

# AMBER BENSON

Educator | Food Safety and Science | Cooperative Extension

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## Education

Master of Science, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, May 2026

Program: *Family and Consumer Science*

Emphasis: *Food Science and Technology*

Advisor: Dr. Luis Sabillón Galeas and Dr. Francine Mezzomo Giotto

Master of Business Administration, MidAmerica Nazarene University, Olathe, KS, June 2024

Program: *Graduate Studies in Management*

Emphasis: *Applied Organizational Leadership*

Advisor: Britney Bowls

Bachelor of Arts, MidAmerica Nazarene University, Olathe, KS, July 2017

Program: *Business Studies in Management*

Emphasis: *Applied Organizational Leadership*

Advisor: Dr. Tammy Ogren

## Appointments

- Assistant Professor, Family and Consumer Science Agent, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, New Mexico State University, Albuquerque, NM (2023-present)
- Owner and Operator, amberoncini, Albuquerque, NM (2020-2025)
- Assistant Store Director, Executive Team Lead, Target Corp, Rio Rancho, NM (2021-2023)
- Culinary Director, Barista Parlor, Nashville, TN (2020)
- Store Leader, Philz Coffee, Davis, CA and Washington D.C. (2017-2020)

## Publications

1. **Benson, A. M.** (2025). *Canning Confidence*. [Manuscript submitted for publication December 2025]. New Mexico State University Extension Publication.
2. Archuleta, M., **Benson, A. M.**, Flores, N., Hendley, A. J., Schlenker-Davies, C. *Drying Foods, E-322*. [Manuscript revisions submitted December 2025]. New Mexico State University Extension Publication.
3. **Benson, A. M.**, Flores, N., Giotto, F., Sabillón, L. *Preserving Tomatoes at Home, E-306*, [Manuscript revisions submitted December 2025]. New Mexico State University Extension Publication.
4. **Benson, A. M.**, McKee, L. *Home Canned Sweet Spreads made with Green Chile, E-326*. [Manuscript revisions submitted September 2025]. New Mexico State University Extension Publication.
5. **Benson, A. M.**, Garcia-Anyas, C. In a Pinch Ingredient Substitutions for Everyday Cooking, *E-131*, [Manuscript revisions submitted July 2025] New Mexico State University Extension Publication.
6. **Benson, A. M.** Christensen, D., Flores, N., Schlenker-Davies, C. *Storing Food Safely, E-118*, (Revised, April 2025). New Mexico State University Extension Publication.

7. **Benson, A. M.** (2023). *Pressure canning for beginners: A step-by-step guide with 50 recipes*. Rockridge Press.

## Projects

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**Benson, A. M.** "Fermentation for the Future," ferment.nmsu.edu. Animation food safety I designed featuring the food safety concept "Hurdle Technology" in partnership with NMSU's Innovative Media team.

**Benson, A. M.** [NMSU Global Microlearning Series](#), "From Garden to Jar: The Food Preservation Learning Pathway."

## Research

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1. **Empowering Home Food Preservation Skills in New Mexico, Principal Investigator, Master's Thesis.** (2026).
  - a. Purpose of this mixed-methods study was to evaluate the immediate effectiveness of Cooperative Extension home food preservation workshops in New Mexico.

## Awards and Honors

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1. Excellence in Teaching, Outreach, and Service, New Mexico State University, Graduate Wellness Initiative, April 2026
2. Communications Internet Education Technology Award, New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate First Place Winner, 2026
3. Greenwood Frysinger Mentorship Award, New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate First Place Winner, 2026
4. Excellence in Extension Programming Award, Western Extension Director's Award of Excellence, Nominated January 2026
5. Provost's Distinguished Fellowship, Oregon State University, Ph.D., Food Science and Technology, Dr. Joy Waite-Cusic, Nominated January 2026
6. Nominated for the Western Extension Directors Association (WEDA), Excellence in Extension Programming Award, "Fermentation for the Future," January 2026
7. Greenwood Frysinger Mentorship Award, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS National Winner, October 2025
8. Greenwood Frysinger Mentorship Award, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS Western Region First Place, 2025
9. Greenwood Frysinger Mentorship Award, New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate First Place Winner, 2025
10. Food Safety Award, Fermentation for the Future, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS Western Nation Second Place Winner, October 2025
11. Food Safety Award, Fermentation for the Future, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS, Western Region First Place Winner, 2025
12. Food Safety Award, Fermentation for the Future, New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate First Place Winner, 2025
13. Innovation in Programming Award, Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS Western Region Second Place Winner, October 2025
14. Innovation in Programming Award, Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less, New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate First Place Winner, 2025
15. Florence Hall, Green Chile Preservation, National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS Western Region Third Place Winner, 2025

