

# 2023 Advisory Report



## ABOUT THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service (CES) is a network of available local experts who bring relevant information, education, and research to the residents of New Mexico. NMSU Extension relays this information to residents by offering programming in the areas of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. There is an Extension Office in every county in the state of New Mexico.

The Bernalillo County Extension Office is one of NMSU's 33 "satellite" offices. There are seven full time extension agents, two administrative assistants, and several part time staff members.



**HORTICULTURE**



**AGRICULTURE**



**4-H YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT**



**FAMILY & CONSUMER  
SCIENCES**



**NUTRITION  
EDUCATION**



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# A Message From the County Director



John Garlich

Welcome to the Bernalillo County Cooperative Extension Service. I am honored to share with you, our community, the great and inspiring work the Extension Agents, staff, and volunteers continue to do. This past year, 2023, saw many changes around the office.

The office welcomed Taylor Roggow as the administrative assistant and Carla Jaramillo as a program assistant. Taylor is a great addition to the office helping with the website, finances, and many tasks. She keeps the office running well. Carla is wonderful with helping the 4-H families navigate through the system and helps to support all the 4-H agents.

Also joining the team included Amber Benson as the FCS Agent and Joseph Delgado as the Horticulture Agent. Amber is a cookbook author and food entrepreneur. She is reinvigorating the extension food preservation program. Joseph is a recent horticulture graduate of NMSU and brings the latest in gardening knowledge.

The seasoned agents are also being recognized for their great work. Dianne continues her role nationally as a leader in health and wellness in Extension. Brittany S. was recognized for her work with urban youth in 4-H programming. Brittany J. and Phillip work with the enrolled 4-H youth and lead teams and youth onto National competitions.

All of the agents continue to impact the community locally whether it be with Master Gardeners, Master Composters, 4-H, the Extension Association, as well as with many of our community partners with Bernalillo County, Los Ranchos, NM Farmers Marketing Association, Road Runner Food Bank, Three Sisters Kitchen, South Valley Economic Development Center, Crossroads, TenderLove, Albuquerque Public Schools, and the list goes on.

The office would also like to THANK the MANY volunteers who help directly or behind the scenes that enable these programs to happen and to expand the reach into the community. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

The next few pages are brief highlights of the work, education, and impacts the agents realized in 2023. I look forward to hearing new ideas as well as seeing the impacts of education and programming grow in 2024.

In gratitude,  
John Garlich



Funding for the Bernalillo County Extension is provided by the USDA, NMSU, and Bernalillo County.



# Agriculture & Horticulture



## Master Gardeners

The Albuquerque Area Extension Master Gardener (AAEMG) is a program that seeks to preserve and beautify the environment while improving the quality of life in the community. To meet that goal, AAEMG provides current research-based information that promotes horticulture best management practices, sustainability, and environmental initiatives developed by Cooperative Extension Services from New Mexico State University.

## Participant Feedback

- Increase knowledge in garden topics
- Confidence when talking to the public

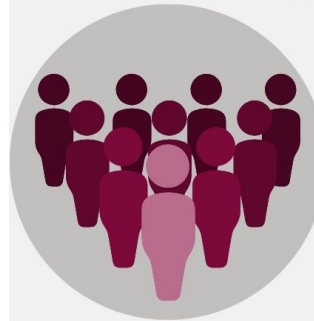
## Master Composters

The Bernalillo County Master Composters program seeks to educate interested citizens on how to voluntarily channel organic home waste into a beneficial resource. Volunteers are trained in the science, materials and various methods of home composting. Volunteers are encouraged to teach and support Bernalillo County residents in their efforts to properly manage home waste and reduce landfill inputs.



# 346

## MASTER GARDENERS



- **36** New Master Gardeners
- **40** hours of volunteer work
- **90%** gained new horticulture knowledge
- **12** classes open to the public, with an average of **88** attendees
- Answered more than **1,200** questions

# 14,363

## VOLUNTEER HOURS



# 1,400 POUNDS OF PRODUCE

Donated to food banks. This equates to **5,600** servings of fruit and vegetables.

