

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 20, 2017 "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND FARMS DAY"
3 IN THE SENATE.

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

10 WHEREAS, studies have shown that for every dollar that
11 goes to local agricultural producers, one dollar eighty cents
12 (\$1.80) is circulated in the local economy; and

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

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

24 WHEREAS, an investment in children's health will help
25 stem the rise in childhood obesity in New Mexico, where

1 thirty-two percent of children are overweight or obese; and

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

8 WHEREAS, seventy-five farmers are providing New Mexico
9 products to forty-five thousand people each week in
10 thirty-one counties by direct sales and through the
11 supplemental nutrition assistance program, the special
12 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and
13 children and senior farmers' market nutrition programs,
14 resulting in annual gross sales of six million dollars
15 (\$6,000,000) in 2016; and

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

24 WHEREAS, a healthier population will help to save the
25 state an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars

1 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an
2 additional one billion two hundred million dollars
3 (\$1,200,000,000) for diabetes; and

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

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

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

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

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

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