

GRANT COUNTY

Resolution No. 2012-06

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE OF NEW MEXICO LEGISLATION,
“LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT”, AMENDING STATE STATUTE
TO INCLUDE FOOD RETAIL AS AN ELIGIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITY**

WHEREAS, the County of Grant recognizes that many rural communities in New Mexico lack access to retail food outlets and grocery stores without adequate refrigeration and financing to provide a variety of fresh foods, and;

WHEREAS, the County of Grant acknowledges that current State Statute does not recognize the development and improvement of retail food outlets as an eligible economic development activity and therefore these activities do not qualify for economic development support, and;

WHEREAS, research has shown that the farther one must travel to reach a grocery store, the fewer servings of fresh fruits and vegetables they will eat, and the higher their chances of suffering from diabetes, heart disease, obesity and other diet-related diseases, and;

WHEREAS, the County of Grant recognizes that diet-related diseases cost New Mexican taxpayers over \$324 million dollars annually in health care expenses and New Mexico is ranked 49th in the country for food security; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Grant recognizes that developing retail food outlets that offer healthy food for rural communities provides opportunities for New Mexicans to improve their nutritional habits, increases food security in rural areas and contributes to the local and State economy.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Grant County Board of Commissioners supports the “Local Economic Development Act”, amending New Mexico State Statute to include food retail as an eligible economic development activity in communities with populations of less than five thousand people.

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, County Clerk

Enhancing Access to Affordable and Healthy Food: Local Economic Development Act Amendment

*Representative Begaye
2012 Policy Initiative*



Independent food retail stores are a critical economic driver in rural communities as well as an important place for community members to access affordable and healthy food. The New Mexico Food Gap Task Force recommends that the legislature amend state statute to include food retail as an eligible economic development activity. The amendment would allow existing or new retail food stores in communities with populations of less than five thousand people, that sell food for home consumption, to qualify for economic development support.

The Need:

The further people have to travel to purchase their food, the farther their dollars will travel from their community. In New Mexico, many rural communities lack access to retail food outlets. Those who have grocery stores, lack adequate refrigeration and financing to provide the variety of fresh foods that keep their community shopping at home.

Additionally, many New Mexicans, particularly in rural areas, lack access to healthy and affordable food outlets. Research has shown that the farther one must travel to reach a grocery store, the fewer servings of fresh fruits and vegetables they will eat, and the higher their chances of suffering from diabetes and heart disease.

Economic Support:

- ⇒ Is necessary for small rural communities to improve existing retail stores or to develop new ones.
- ⇒ Can provide resources and financing to small rural communities food retail that need to acquire refrigeration and infrastructure to help them adequately supply fresh produce and healthy food options.

The New Mexico Food Gap Task Force is a governor appointed task force of public and private sector participants charged with assessing New Mexicans ability to adequately access affordable and healthy foods and the economic and health impacts. The Task Force developed recommendations to improve New Mexico's food system presented to policymakers and the governor in November 2008.

The Numbers:

- ⇒ New Mexico is ranked 49th in the nation for food security.
- ⇒ **1 in 3** of NM counties classified as having "low food access."
- ⇒ Rural NM families travel up to **140 miles** round-trip to the closest grocery store.
- ⇒ **33%** of rural stores do not carry fresh fruit.
- ⇒ The cost of fresh fruits has increased over **77%** since 1989 while fats and sweets have decreased **33%**.
- ⇒ **77%** of NM adults do not eat recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables.
- ⇒ **1 in 14** New Mexicans have type 2 diabetes.
- ⇒ Diet-related diseases cost New Mexico **\$324 million** each year.
- ⇒ **Only 1** full-service distributor serves NM rural grocers.

Success Model: Tatum Food Market

After losing their local food store, Tatum residents (a town of 683) were driving more than 20 miles to Hobbs to shop. In response, they obtained \$150,000 from Lea County to fully equip a vacated grocery store building. They leased the building, fully equipped, to experienced owners. The Tatum Food Market opened in November 2008.

