

**Food, Hunger, Water, Agriculture Policy**  
**Food Systems Action Team**  
**May 28, 2020 ♦ 3:30 – 5:00 pm**  
**Meeting Notes**

Facilitation: Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First  
Notes: Wendy Wintermute, New Mexico First

Bryan Crawford-Garrett, Thornburg Foundation  
Zoey Fink, Farmer and National Young Farmers Coalition  
Bruce Hinrichs, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service  
Eric  
Jonas Moya, NM First  
Jason New, NMDA  
Pam Roy, NM Food and Ag Policy Council  
Ron Montibon, The Montibon Company  
Tyler Eshelman, New Mexico Coalition to Enhance Working Lands (NMCEWL)  
Brent Van Dyke, NM Association of Conservation Districts  
Mike Venticinque, NM Farmers' Marketing Association  
Wendy Wintermute, NM First

I. Welcome

II Check-in - What brings you joy in this work?

- Jonas: Empowering others
- Ron: Working on projects with long-term benefits
- Jason: passion for agriculture. Helping and seeing others prosper and success is why I do what I do. Helping others, connecting people, making things happen. Problem-solving.
- Dan: Able to be working actively with a group of charged up folks that are making things happen.
- Eric: People who feel they haven't been heard and acknowledge that are being heard.
- Sarah: Community building. Strengthening awareness about local food systems. Pretty lonely out there if we weren't working together.
- Mike V: Seeing these farmers and organizations come together and explode with CSAs, everyone leaning on each other. Sense of community coming out of this global tragedy.
- Bryan: Collaborative networks have shown a lot of resilience. Coming together in new ways, building on work that's been happening for so many years.
- Tyler, NM Cool. Hearing the stories directly from producers about the success of our collaboration, their resilience during this time. Getting food to people who might need it at this time. Access to fresh, good food.
- Wendy: Very local community, Int Dist in ABQ, very stressed. Community coming together crossing old boundaries.
- Lilly: Our work started out with 80 people, meeting 1-2 in prep for regular budget session. Group has expanded significantly. Connections made between producers and consumers, food banks, Pueblo Relief Fund. Resulting in stronger relationships and folks getting what they need.
- Bruce: Proud of our state office - financial trainings, mental health trainings. That's what we're here for.
- Pam: Being with you all, being on these calls. Really grateful to have these opportunities to share. So much collaboration and coordination going on.
- Zoey: Just planted a field of blue corn and sold out in a day. 75 more people getting food from us. That feels great.

IV Updates from action steps from last meeting

- Jason and Bruce, NMSU, Acequia Association, NMFMA – Collective Seed Purchase
- Mike: Seed orders, repackaging, getting these out. Speed with which it happened was great, though I wish it could have happened soon. Seeds are in, repackaging is in process. Seeds are going out this week. In the mail, or you can pick them up. Emily at the Acequia Association did an amazing job. Grateful farmers are getting seeds to start the new season. Those who could source elsewhere are giving them to someone else, or perhaps create a storage bank. 500 lbs of potato seeds coming from CO. (Jason and the Colorado Dept. of Ag.)
- Lilly: Total farmer respondents around seed supply: 140. Thanks to NM Foundation and Thornburg for funding.
- Mike: Monday – our first official farm visit.

IV Updates by Organization about Food Production Needs and Opportunities

- Accessing Funding – Federal, State, Philanthropy
- Simplifying applications, rapid responses

Tyler: Working on translating grant language, creating 1-2 pagers on opportunities, checklists to clarify what you need. Good news is that apps are getting simpler. Weekly newsletter that highlights opportunities, resources for mental health, food safety practices to go hand-in-hand with financial resources for producers. Anyone wanting to help, please contact Tyler: [coordinator@nmcewl.org](mailto:coordinator@nmcewl.org)

Roy: Statewide student grant-writer mentorship program. With Sarah and Dan. Need to connect with Olivia Roanhorse and others. Working with local higher ed to create next generation of grant-writers. Next step is to be strategic about approaching higher ed with the concept and figure out the most effective way to put this together.

