

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2016, "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND
3 FARMS DAY" IN THE SENATE.

4
5 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a vibrant food and farming
6 culture that is significant to rural economies and provides
7 employment opportunities on farms; in direct wholesale and
8 retail opportunities; and in food processing, distribution
9 and value-added businesses; and

10 WHEREAS, studies have shown that for every one dollar
11 (\$1.00) that goes to local agricultural producers, one dollar
12 eighty cents (\$.80) is circulated in the local economy; and

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

17 WHEREAS, seventy-five farmers' markets are serving
18 New Mexico produce to thirty-six thousand people per week in
19 thirty-one counties; and

20 WHEREAS, farmers' markets support New Mexico's economic
21 and nutritional health, and food access programs, such as the
22 supplemental nutrition assistance program; the special
23 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and
24 children; and senior farmers' market nutrition programs, to
25 create more than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in

1 annual fresh food sales by small farmers; and

2 WHEREAS, in 2012, New Mexico farmers' markets had annual
3 gross sales of eight million four hundred seventy thousand
4 dollars (\$8,470,000); and

5 WHEREAS, currently, more than twenty-five New Mexico
6 farmers sell to more than sixty school districts serving more
7 than two hundred forty thousand schoolchildren New
8 Mexico-grown fruits and vegetables, enhancing the diets of
9 schoolchildren, promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing
10 academic achievement; and

11 WHEREAS, current state funds of three hundred three
12 thousand dollars (\$303,000) have been awarded to thirty
13 school food authorities specifically to purchase New
14 Mexico-grown produce for school meals; and

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

18 WHEREAS, a healthier population will help to save the
19 state an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars
20 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an
21 additional one billion two hundred million dollars
22 (\$1,200,000,000) for diabetes treatment; and

23 WHEREAS, increased investment from the state legislature
24 enables schools to feature New Mexico-grown produce and meet
25 federal nutrition requirements, serve more fresh fruits and

1 vegetables to New Mexico children and support economic
2 development opportunities for local farmers, entrepreneurs
3 and communities; and

4 WHEREAS, capital outlay projects and general
5 appropriations are means by which to expand New Mexico
6 produce markets, food hubs and community kitchens; and

7 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and
8 distribution centers and community kitchens can accelerate
9 the growth in the number of farmers and rural entrepreneurs;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, the number of New Mexico's community and school
12 gardens is growing, and they provide an important way for
13 children and families to engage in growing food and a way for
14 children to learn about nutrition and life sciences; and

15 WHEREAS, to achieve this goal, programs such as
16 FoodCorps, whose volunteers devote a year of their lives to
17 local communities, served more than nineteen thousand
18 New Mexico students, have built or expanded forty-six school
19 and community garden projects, donated over two thousand
20 pounds of garden produce, engaged close to one thousand four
21 hundred community volunteers and reached students throughout
22 New Mexico;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Wednesday, February 3, 2016, be
25 declared "New Mexico Food and Farms Day" in the senate as

1 acknowledgment that the time has come to invest in
2 New Mexico's children, economy and future by supporting
3 farmers, farmers' markets and food entrepreneurs and by
4 encouraging public schools and others to continue and expand
5 the purchase of New Mexico-grown fruits and vegetables; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 transmitted to the New Mexico food and agriculture policy
8 council, the New Mexico department of agriculture and the
9 public education department. _____

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