COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

DISCOVER EXTENSION:
Delivering solutions to improve lives for all New Mexicans

New Mexico State University
extension.nmsu.edu
New Mexico State University’s Extension Demonstration Train toured New Mexico in 1912, bringing important information to people throughout our vast and diverse state. That train is long gone, but the Cooperative Extension Service endures as the vehicle that delivers research-based information to New Mexicans, improving their quality of life.

Thanks to the Cooperative Extension Service, the discoveries of NMSU faculty reach about a third of New Mexico’s nearly 2 million residents through non-formal education programs in each of the state’s 33 counties. We’re all about outreach and engagement. We listen to the communities we serve.

We conduct programs aimed at the following issues, which you can learn more about in this brochure.

P2........ Youth programs
P4........ Natural resources
P6......... Production agriculture and urban horticulture
P10....... Nutrition, food safety and healthy families
P12....... Community and economic development

Have a favorite NMSU Extension program or story? Share with us how NMSU Extension has improved your life using #discoverNMSUextension.
New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service touches the people of New Mexico in a number of ways.

650,000
New Mexicans reached annually by Extension through several education programs and outreach.

1,058
Number of officials and government employees who take part every year in NM EDGE, a program that fosters better government through education.

65
Number of FARMERS’ MARKETS we helped create all over the state.

750,000+
Online visits to Extension publications in a recent 12-month period. Check out aces.nmsu.edu/pubs.

$18 million
Value of in-kind contributions given annually by Extension volunteers.

80,000
New Mexicans trained since 2005 by the SOUTHWEST BORDER FOOD SAFETY AND DEFENSE CENTER to help protect the nation’s food supply.

1 in 9 children
in public and private schools across the state receive enhanced curriculum during school hours through 4-H School Enrichment programs.
Participants at the New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp spent about a week last summer learning about managing a ranch, bolstering the future of the industry in the state. New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service and members of the state’s beef industry sponsored the fourth annual ranch camp.

“We are proud to offer this one-of-a-kind program for the future cattle producers of our state,” said Jon Boren, director of the Cooperative Extension Service and associate dean of NMSU’s College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.
Going into this I never knew what happened to cattle after they left our ranch … The camp helped me really gain an insight into what possible careers are open.

— Kari Vallo, who grew up on a ranch and recently attended the camp

NMSU Extension specialists presented educational sessions that ranged from nutrition and proper care of the cattle to how to determine the grazing load on a pasture, as well as determining the quantity of wildlife also living on the land and wildfire reduction through proper management of natural resources.

“Each day, the youth participated in college-level curricula of hands-on activities and lectures,” said Jack Blandford, of Luna County Extension, the ranch camp’s director.

Lena Sanchez grew up ranching sheep with her family in Chama. She has always planned on going into ranch management. Thanks to the camp, she learned more about the laws and policies ranchers have to navigate.

During the final day’s presentations to three judges from the beef industry, the campers explained the revenue-generating activities and expenses in their ranch management plans.

“If these young people are a demonstration of what is in store for our industry, the future looks bright,” said Dina Chacon-Reitzel, executive director of the New Mexico Beef Council, one of the camp sponsors.

For more information about the youth ranch management camp, visit nmyrm.nmsu.edu.

4-H Youth Development helps kids give back

For decades, the New Mexico 4-H Youth Development program has provided young people opportunities to develop leadership, citizenship and life skills so they can give back to their communities in meaningful ways.

The New Mexico 4-H Youth Development program succeeds by providing members with
• Positive peer groups
• Year-round community clubs
• Special-interest groups
• School enrichment programs
• Leadership experiences
• Other camps, events and activities

More than 200 projects are offered in a variety of areas, including animal science, creative arts, engineering, nutrition, horticulture, agronomy and citizenship. It also benefits their future. Participants of 4-H are five times more likely to graduate college, two times more likely to join STEM programs and half as likely to use drugs.

