The Cooperative Extension Service is a unique federal, state, and county partnership that was enabled by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 and constitutionally mandated in New Mexico in 1915. Needs of New Mexicans have changed over the past 100 years, but Cooperative Extension Service maintains its relevance and mission by listening to its clientele and providing up-to-date information to citizens throughout the state–both in rural and urban communities.

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service is to provide the people of New Mexico with practical, research-based knowledge and programs to improve their quality of life. As the highly visible community education arm of New Mexico State University, Cooperative Extension Service faculty members serve the state's clientele in all 33 counties and many tribal areas in New Mexico.

The base programs of the Cooperative Extension Service are agriculture and natural resources, consumer and family issues, youth development, and community economic development. In addition to the base programs, Cooperative Extension Service addresses emerging issues such as extreme drought, catastrophic wildfires, food safety, homeland security, financial mediation, public official training, workforce readiness, and health and wellbeing.

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