

This request was not on the list of priority projects submitted by NMSU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department and was not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY09.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The HED states that NMSU's center located in Alcalde, New Mexico is dedicated to research on sustainable agriculture and related issues to benefit small family farms and ranches of north central New Mexico. Small farms have been critical to the fabric of American society throughout the nation's history. Today, as historically, the vast majority of all farms in the United States are small (92 percent). The viability and sustainability of these farms is important to our nation's economy, to the wise stewardship of our biological and natural resources, and to the leadership and social fabric of rural communities. Their economic contribution is important to the State of New Mexico and is especially critical to the thousands of rural communities where they pay taxes and to the thousands of businesses they support.

The ENMRD states that the primary mission of the Sustainable Agriculture Research Education Center is to provide a mechanism for faculty to conduct research and deliver education and extension programs on sustainable agriculture systems for crop, vegetable, fruit, nut, flower, herb and livestock production.

The ENMRD also notes that According to the September 10, 2007 Small Farm Institute Committee's recommendation to the New Mexico State University Dean of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics:

- Agriculture has played an important cultural, economic and environmental role in the survival of the people in New Mexico. Many New Mexicans that make their living in agriculture would be classified as small farmers.
- With increasing urbanization and the loss of family farms to development there is a tremendous opportunity for New Mexico State University to play a proactive roll in increasing its capacity to address the needs of small farmers and ranchers throughout New Mexico.
- The Small Farm Institute Committee recommends a Sustainable Agriculture Research-Education Center be established near the New Mexico State University main campus. Establishing such a center will allow New Mexico State University to address both research and educational needs of small farms in New Mexico for present and future generations.

GH/mt