16. Colorado Excellence in Multi-State Collaboration Award, Modernization of Home Food Preservation, Colorado State Cooperative Extension Service, Colorado Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, CEAFCS Affiliate, October 2025
17. Excellence in Teamwork Award – First Place New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, NMEAFCS Affiliate, March 2024

## **Invited Presentations**

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1. Graduate Research and Arts Symposium, New Mexico State University, “Empowering Home Food Preservation Skills in New Mexico,” April 2026
2. New Mexico State University, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Poster Presentation, “Empowering Home Food Preservation Skills in New Mexico,” April 2026
3. Graduate Research Presentation, New Mexico State University, “From Garden to Jar: A Food Safety Learning Pathway,” New Mexico State University Global Microlearning Series, April 2026
4. ACES Student Research, Poster Competition, New Mexico State University, “Innovative Approaches to Volunteer Leadership: Mastering Motivation,” April 2026
5. Extension Leadership Conference, Joint Council of Extension Professionals, “Innovative Approaches to Volunteer Leadership: Mastering Motivation,” Poster Presentation, Savannah, Georgia, February 2026
6. NMSU Cooperative Extension Service, All Agent In-Service Conference, Innovation Grant Presentation, Fermentation for the Future, January 2026
7. University of New Mexico. Entangled Cultures: How Humans and Microbes Co-create through Fermentation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 2025
8. Prickly Pear Festival, Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 2025
9. USDA Rio Grande Colonias Regional Food Business Center, Understanding the New Mexico Homemade Food Act, August 2025
10. Tomato Fiesta, Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 2025
11. New Mexico Diabetes Advisory Council Conference, “Mastering Weight Loss with GLP-1: Effective Strategies for Long Term Success,” Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 2025
12. Year-Round Leadership Extension Conference. Joint Council of Extension Professionals, Savannah, Georgia, February 2025
13. Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Entrepreneurial Business Seminar: Embracing Self-Determination and Stewarding Creative Solutions,” October 2024
14. Albuquerque Fermentation and Fungi Fest, Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 2024.
15. Prickly Pear Festival, Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 2024
16. NMSU, ICAN Seed to Supper, Preserve Your Harvest, August 2024
17. Modernizing Home Food Preservation conference. National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Science Agents (NEAFCS). Oregon State University, Portland, Oregon, February 2024
18. Albuquerque Fermentation and Fungi Fest. Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 2023
19. Prickly Pear Festival, Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 2023
20. Tomato Fiesta, Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 2023

## **Teaching**

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### **New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service**

1. Master Food Preserver Certification (Spring 2026)
  - a. 12 students
  - b. 6 volunteer instructors
  - c. 7 guest lecturers