## 5 MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- Think Trees New Mexico Conference
- Ready, Set, Grow!
- Extension Master Gardener Advisory Board
- Albuquerque Area Extension Master Gardeners
- Bernalillo County Master Composters



## Statewide

### On Farm Food Safety

The agent delivered On Farm Food Safety classes through the NMDA – Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) online classes each month as well as with the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association Tier 1 and 2 training. These trainings teach farmers about the hazards and risks for food safety and food-borne illness associated with growing fresh fruits and vegetables. In New Mexico, local institutions, i.e. schools, early childhood centers, and senior centers, receive state funding to purchase New Mexican grown produce. These institutions require the farmers to receive education training, but also submit a food safety plan to be reviewed prior to purchasing. The agent helps the farmers with these food safety requirements and reviews, which enables the farmers to sell to local institutions while fulfilling the institutional requirements for food safety. Unofficial purchases of local produce by schools and state institutions was estimated at over \$1 million. Also, these food safety education and farm reviews are allowing more producers to sell at local retail grocery stores or local food hubs and aggregators.



## Community Development

### S.A.R.E

In 2023, Bernalillo County Extension in conjunction with S.A.R.E. – Sustainability – Agriculture – Research – Education and NMSU Extension Plant Sciences collaborated with the Los Ranchos Agri-Nature Center and Rio Grande Community Farm to host a two-day sustainable agriculture workshop demonstrating soil health, integrated pest management, irrigation for an arid climate, farm tools for small acreage, and various topics for small-scale and sustainable agriculture producers.

### Grow the Growers

The Extension Agriculture Agent continues to support the Bernalillo County 'Grow the Growers' farm incubation program at Gutiérrez-Hubbell House. The agent teaches farm business and food safety classes; leads field walk throughs for disease, pest, and weed issues; answers questions; and provides overall support to the program.



### The Village of

### Los Ranchos: "Aligning Our AgriFuture"

The Village of Los Ranchos continues the Aligning our AgriFuture project through the Strategic Doing process by engaging the public. Extension has participated in a number of convenings during which the need for educational trainings arose. The Ag agent collaborated with the village to host workshops on various topics including fruit trees, grapes, soil health, composting, plant diseases/pest management, and seasonal gardening. The agent assisted with various youth educational related agricultural activities.

### Agriculture Education

The Ag Agent spoke about on-farm food safety at the National Aquaponics Conference held in Santa Fe.

The Agent speaks regularly for workshops at the Agri-Nature Center of Los Ranchos, the Albuquerque Garden Center, various garden clubs, and the Gutierrez-Hubbell House.

The Agent continues to co-organizes the Ready, Set, Grow webinar series which continues to grow and reach new audiences. The Agent steadily answers questions via phone, walk-ins, and email, as well as conducting regular site visits.

# 4-H Youth Development

## Youth Spotlights

### Senior 4-H Pistol Team were the 2023 State Champions

The senior team from Bernalillo County won this year's contest, which qualified them for the National Shooting Sports Championship in Nebraska. Pictured from left to right: Savannah Tuss, Teagan White, Coach Alan Sonntag, Logan Porter, and Krista Batie.

High Point Individual Overall:  
Logan Porter—2nd



### Kasi Montoya

Serving on the NM State 4-H Leadership Team as an Ambassador for the Horse Project

### Savannah Tuss, Sylus Roy, Ethan Pedroncelli, Kasi Montoya, Addison Garver

Bernalillo County Senior team placed first in Food Challenge



### Allison Westfall

Attended the Shooting Sports Youth Leadership Summit



### Katelyn Peach, Savannah McSween, Anastasia Herrera, Addison Garver

Consumer Decision Making Team won 5th place nationally, with Savannah McSween earning 4th place in individual rankings



~200

Youth enrolled in 4-H

Youth Exhibitors at County Fair

168

3,100

Youth participating in 4-H in school

Grant funds awarded for 2023 Urban 4-H Program

\$42,350



## Program Highlights

### Pinto World:

Agents took eleven youth, aged 9 to 15, to the Pinto World Championship Show in Tulsa, Oklahoma. At this event, the youth competed in horse judging and speech competitions. In the horse judging competition, the 13 and under team achieved an impressive 5th place overall, while the 14-18 team secured the 11th position out of 22 teams. In the speech competition, the youth excelled, earning one world champion title, four reserve world champion titles, and six top-five titles.

