

Bernalillo County Cooperative Extension Service

2024 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, one program assistant, one administrative assistant, and part time staff.



HORTICULTURE



AGRICULTURE



**4-H YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT**



**FAMILY & CONSUMER
SCIENCES**



**NUTRITION
EDUCATION**



BE BOLD. Shape the Future.
New Mexico State University
Bernalilloextension.nmsu.edu

Table of Contents

3

A Message From the County Director

8

Family & Consumer Science
Wellness Programming

4

Agriculture & Horticulture
Master Gardeners & Composters

9

Family & Consumer Science
Master Food Preservers

5

Agriculture & Horticulture
Program Highlights

10

ICAN/EFNEP
Program Overview

6

4-H Youth Development
Youth Spotlights

11

Vision for 2024
Overview of goals

7

4-H Youth Development
Program Highlights

12

Meet the Team
Faculty & Staff

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, 2024, saw exciting new programs launched, as well as existing programs expanded.

We are excited to see the 4-H youth programming expanding in the schools and, with the military partnerships, nationally. Also, the 4-H youth are active in our traditional clubs and state programs. The Family Consumer Science (FCS) programs excel on various programs including the Master Food Preservers, helping food entrepreneurs, Extension Get Fit, Kitchen Creations, and much more. The FCS agents are recognized nationally for their work and also serve in leadership. The ICAN program welcomed new educators as well as said goodbye to a few. They are doing great work in the community for SNAP Education. The Master Gardeners are continuously busy and growing abundant produce. The Agents are doing great work; I hope you will take the time to read

through our accomplishments and reach out to the agents to learn more.

We also said 'goodbye' to Brittany Johnson, 4-H Agriculture Agent. We wish her well and look forward to working with her in her new role up in Sandoval County. We hope to be hiring soon for a new agent and look forward to welcoming the new agent in 2025.

Soon, we will be planning for our new location. While a timeline is not known at this time, we will be including our partners in the planning process to help us design a useful space for impactful educational programming for you.

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. We greatly appreciate all the efforts and support provided to the office and agents for a successful program.

The next few pages are brief highlights of the work, education, and impacts the agents realized in 2024. I look forward to hearing new ideas as well as seeing the impacts of education and programming grow in 2025.

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

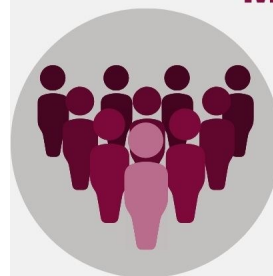
The Bernalillo County Master Composters program seeks to educate interested citizens on how to voluntarily channel organic home waste into a beneficial resource. Volunteers are trained in the science, materials and various methods of home composting. Volunteers are encouraged to teach and support Bernalillo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



369

MASTER GARDENERS

- **62** New Master Gardeners
- Supported **34** volunteer opportunities
- **17** classes open to the public, with an average of **60** attendees
- Answered more than **617** calls to the Master Gardener Hotline
- Interacted with almost **6,000** Bernalillo County residents



>12,000

VOLUNTEER HOURS



3,100 POUNDS OF PRODUCE

Donated to food banks. This equates to **12,400** 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

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.

Agriculture Education

The Agent hosted an international delegation to speak on Urban Agriculture and growing food in small spaces. The Agent collaborated with Santa Fe Community College and NMSU Extension Specialist on an Aquaponics webinar series.

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-organize 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 Food Challenge Team Competed at the 2024 National 4-H Food Challenge

After placing first in the New Mexico 4-H Food Challenge in 2023, the senior team from Bernalillo County competed at the National 4-H Food Challenge in Dallas, TX in 2024.

Pictured from left to right: Savannah Tuss, Addison Garver, Allison Westfall, Sylus Roy, Ethan Pedroncelli, and Kasi Montoya.



Allison Westfall, Luciana Brown, Emma Hess, and Savannah Tuss

State First Place in Consumer Decision Making Contest



County Fair

Youth enter a wide variety of projects including crafts, food, and animals (both large and small)



Adventures in Leadership Camp

Military connected youth learned about leadership and teamwork through activities like white water rafting



Youth at Small Animal School

Attendees in the Rabbit track at Small Animal School learn about proper handling in showmanship

250

Youth enrolled in 4-H

Grant funds awarded to 4-H in 2024

\$37,000

6,014

Youth participating in 4-H in school

Grant funds awarded for 2024 Urban 4-H Program

\$64,000



Program Highlights

Egg to Chick:

Egg to Chick is an educational, school-based program where students learn the basic principles of hatching chicks. This program brings one aspect of farming to urban students who may not have the opportunity to observe this life cycle process in any other setting. Students incubate, candle, hatch and observe live chicks over the course of a month. They are also instructed to read to the chicks every day.

