



State of New Mexico

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Diane D. Denish
Lieutenant Governor

October 19, 2007

To attendees of the New Mexico Organic Farming Conference:

Welcome to what promises to be two days of exciting information sure to rev up your agricultural juices. The speakers and exhibits hold a wealth of information that can improve everyone from the backyard gardener to a full-scale farmer.

The food industry has suffered a number of blows in recent years with alarms over tainted foods, trans fats, bird flu and the conditions under which some animals are raised and slaughtered. One of the bright lights, however, has been the rise in public consciousness about more carefully choosing the food they eat. Admirably, your sector of the food industry is meeting that growing demand.

Where you once had to hunt down tiny grocery stores that were the only places to carry organic foods, you can now “go green” in large and small stores alike. Restaurateurs are demanding their food be not only organic but locally grown. Farmers’ markets have cropped up in cities across New Mexico.

Altogether, organic growers account for 75,000 well-tended acres in our state, providing food that’s good for us, building up the value of our soil and practicing wise and humane husbandry. Farming has never been easy, but New Mexico’s growing conditions are particularly challenging. Lack of rain, caliche, sand, wind and those apple-blossom-killing late freezes combine to raise the ante.

That’s where this conference comes in. Sponsored by New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission and Farm to Table, a non-profit, educational organization, we’ve brought together some of the best experts in the Southwest. Agriculture is an important part of our state’s economy, and we’re eager to support this fast-growing segment of it. Here’s to all our health!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane D. Denish".

Diane D. Denish
Lieutenant Governor