### 4-H Military Program:

By annually applying for the 4-H Military Partnership grant, we opened opportunities for military-connected youth to benefit from full scholarships. These scholarships allowed them to participate in state-level events and actively contribute to 4-H projects on Base. In the grant secured for the year 2023, a total of \$29,750 was allocated, facilitating programs in collaboration with the New Mexico Army National Guard and Kirtland Air Force Base.

### Garden Kits Project:

More than 20 garden kits were handed out in 2023. Youth were able to choose from a variety of kits, such as salsa kits, herb garden kits, or cut flower kits. Each youth member was also given a Garden Project Guide to help them through each phase of the process from seed starting to harvest.

### Food Challenge:

Hosting food and healthy living workshops lead to a 20% increase in participation of food and nutrition education related opportunities. For 2023, 18 youth participated in the State Food Challenge, increasing from 8 the previous year. Youth stated a 95% increase in food preparation and nutrition knowledge from the beginning to end of the programming period.

## Egg to Chick Program



- **100%** of teachers felt students' knowledge of agriculture increased
- **85%** of teachers believed students gained understanding of the importance of agriculture in their lives
- **66%** of teachers perceived an improvement in students' reading proficiency as a result of reading to the chicks

## Fair

- **168** Youth Exhibitors
- More than **1000** entries in Youth Hall, Small Animal, Horse, and Large Animal
- **\$148,000** generated by Large and Small Animal Sale



## PROGRAM AWARD



4-H Schools:  
Winner of the Western Extension Directors Association for Excellence in Programming for a Team

# Family and Consumer Science

Family and Consumer Sciences continued strong programming and impacts in 2024.

Dianne continued to serve on the NEAFCS National Board as Western Region Director. She also won a College of Agricultural, Consumer, Environmental Sciences (ACES) Team Award and First Place for the New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Financial Management Award.



## Family and Consumer Sciences Programming

### Kitchen Creations

Throughout the year, four 4 week sessions were offered. This program is made possible by strong collaborations with agents statewide, the American Diabetes Association, and the NM Department of Health Diabetes Prevention and Control Program.

- **100%** of participants (235 statewide) reported they were satisfied with the classes and **99%** understood the strategies to plan and prepare healthy meals.

### National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP)

Two cohorts (42 weekly sessions) provided to underserved residents at the TenderLove Community Center, serving unhoused women and those coming out of incarceration, and First Nations Community HealthSource, serving urban Native Americans.

- **100%** cited feeling positive about their abilities to eat healthy as a result of the program
- **100%** reported weight loss of 1-20 pounds

### Mind Matters

Over the course of twelve weeks, participants were taught stress management tools and learned to address their physical, relational, and mental health needs in this webinar.

### Med Instead of Meds

A six week webinar course designed to help participants explore the Mediterranean Diet. This program was offered as a collaboration between Bernalillo CES and five other counties around the state.

### Home Food Preservation

Over six months in 2023, fifteen public classes and five public workshops were offered in a variety of home food preservation topics, including canning, dehydrating, freezing, freeze-drying, fermentation, and pickling.

