

GRANT COUNTY

Resolution No. 2012-05

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE OF NEW MEXICO LEGISLATION, “HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY ECONOMY”, INCREASING FUNDING FOR NEW MEXICO-GROWN PRODUCE IN SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the County of Grant recognizes that the benefits of local food production include stewardship of working agricultural lands; direct and indirect jobs in agriculture production, food processing, eco-tourism and support industries; energy conservation and greenhouse gas reductions due to reduced miles to market; and increased food security through access to locally grown foods; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Grant believes that investing in healthy school meals with seasonally available New Mexican-grown produce will strengthen the local and State economy; and,

WHEREAS, public school student nutrition programs are entirely separate from the rest of school budgets, and providing additional funding for fresh fruits and vegetables would ensure New Mexican youth develop healthy eating habits; and,

WHEREAS, health studies indicate that there is direct correlation between adequate nutrition and a child's development and school performance; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Grant further finds that adequate nutrition is also necessary for the physical health of children, and that ready access to New Mexico farm- and ranch-raised food will help reduce diet-related diseases.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Grant County Board of Commissioners supports State of New Mexico Legislation, “Healthy Kids, Healthy Economy”, allotting \$1.44 million in funding for fresh fruit and vegetable purchases for school meals in Grant County and across New Mexico.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 12th DAY OF January 2012.

GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Brett Kasten
Brett Kasten, Chair

Gabriel Ramos
Gabriel Ramos, Member

Christy Miller
Christy Miller, Member

ATTEST:

Robert Zamarripa
Robert Zamarripa, County Clerk

Healthy Kids, Healthy Economy

NM Grown Produce for School Meals

2012 Legislative Sponsor: Senator Pete Campos, \$1.44 million



An investment in fresh fruits and vegetables for school lunches is being requested – New Mexico-grown when available. This funding will help to ensure that our state's young people develop life-long nourishing eating habits that promote health and academic achievement. It will also help to strengthen our farm and ranch economies, preserve our environment, and reduce the cost of treating diet-related diseases.

The Threats:

- One in five children in New Mexico are considered food insecure.
- The percentage of New Mexico's children who are obese and overweight has grown to almost 40% for third graders. Obesity currently costs New Mexico an additional \$324 million for health care.
- The risk of being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes is 30 percent for boys, 40 percent for girls, and even higher for Hispanic and Native American children.

If we don't reverse these risks by improving our young people's diets, we are in danger of raising the first generation of American children with a lower life expectancy than their parents.

The Solution:

First Lady Obama's "Let's Move" Program puts a national spotlight on ways we can improve children's health through increasing fresh fruit and vegetable consumption, nutrition education and exercise. In addition, the recent passage of the federal Child Nutrition Reauthorization includes improving school nutrition and funding for Farm to School programs – all supporting efforts already underway in NM. We know that healthy eating habits formed during childhood decrease the risk of chronic disease, and children will increase their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables when those foods are available, affordable, and tasty. Our goal is to turn back the rising tide of poor nutrition by providing at least two servings of the highest quality fresh fruit or vegetables each school week to every New Mexican student; and, to strengthen our farming economy and increase farmer incomes, we will purchase that food from New Mexico farmers when it is seasonally available.

Important Facts:

- Student Nutrition Programs budgets are entirely separate from the rest of school budgets. New Mexico does not provide funding for Student Nutrition Programs. Schools receive approximately \$1 per meal from federal reimbursements to cover all food costs.
- More than 221,000 lower income NM children are eligible to participate in the free or reduced-price school meal program. These children eat less produce due in part to its relatively high price – fresh fruits and vegetables have *increased* by 40 percent in the last 15 years compared to a 20 percent *decrease* for high sugar and high fat foods.
- Eleven school districts currently purchase NM grown produce, when available. They are Taos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Farmington, Bloomfield, Belen, Los Lunas, Moriarity, Las Cruces, Pecos and Alamagordo. The total enrollment of these districts is 185,903. Total enrollment in NM schools is 325,542. So this represents 57% of the students in the state that are getting local foods. In the past five years schools have purchased more than \$2 million of New Mexico grown produce. Currently more than 15 farmers are selling to schools with an additional 31 producers scheduled to sell to schools and institutions in 2011.
- The 2007 Legislature allocated \$85,000 recurring funds to Albuquerque Public Schools which purchased NM salad greens, apples, melons, carrots, and other produce for 6,000 school children.
- If every NM consumer purchased only 15 percent of their food from the state's farmers and ranchers, it would increase annual farm income by \$392 million.

\$4,185,736 = 266,256 students that eat school lunch X 74 servings (2 per week x 37 weeks) X 25 cents per serving

Federal Legislation supporting Farm to School:

- Geographic Preference, USDA Food and Nutrition Service 2011
- Farm to School Grant Program, \$45 Million, Child Nutrition Reauthorization