- d. 60 hours of lecture and lab instruction
- 2. Junior Master Food Preservers
  - a. Youth Food Preservation Series (5 County Collaboration)
- 3. Prickly Pear (Fall 2025)
- 4. Red Chile Project: Preserving the Season (Fall 2025)
- 5. Chicken Harvesting (Summer 2025)
- 6. Grow the Growers: Spice World (Spring 2025)
- 7. Grow the Growers: Brassica (Spring 2025)
- 8. Safety of Southwestern Foods (Spring 2025)
- 9. Los Ranchos Heirloom Grains and Sourdough (Spring 2025)
- 10. Master Food Preserver Certification (Spring 2025)
  - a. 30 students
  - b. 70 hours of lecture and lab instruction
- 11. Preserving Tomatoes (Fall 2024)
- 12. Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less (Fall 2024)
- 13. Charcuterie Board Workshop (Fall 2024)
- 14. Cold Smoking and Curing Meat (Fall 2024)
- 15. Game Meats & Jerky (Fall 2024)
- 16. Chile Ristra Making Workshop (Fall 2024)
- 17. Pressure Canning Meat, Game, and Fish (Fall 2024)
- 18. Beginner Sausage Making (Fall 2024)
- 19. Preserving Prickly Pear (Fall 2024)
- 20. Green Chile: Preserving the Harvest (Fall 2024)
- 21. Intermediate Kombucha (Fall 2024)
- 22. Fermenting Flourishes (Summer 2024)
- 23. Miso & Mustard (Summer 2024)
- 24. Fermented Hot Sauces (Summer 2024)
- 25. Jerky (Summer 2024)
- 26. Canning Tomatoes and Salsa (Summer 2024)
- 27. Fermented Vegetables: Lactic Acid Pickles (Summer 2024)
- 28. Kraut and Kimchi (Spring 2024)
- 29. Koji (Spring 2024)
- 30. Pressure Canning 101 (Spring 2024)
- 31. Master Food Preserver Certification (Winter 2024)
  - a. 15 students
  - b. 70 hours of lecture and lab instruction
- 32. Canning and Freezing: Tamales (Fall 2023)
- 33. Pressure Canning Meat, Posole, and Green Chile Stew (Fall 2023)
- 34. Ferment: Pumpkin Spice Kombucha (Fall 2023)
- 35. Dehydration & Drying (Summer 2023)
- 36. Preserving Prickly Pear (Summer 2023)
- 37. Freezing and Drying Fruit and Vegetables (Summer 2023)
- 38. Pressure Canning (Summer 2023)
- 39. Water Bath Canning Jams and Jellies (Summer 2023)
- 40. Water Bath Canning Pickles (Summer 2023)
- 41. Water Bath Canning Tomatoes and Salsa (Summer 2023)

**ServSafe National Restaurant Association, Dual Role Instructor and Proctor**

- 1. ServSafe Food Protection Manager Training and Certification (Winter, Spring, Fall 2025)
- 2. ServSafe Food Protection Manager Training and Certification (Winter, Spring, Fall 2024)

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## Service

### University Service

Director's Advisory Board, New Mexico State University, 2026

Search Committee Member, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences New Mexico State University, 2024-2025

### Field Service

National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

*Western Region Food Preservation Work Group, 2023-2025*

*Washington State University, Fundamentals of Food Safety and Preservation, Publication Revision, 2025-2026*

*Reviewer and Judge, National Awards Committee, 2024*

New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

*Bylaws Committee, 2024*

International Association of Culinary Professionals

*Reviewer and Judge, International Awards, Written Media 2023, American Cookbooks 2024*

University of Tennessee, Cooperative Extension Service

*Volunteer, 2020*

University of California, Cooperative Extension Service

*Volunteer, Master Food Preserver, certified 2016*

### Leadership

New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NMEAFCS)

*President, 2025-2026*

*President Elect, 2024-2025*

*Vice President, Member Resources, 2023-2024*

National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS)

*Voting Delegate, 2025*

*Mentor and Leadership Committee, 2024*

*Awards Committee, 2024*

### Volunteer Management

1. NMSU Master Food Preserver Program (2023-2026)

### Volunteer Service

1. Community Farming, 2025-2026

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## Grants

### Innovation Grant

"Fermentation for the Future," Grant Extension, \$9,000, 2026

"Rooted in New Mexico: Food Science Education Through Native Crops," \$20,000, 2026

"Fermentation for the Future," \$12,500, 2024

"Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less," \$16,000, 2024

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## National Impact Statement

National Land-Grant Impact Database, [Food Preservation Education Improves Food Safety and Household Food Security](#), 2025

National Extension Association Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS), [Food Preservation Education: Food Products, Processes, and Education](#), National Impact Statement, 2025

## **Professional Associations**

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National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS), 2023-2026

New Mexico Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NMEAFCS), 2023-2026

Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP), 2023-2026

International Association of Culinary Professionals, 2020-2025

## **Professional Development**

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ServSafe Food Protection Manager, Dual Role: Instructor and Proctor, 2023-2026

Produce Safety Alliance, Certified Trainer, April 2024

Better Process Control School, Certification February 2024

HACCP, Certification, February 2024

Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (Human Foods), PCQI Certified (AIB International), March 2024