More than 75,000 young people annually develop numerous skills through an array of 4-H programs.
Extension agents provide quick support after mining spill

A truck delivers water to a field in San Juan County after the Gold King Mine spill caused irrigation ditches to be closed. NMSU’s Cooperative Extension Service spearheaded the response to agricultural producers’ needs for water for irrigated crops, and hay and water for livestock in the affected areas along the Animas and San Juan rivers. (NMSU photo by Bonnie Hopkins)
When three million gallons of mining sludge from the Gold King Mine in Colorado flowed downriver in the Animas and San Juan rivers, multiple parts of New Mexico State University’s system came together and addressed important agricultural questions.

Within hours of the incident passing through San Juan County, NMSU’s Cooperative Extension Service was organizing emergency response when irrigation water diversion from the river was stopped.

Bonnie Hopkins, San Juan County Extension agricultural agent, mobilized livestock relocation, water delivery for livestock and crops, and hay delivery for livestock. Other NMSU Extension agents from across the state provided labor and logistical assistance.

She also organized ditch riders, irrigators and producers, providing a forum for updates on water and exchange of information about ditches’ conditions from producers themselves.

NMSU, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, New Mexico Environment Department and New Mexico State Engineer’s office personnel are addressing the short- and long-term impacts of heavy metal contamination of river water and soil along the contaminated rivers.

The organizations came together as one, something that was evident during the spill’s immediate aftermath. Working in the field generated complex questions in the minds of NMSU faculty but they weren’t in position to get answers. The solution? Faculty relayed information to NMDA personnel at the emergency response center. NMDA then communicated with NMSU professors and researchers in Las Cruces so those experts could gather and analyze scientific information from their colleagues in the field.

“The goal was to determine the risks, if any, that come with using the river water to irrigate crops or water cattle,” said Katie Goetz, NMDA public information officer. “The information NMSU produced was distilled into easy-to-understand fact sheets that were shared with the Extension personnel as they communicated with the affected farmers and ranchers.”

NMSU will continue to be involved in years to come. Research faculty are organizing to study the long-term impact of the mining sludge spill to help the residents of San Juan County and the Four Corners region to recover from the Gold King Mine spill.

Work sustains growers and protects investments

Thanks to the Cooperative Extension Service, New Mexico growers have had opportunities over the years to learn how they can keep their agricultural operations safe and viable.

The annual New Mexico Sustainable Agriculture Conference “rotates around the state and addresses topics in sustainable agriculture of special interest to local agricultural professionals,” said Stephanie J. Walker, vegetable specialist for New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service.

Recent topics ranged from soil conservation and alternative crops to the use of unmanned aircraft systems for rangeland monitoring.

Another event, the Four Corners Weed Symposium provides the region with the latest information on handling weeds.

Aside from these helpful events, Extension has produced publications about navigating the challenges of growing crops in New Mexico’s diverse soils. Scores of publication also are available to help residents cope with drought online at aces.nmsu.edu/pubs.

NEW MEXICO producers enjoyed increased PROFITABILITY thanks to forage research and Extension programs that HELPED THEM:

- reduce water use by 30%
- cut fertilizer and seed costs by 25%
- increase yields by 10%
For the thousands of New Mexicans who want to improve their home’s landscaping or get more from their vegetable garden, New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service provides research-based solutions.

New Mexico Master Gardeners help Extension agents spread useful information about homeowner horticulture across the state — the majority of New Mexicans are connected to gardening in some way.

The volunteer Master Gardeners, who are specially trained by Extension agents, deliver information in a variety of ways. In Doña Ana County, for example, Master Gardeners respond to questions via a hotline, set up tables at the popular Las Cruces Farmers and Crafts Market and relevant conventions. They also provide technical information and present educational programs at schools and community gardens.

John Allen, an Extension agent in Hidalgo County, teaches Master Gardeners how to set up composting worm bins at a recent class. (Photo by Andres Leighton)
Sandoval County Master Gardeners recently held an eight-week series of classes.