Dan: Thanks to connection to Olivia Roanhorse. Connected to Sue Forster-Cox at NMSU – 40 years of grant-writer in public health. Introduced to Terry, Bruner who gave our groups some great guidance. Diff between ag grants and other federal grants. Grant opportunity application due by July 6<sup>th</sup>. Meeting with Fergus on Sat, projecting Agri-Futures Initiative priorities and budgets for next year. Opportunities to model ag in urban-suburban areas. Sue bringing her public health background in, teaching nutrition classes.

Bryan: Regional Food System Partnership Program (USDA) application in from a NM group. Thornburg is trying to use their funds to leverage federal funds

Bruce: 1500 participants in a seed distribution program; 5,000 packets of seeds. Through Master Gardener program. Beef producers meeting tonight re bottleneck.

Roy: working with food groups in LC and San Miguel Counties. Regs around food pantries, senior centers, etc., somewhat complex and contradictory. Some have to provide balanced meals, some don't. Can we map this out and streamline the system?

Sarah: Funds for paying interns came up in WF group. I know of a farmer that would like to compensate an intern, interested in farming as a profession. NRCE, Rural Development \$\$, federal, state dollars (not readily available). Any philanthropic dollars interested in supporting a burgeoning interest in a new farmer?

Bruce. We had everything worked up with DWS to provide week-long certificate training program, followed up by a job fair, inviting producers looking for interns. Now postponed.

Lilly: Difficulties in participating in the Food Box program. A lot of our producers aren't GAP certified. Zoey shared that the barrier isn't around a lack of confidence in safety, but what's the motivation to complete all the paperwork, etc., to become certified. Steve and Lilly thought about how to make certification more inviting. Mike and Anthony will help us think about this. Others are invited to help think this out, so we'll be ready when the next round of funding comes out.

Dan: Press release that NM Fresh Foods is establishing a high-pressure processing facility, cold storage plant that can process many foods. In ABQ. 138 new jobs, 500 million lbs of fresh food products. Distribution system in the works. Kelly Egoft having a conversation with Fergus to make it clear to local farmers that they will have a facility opening in January.

Mike: Looking for organic producers for juice processing.

Tyler: Newsletter on Monday with grant opportunities around CFAP; NM DOH guidelines for business operations; SBA for PPP; stories of resilience. Info fliers that anyone can tweak and redistribute.

Jonas: ACI Ag Call about WF, informed about safety – lots of conversations around PPE; legal compliance; how to manage potential infections.

Eric: We have some assets to bring to the table re: entrepreneurship training.

Jason: Call yesterday re: COVID safety practices. DOH website has guidance on different sectors and industries on safety practices and recommendations. Questions about pre-screening for COVID – temperature checking, screening questions, availability of testing. Some producers are inviting DOH to come to the site to test or allowing workers to go to test sites.

NMDA is still working at home. The only inspections we're doing are those deemed essential. Ready to get back into the field.

### **Federal Relief Dollars?**

Jason: Utah and Nebraska carved out significant amounts to fund relief efforts. NM is still trying to figure out how to follow suit. It would take legislative action during the special session. Will there be time for anything except the budget.

Jason: NMDA has a list of funding opportunities. Working on FAQs on CFAP, PPP, Food Box program. More to come. Part of Zachary's job at NMDA. Also develop an educational resource.

Lilly: Will share one-pager on our common ground re: funding priorities, some of which are for the special session, the regular session, and for administrative decisions.

### **V Summarize Next Steps**

- Lots of invitations and opportunities to collaborate.
- Work with Tyler on translating funding opportunities
- How to make it more feasible to apply for federal opportunities

- What does it take to meet safety standards that are competitive for federal dollars?

VII Adjourn