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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/30/2022

SPONSOR Lente LAST UPDATED _____ HM 25

SHORT TITLE Agriculture & Food in K-12 Curriculum SB _____

ANALYST Gaussoin

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

| | FY22 | FY23 | FY24 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|--------------|------|------|------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Total | NFI | NFI | NFI | NFI | | |

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Agriculture (NMDA)
Governor's Office

No Response Received

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Memorial

House Memorial 25 (HM25) requests the Public Education Department to explore how to incorporate lessons about agricultural, food, and nutrition into the curricula for kindergarten through 12th grade.

The memorial requests the department to report to an “appropriate legislative committee” on their recommendations and a timeline for implementation by October 1, 2022.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Memorials do not contain appropriations, and PED did not provide an estimate of costs to its agency. However, the department likely can complete the report with existing resources.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Governor’s Office suggests incorporating agriculture in public school curricula could encourage younger New Mexicans to become farmers and ranchers. According to a 2017 report from the U.S. Census Bureau, the average age of a New Mexico farmer or rancher is 60, four years older than the national average.¹ From the Governor’s Office:

The state’s agricultural community has long worked to recruit young producers to counter this statistic. To ensure the long-term sustainability of agriculture in New Mexico, career and technical education programs will assist filling the workforce gap as aging farmers and ranchers retire.

NMDA notes the *Resilience in New Mexico Agriculture Strategic Plan* completed in 2017 has education and training in its first recommendation and seeks an increase in funding and institutional support for agriculture education in public schools, existing for expansion of 4-H and Future Farmers of America, both extracurricular programs focused on science and agriculture. The department says FFA already exists in many of the state’s junior high schools and high schools.

NMDA says inserting agricultural curriculum into the school-day curriculum has been difficult because schools must focus on core competencies and because of security issues. The Cooperative Extension Service, part of NMDA, “welcomes the opportunity” to work with PED to develop agriculture-related lessons that focus on science, technology, engineering, and math—STEM.

The Governor’s Office lists the following programs as those that already implement agriculture, food, and nutrition in the public school system:

- Cooking with Kids (<https://cookingwithkids.org/>);
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/pchb/hknnm/>);
- Kids Cook! (<https://kidscook.us>);
- Kids, Kows and More (<https://www.southwestdairyfarmers.com/pages/kids-kows-more-program>);
- La Semilla Food Center (<https://www.lasemillafoodcenter.org/>)
- New Mexico Acequia Association (<https://lasacequias.org/youth-education/>);
- New Mexico Agriculture in the Classroom (<https://newmexico.agclassroom.org/>);
- New Mexico FFA (formerly known as the Future farmers of America (<http://www.nmffa.org/>); and
- New Mexico 4-H (<https://aces.nmsu.edu/4h/>)

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The requested study would require staff time and other resources from PED.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

HM25 asserts New Mexico agriculture is composed of about 25 thousand farms and ranches, encompasses 40 million acres of land, and is valued at \$3.44 million. It argues the state needs agriculture in the curriculum will encourage the next generation of biologists, food scientists, and

¹ https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/New_Mexico/st35_1_0052_0052.pdf

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nutritionists as well as farmers and ranchers and could be a strong component of outdoor classrooms.

HFG/rl