“The series covers all the topics needed to grow a bountiful vegetable garden and interesting landscape in desert soils and climates,” said Lynda Garvin, NMSU Sandoval County agricultural agent.

Here are some of the class titles from Garvin’s event.
• Fruit Trees for the Home Landscape
• Building Desert Soils
• Gardening in Drought Conditions
• Plant Selection for High Desert Gardening
• Insect Pest Management

Each year Master Gardeners give more than 50,000 hours of volunteer service to improve homeowner horticulture across the state.

Master Gardeners are a diverse and versatile group; they come from all ethnic and educational backgrounds and have experience in all walks of life. Those traits help them relate to people in their community.

Chile and pecans are ingrained in New Mexico’s culture and key to our state’s economy.

To serve the community, the Cooperative Extension Service has organized events to share new discoveries about the popular crops and bolster growers.

For half a century, regional pecan farmers have gathered in Las Cruces to discover how to improve their orchard operations. The Cooperative Extension Service has supported the annual Western Pecan Growers Association conference and trade show. Extension researchers and specialists give presentations...
at the conference, which is organized by Extension.

Pecans are one of the top crops in the state, and New Mexico is one of the top pecan producers in the country.

The most recent conference drew about 300 people from the U.S. pecan-growing belt and Mexico. In a survey, 81 percent of attendees said they learned important information that they planned to incorporate into their operations.

The 2015 conference also featured an update on the proposed pecan marketing order, tips for success in doing business in China and a look at mechanical pruning techniques.

For people interested in learning more about the chile pepper, Chile Field Day is the perfect opportunity.

“Most New Mexicans love to eat chile; we hope to showcase some of the research projects that support production of the crop,” said Stephanie Walker, NMSU Extension plant sciences assistant professor.

In 2015, research projects, including pest and disease management, breeding and mechanization, that are being conducted at NMSU and contribute to the productivity of the state’s chile fields were presented, Walker said.

“The western pecan is a superior pecan to others sold in the international markets. We need to continue to build those international markets and it is important that our growers are knowledgeable on (international) marketing practices.”

— John White, director of the Western Pecan Growers Association

Kids discover safety through Extension

In towns across eastern New Mexico, Cooperative Extension Service agents team with the Progressive Agriculture Foundation to teach children safety lessons that will keep them and others free from harm, whether they are at home or on the farm or ranch.

The one-day events, dubbed Progressive Agriculture Safety Day, annually reach more than 5,000 children and teachers.

Young students learn how and when to make 911 calls for help. They learn how to be safe around household chemicals, electricity, water, farm equipment and lawnmowers. They also learn first aid. All of this is delivered through age-appropriate, hands-on activities.
Food education fosters a better quality of life

Shopping and preparing healthy meals for a family on a limited budget can be a challenge.

To help, New Mexico State University’s Extension offices teach adults and children in the community the basics through the Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN) program.

The ICAN program delivers hands-on lessons on healthy food choices, food preparation skills and food buying strategies free of charge to people with limited resources.

“Participants learn the basics of purchasing, preparing, safe food handling, budgeting, and planning meals in an
interactive and fun learning environment,” said Donna Sauter, Extension’s ICAN director.

Many Extension offices offer the classes to adults and youth, in English and Spanish.

Classes are held in community centers as well as schools. Extension offices coordinate with organizations that serve the same population as the ICAN program.

ICAN’s mission, Sauter said, “is to improve the health status and reduce the nutritional health disparities of New Mexicans while making a measurable, positive impact on the well-being of our communities.”

One new ICAN initiative, the free People to Produce farmers market in Curry County, recently distributed 6,000 pounds of produce to families.

“With fresh foods, I know my grandkids will eat healthy,” said Barbara Rodriguez, who has benefited from the markets. “I’ve also tried different recipes with the produce I’ve gotten here.”

