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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 20, 2017 "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND FARMS DAY"  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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 dollar 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

WHEREAS, state funds of three hundred thirty-five thousand dollars (\$335,000) have been awarded to fifty-one school food authorities specifically to purchase New Mexico-grown produce for school meals, enhancing the diets of three hundred forty-seven thousand students, promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing academic achievement; and

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

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

7           WHEREAS, seventy-five farmers markets are providing New  
8 Mexico products to forty-five thousand people each week in  
9 thirty-one counties by direct sales and through the  
10 supplemental nutrition assistance program, the special  
11 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and  
12 children and senior farmers' market nutrition programs,  
13 resulting in annual gross sales of six million dollars  
14 (\$6,000,000) in 2016; and

15           WHEREAS, eighty double up food bucks outlets, including  
16 farmers' markets, grocery stores, farm stands and mobile  
17 markets, are making it more affordable for supplemental  
18 nutritional assistance program participants across the state  
19 to increase the amount of fresh, New Mexico-grown produce  
20 that they eat while providing farmers with more than seven  
21 hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) in electronic  
22 benefits transfer sales during 2016; and

23           WHEREAS, a healthier population will help to save the  
24 state an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars  
25 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an

1 additional one billion two hundred million dollars  
2 (\$1,200,000,000) for diabetes; and

3 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and  
4 distribution centers and community kitchens could accelerate  
5 the growth of farmers and rural food entrepreneurs; and

6 WHEREAS, the growing number of New Mexico community and  
7 school gardens provide an important way for children and  
8 families to engage in growing food and provide a way for  
9 children to learn about nutrition and life sciences; and

10 WHEREAS, to achieve these goals, programs such as  
11 foodcorps, americorps, food policy councils, health councils,  
12 health equity partnerships, community outreach patient  
13 empowerment and many other organizations and agencies help to  
14 coordinate programs and make the connections between health,  
15 the built environment and policies;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
17 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize  
18 that the time has come to invest in New Mexico's children,  
19 economy and future; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 20, 2017 be  
21 declared "New Mexico Food and Farms Day" in the house of  
22 representatives; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
24 transmitted to the executive director of New Mexico farmers'  
25 marketing association.