- **90.62%** of reporting participants plan to practice home food preservation within the next six months as a result of attending







## FCS Program Highlights

- Three grants were awarded for 2024 Innovative Programming: Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less (\$16,500), Fermentation for the Future (\$12,600), and Master Food Preservers (\$1,500)
- The FCS area was awarded a General Mills HomeTown Grant Making Program for programming in Bernalillo County (\$15,000)
- The FCS program maintained strong community partnerships with Roadrunner Food Bank, TenderLove Community Center, Crossroads for Women, South Valley Economic Development Center, UNM Southwest Mesa Clinic, Village of Los Ranchos Agri-Nature Center, Alzheimer's Association, ABQ Mainstreet (Downtown Arts & Culture), and the New Mexico Diabetes Advisory Council
- Dianne presented a poster at the Joint Council of Extension Professionals Extension Leadership Conference
- Amber collaborated with NMSU Innovative Media under the guidance of Nancy Flores, Extension Food Technology Specialist to create a video about Making Prickly Pear Cactus Juice. Cindy Schelenker-Davies, retired BCCES County Director, lent her years of experience to help prepare for the video, and Joseph Delgado, BCCES Horticulture Agent, assisted with harvesting the tunas for the video.
- Western Region Mental Health and Nutrition Network: Dianne presented at the Conference and participates in a Work Group



Scan here to watch the video!

## Master Food Preservers

The in-person training program for Master Food Preservers relaunched to the state for the first time in five years. The initial cohort will have fifteen participants who will attend an eleven week adult continuing education and professional development program.

The Master Food Preservers program in Bernalillo County will also have trained additional educators in five counties across the state to hold food preservation education for the public and facilitate an ongoing trainer program.

## Extension Association

In 2023, the members of the Bernalillo County Extension Association contributed 5,651 community service hours, reaching 9,300 people. They also donated \$103,632 in financial support to the community.



**5 MASTER PRESERVERS**

Shared food safe preservation techniques at local grower's markets and food events

**>200 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Aside from aiding with classes, volunteers often judge at 4-H events, and the New Mexico State Fair



**15 HANDS ON FOOD PRESERVATION CLASSES**

**including:**

- Canning Jams and Jellies
- Canning Pickles and Relishes
- Salsa and Tomato Products
- Canning Fruits
- Pressure Canning
- Freezing and Drying Fruit and Vegetables (2 classes)
- Cactus Concoctions: Prickly Pear
- Kombucha
- Preserving Meat
- Tamales



# ICAN/EFNEP

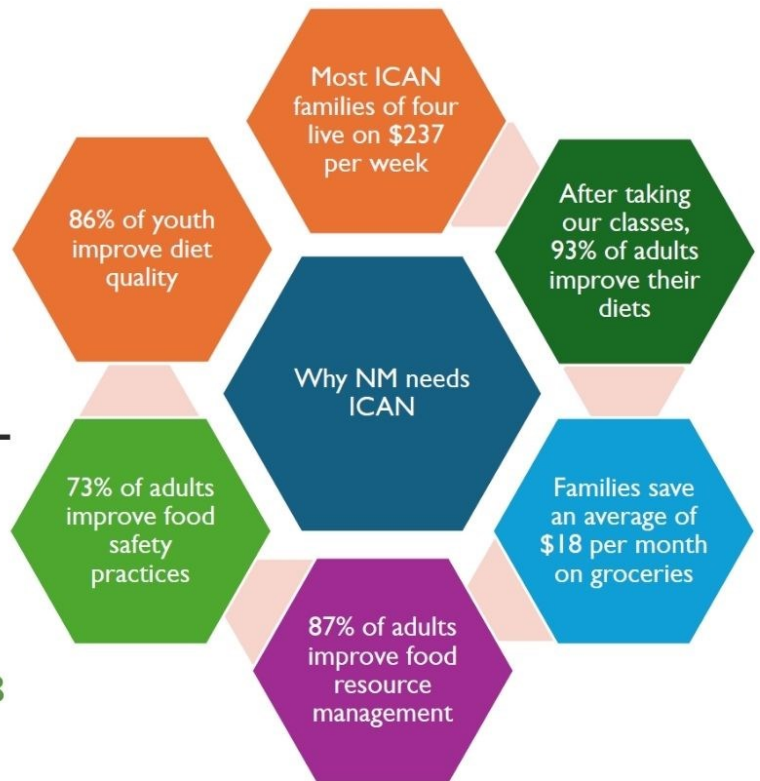


## Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN)

ICAN is a nutrition education program of New Mexico State University. Our mission is to inspire New Mexico's limited-resource families to make healthy food and lifestyle choices, and to make those choices possible by creating health-friendly communities. To help us achieve this goal, ICAN is federally funded by USDA grant programs such as EFNEP.