Sauter said that food safety is an important lesson to prevent people from becoming sick.

In addition to learning how to improve their health, ICAN participants also gain valuable life skills. Upon completion of the program, graduates receive a certificate, which has helped some graduates acquire a job in the food service industry.

A recent lesson, entitled “plan, shop and save,” taught participants how to read and compare grocery ads and how to read food labels.

What do a popular food safety blog and a series of fitness classes have in common? Both support community health.

On weekday mornings at the New Mexico State University Grant County Extension office in Silver City, you will likely see a group of women having fun and investing in their long-term health and fitness. Established in 2009, the New Mexico StrongWomen Strong Bones program has evolved to include strength-training programs for both men and women.

In 2012, NMSU launched the Food Safety and Protection blog thanks to input from Extension agents.

The blog features the latest notifications from the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service that pertain to New Mexico, Texas and the Four Corners region.

Read the blog at nmsufoodsafety.blogspot.com.
Government officials gain an EDGE

Recent graduates of NM EDGE’s County College and the New Mexico Certified Public Managers were recognized in January in Santa Fe during the New Mexico Association of Counties’ Legislative Conference. (Courtesy photo)
Every year nearly 1,100 administrators, elected officials and staff members in all levels of government learn the best management practices and theories through New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service.

Forty-four public servants in 2015 received certification in their fields through NM EDGE, which stands for Education Designed to Generate Excellence in the public sector.

“We feel this program directly assists us in our mission to take practical education to every part of our state,” said Jon Boren, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service director. “We couldn’t be more pleased with the enthusiastic response to the program. We continue to find collaborative ways to reach out to new partners toward our mutual goal of better government through education.”

To obtain a certification designation, the students must complete a required number of three-hour classes depending on the certification, and a portfolio demonstrating, through written and project work, their application of the competencies learned by participating in the classes.

In 2015, eight graduates received the designation of New Mexico Certified Public Purchasing Professional, NM EDGE’s newest public sector specialization program.

“The public purchasing certification curriculum was developed through the collaborative efforts of NM EDGE, many of our partners and practicing experts,” said Mary DeLorenzo, NM EDGE program director. “It is recognized by New Mexico State Purchasing as a reciprocal certification to the Chief Procurement Officer. CPO certification is required by state statute to be completed by July 1. We are delighted to be part of the solution.”

Other recent certifications awarded were the public sector specialization designation of public assessment officer, county commissioner and advocate for public ethics.

Programs aim to secure bright economic future

New Mexico is a unique state with distinct economic opportunities and challenges. New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service is invested in ensuring a bright economic future in two promising programs.

• The Youth Entrepreneurship Summer (YES) Camp is a college course for high school students eager to learn about entrepreneurship. YES students learn financial strategy, market research and the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, including its rewards and challenges.

• The Stronger Economies Together (SET) program works at the community level. Experts say that thorough planning among New Mexico’s widespread communities is vital for our economic success. SET facilitates the development and implementation of a strong, multi-region economic blueprint, based on current and emerging strengths.

4 in 10

The number of young people who have or would like to start their own business some day. Extension has ways to get them started

Source: Harris Interactive survey
Jesse Jim is working to improve the lives of her fellow Navajo people.

Jim’s duties as an NMSU faculty member working through the Cooperative Extension Service include providing youth development, nutrition and agricultural programs for the people of the Navajo Nation’s eastern region.

“The Tribal Extension job is to find the balance between living in a Western society and traditional culture,” she said. “There is a balance in everything. Coming from the Navajo culture, the only balance is agriculture. I’m demonstrating that we can teach the youth critical thinking through other projects, such as Lego robotics and rocketry.”
A life-long resident of the eastern Navajo Nation region, the New Mexico State University graduate and Tribal Extension agent deals personally each day with many of the same issues experienced by her neighbors.

She lives on her family’s 5,287-acre ranch north of Crownpoint in a sandstone house built by her grandfather. She calls it a “typical rural Navajo homestead.”

