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HOUSE MEMORIAL 25

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2015, "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 rural economies and provides employment opportunities on farms; in direct wholesale and retail opportunities; and in food processing, distribution and value-added businesses; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that for every one dollar (\$1.00) that goes to local agricultural producers, one dollar eighty cents (\$1.80) is circulated in the local economy; and

WHEREAS, if every New Mexico consumer purchased only fifteen percent of the consumer's 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

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

4 WHEREAS, farmers' markets support New Mexico's economic
5 and nutritional health, and food access programs such as the
6 supplemental nutrition assistance program, the women, infants
7 and children special supplemental nutrition program and senior
8 farmers' market nutrition programs to create more than five
9 hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in annual fresh food sales
10 to small farmers; and

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

14 WHEREAS, currently, more than twenty-five New Mexico
15 farmers sell to more than sixty school districts serving more
16 than two hundred forty thousand schoolchildren New Mexico-grown
17 fruits and vegetables, enhancing the diets of schoolchildren,
18 promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing academic
19 achievement; and

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

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

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1 percent of children are overweight or obese; and

2 WHEREAS, a healthier population will help to save the
3 state an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars
4 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an
5 additional one billion two hundred million dollars
6 (\$1,200,000,000) for diabetes treatment; and

7 WHEREAS, increased investment from the state legislature
8 enables schools to feature New Mexico-grown produce and meet
9 federal nutrition requirements, serve more fresh fruits and
10 vegetables to New Mexico children and support economic
11 development opportunities for local farmers, entrepreneurs and
12 communities; and

13 WHEREAS, capital outlay projects and general
14 appropriations are means by which to expand New Mexico produce
15 markets, food hubs and community kitchens; and

16 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and
17 distribution centers and community kitchens can accelerate the
18 growth of farmers and rural entrepreneurs; and

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

23 WHEREAS, to achieve this goal, programs such as FoodCorps,
24 whose volunteers devote a year of their lives to local
25 communities, served over nineteen thousand New Mexico students,

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1 have built or expanded forty-six school and community garden
2 projects, donated over two thousand pounds of garden produce,
3 engaged close to one thousand four hundred community volunteers
4 and reached students throughout New Mexico;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
6 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that Wednesday,
7 January 28, 2015, be declared "New Mexico Food and Farms Day"
8 in the house of representatives as acknowledgment that the time
9 has come to invest in New Mexico's children, economy and future
10 by supporting farmers, farmers' markets and food entrepreneurs
11 and by encouraging public schools and others to continue and
12 expand the purchase of New Mexico-grown fruits and vegetables;
13 and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the New Mexico food and agriculture policy
16 council, the New Mexico department of agriculture and the
17 public education department.