In **2023**, ICAN reached **33,000** clients at **240** locations across New Mexico.



- Bernalillo SNAP-Ed: **19** series classes with **240** adult class participants
- Bernalillo EFNEP: taught **1088** youth in schools and graduated **78** adults from series lessons

Contact **Bernalillo County Extension Service** for more information on ICAN programs in your area!  
Call **(505) 243-1386** and ask for ICAN!



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**College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences**  
Cooperative Extension Service



## HORTICULTURE

- Master Gardeners will work to collaborate with City of Albuquerque greenhouses, Farmer's Markets, Public Libraries, Public Schools, and Demonstration Gardens
- Growing food for local food banks
- Support the public with gardening education

- On-going support and assistance to Bernalillo County—"Grow the Growers" farmer training program
- Organize varied programs for the Los Ranchos workshop series
- Support the Village of Los Ranchos with the "Aligning our AgriFuture" convenings and outcomes
- Host statewide trainings for "On-Farm Food Safety"
- Support local farmers in the NM "Farm-to-Cafeteria" program
- Provide training on farm business and planning topics



## AGRICULTURE



## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- Simplify the enrollment and onboarding process
- Continue to host and expand the "Adventures in Leadership" camp with 4-H project tracks
- To incorporate more students from the 4-H in the schools program in county events, we will host mini county events (fair, contests, etc.) at the schools
- Increased frequency of hands-on horse project meetings
- Continue to build FCS programming in sewing and baking
- Continue to develop and build our Agriculture programming
- Work with state funding to expand our ability to host different types of food preservation classes for youth
- Expand the Healthy Living Grant program to more schools

- Host cooking classes to promote healthy lifestyles
- Continue food safety and preservation classes
- Ongoing diabetes and pre-diabetes programs throughout the county promoting healthy lifestyles
- Continue to host wellness classes
- Continue to collaborate with community partners
- Support food entrepreneurs



## FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE



## ican Ideas for Cooking & Nutrition

- Hire more educators
- Continue to reconnect with pre-pandemic partners and forge new partnerships
- Work to provide more education in middle and high schools
- To increase class participants and reach
- Be a part of a healthy Bernalillo County

**Dianne Christensen**

*Family & Consumer Science Agent*

Conducts programs around the areas of families and healthy living



**Brittany Sonntag**

*Urban 4-H Agent*

Conducts non-traditional 4-H programs and oversees 4-H programs in the schools



**John Garlich**

*County Director*

In addition to being the program director, assists farmers and local food systems through educational programming



**Phillip Alden**

*4-H Family & Consumer Science Agent*

Conducts youth programming centered around healthy living, home economics, and leadership



**Joseph Delgado**

*Horticulture Agent*

Coordinates programs with Master Gardeners and answers general public questions about all things horticulture



**Suzanne Porter-Bolton**

*ICAN Supervisor*

Coordinates ICAN educators and conducts programming in nutrition and food resource management



**Amber Benson**

*Family & Consumer Science Agent*

Conducts programs in the areas of food preservation and entrepreneurship



**Brittany Johnson**

*4-H Agriculture Agent*

Coordinates agriculture and natural resource programs for youth



**Administrative Assistants**

Carla Jaramillo  
Taylor Roggow

**Part Time Staff**

Cindy Davies  
Nissa Patterson  
Elliott Sachse



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**College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences**

Cooperative Extension Service  
Bernalillo County Extension Office

1510 Menaul Blvd Ext NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
505-243-1386

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