Jim said she hauls 500 to 600 gallons of water each week from Crownpoint to fill a cistern so she can have running water in the house. But she does have modern amenities — access to Internet and cell phone service.

“People need to know there are information resources out here to help them,” she said. “I want to provide the information on how to manage the livestock and rangeland to my community. I want to tell them, ‘I’ve been there, and I’m here to help you. What you are doing is not wrong, but here is a better way to approach it to make it better.’”

Tribal Extension agents also support Native American culture.
Kathy Landers, the Tribal Extension coordinator based in McKinley County, and her colleagues are developing a curriculum for a Navajo weaving course. It’s one of the Native American culture programs that Tribal Extension agents offer.

Landers said it’s important to support such a program “so that weaving doesn’t become lost.”

Once the program is complete, participants will learn how to weave items from coasters to rugs. They will also learn how to build a loom.

An Extension program called the Rural Agricultural Improvement and Public Affairs Project (RAIPAP) also serves Native Americans. RAIPAP supports small-acreage Hispanic and Native American farmers in Northern New Mexico, helping their operations thrive in a global economy.

THE TRIBAL EXTENSION PROGRAM INCLUDES FOUR PROGRAM AREAS

• Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
• Youth Education
• Community Resource, Economic and Leadership Development
• Strengthening Families through Education in Health, Nutrition and Family Resource Management

Extension helps match producers with NM food demand

A recent study showed that 70 percent of consumers in the Albuquerque metro area would buy locally grown food if it were available.

Just how significant is that economic opportunity for New Mexico food producers?
Looking a little closer at the numbers reveals that it’s big.

The nearly 1 million people living in the metro area annually consume $78 million in fresh fruits and vegetables. But more than 80 percent of those healthy foods come from outside New Mexico.

Metro-area agents with New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service created the CONNECTING Local Food Producers with Local Markets Project to link the food demand with suppliers.

The Extension agents are working with more than 3,300 farm operations in the metro region on plans to provide more locally grown produce to residents.

Through the CONNECTING program, officials are getting a better understanding of the supply-and-demand picture for food (primarily fruits and vegetables) in the metro area. They are also developing workshops for food producers, measuring their interests and meeting with local food buyers to assess food demand.

Elsewhere in the state, Extension is partnering with other agencies to conduct grant-writing workshops to help New Mexicans develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local and regional markets.

The Agriculture Act of 2014 — better known as the Farm Bill — authorizes $30 million annually to programs that support direct producer-to-consumer activities.
New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service improves our communities through discovery. We provide practical, research-based knowledge and programs in response to needs of New Mexicans. That’s the mission we have embraced for more than 100 years and we will remain eager to help our neighbors statewide for years to come.

It’s vital that we keep local needs at the forefront. We pride ourselves in listening to our communities, responding to their needs and improving lives. While our mission has endured over the years, our delivery methods and partnerships continually change — just as they have for decades.

In New Mexico’s early days of statehood, the best way to reach people with our resources was by train. Later, Extension distributed thousands of printed publications statewide. Today, Extension is a leader in utilizing modern technology — social media, learning games, apps and e-books — to disseminate beneficial information.

Our areas of expertise also evolve to meet society’s needs. We imagine a future in which we will be improving lives through discoveries in areas such as alternative energy, urban issues and health care.

“Issues have changed over the years, but the need to extend research-based information out to the state remains constant.”

— Jon Boren, director of the Cooperative Extension Service
ew Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service exists to serve all New Mexicans, wherever they live. We reach every corner of New Mexico thanks to 54 offices statewide — there’s at least one in each of New Mexico’s 33 counties. We provide a wide range of research-based information, and we deliver that knowledge in whatever way it is needed. We have more than 300 faculty and staff, along with nearly 11,000 volunteers, all dedicated to improving the quality of life for their fellow New Mexicans through discovery.
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