Hydroponics:

Hydroponics in schools offers a hands-on approach to learning, allowing students to explore plant growth without soil using nutrient-rich water solutions. It empowers school youth with fresh produce and life skills, culminating in "salad parties" where students taste vegetables they grew themselves.

Small Animal School

In 2024, Bernalillo County 4-H hosted the first multi-county Small Animal School in New Mexico, with participants arriving from as far away as Roswell, NM. Over two days, youth learned about care, handling, and showmanship for rabbits and chickens. Youth also learned about first aid for small animals and every youth attendee took home a first aid kit from the school.

Adventures in Leadership:

The 2024 Adventures in Leadership Camp offered military-connected youth a dynamic experience focused on leadership, teamwork, and healthy living through activities like White Water Rafting, High Ropes Course, and Outdoor Cooking. The camp helped participants develop life skills such as communication, decision-making, and resilience, with over 90% of attendees rating the educational content highly. The program also enhanced awareness of nutrition and physical activity, fostering lasting confidence and a strong connection to the 4-H community.

Program Awards

- International Night: Regional winner of NAE4-HYDP Excellence in Global Citizenship Programming Award
- 4-H in the Schools at Collet Park Elementary: National winner of NAE4-HYDP Excellence in 4-H Club Support Award



County Fair

- **>200** Youth Exhibitors
- More than **1100** entries in Youth Hall, Small Animal, Horse, and Large Animal
- **\$154,000** generated by Large and Small Animal Sale



Family and Consumer Science

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

Dianne was elected NEAFCS President Elect for a three year term serving as President and Past President. She was also awarded the College of Agricultural, Consumer, Environmental Sciences (ACES) Distinguished County Agent Award. She won First Place State, Second Place Regional, Third Place National for the NEAFCS Communications Internet Education Technology Award, as well as a First Place State for the NMNEAFCS Excellence in Teamwork Award.



Family and Consumer Sciences Programming

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. Two cohorts of Mind Matters—a total of 24 sessions—provided stress management tools to women coming out of incarceration and ICAN educators.

Master Food Preserver

In 2024, 5 FCS Agents, 10 volunteers, and 2 entrepreneurs were trained, expanding across multiple counties to become a statewide initiative. The train-the-trainer model allows programming to be shared with greater capacity and increasing exposure to underserved and high-risk communities across New Mexico.

Fermentation for the Future

This innovative program was funded by NMSU, bringing a 12-part, hands-on food safety program highlighting the ancient practice of fermentation. Courses were low- to no-cost, open to the public, and featured courses teaching students about sausage-making, koji, sauerkraut, mustard, and many other topics. The program emphasizes food safety for home cooks and value-added food producers to help increase food sovereignty and create a stronger regional food system.

Extension Get Fit

Two 12-week cohorts offered strength training to county residents, underserved women, and seniors in a rural, underserved area of Bernalillo County.

Walk With Ease

Three 6-week cohorts were provided to county residents and underserved seniors.

Making a Living on 5 Acres or Less

This program features ongoing free and low-cost workshops aimed at developing Native and Indigenous food entrepreneurs across the state. These efforts highlight the use of traditional foods, community partnerships, and access to small business development resources for New Mexicans.

Slim & Strong

Two 6-week cohorts delivered key health and wellness information.

Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives (PEARLS)

A new program in New Mexico to assist seniors with depressive symptoms.

Extension Association

In 2024, the Bernalillo County Extension Association chapter contributed 2,190 community service hours, reaching 4,721 people. They also donated \$116,030 in financial support of the community.



FCS Program Highlights

- \$30,000 in grant funding supported 50+ innovative food safety programming efforts in Bernalillo County
- FCS Health and Wellness 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, New Mexico Diabetes Advisory Council, Tijeras Senior Center, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and Entrepreneurial Complex, Village of Los Ranchos Agri-Nature Center, ABQ Mainstreet Downtown Arts & Culture, South Valley Economic Development Center, and Arrowhead Center.
- Dianne collaborated nationally with the Mental Health and Nutrition Network and National Arthritis Walk with Ease
- The Agents trained through the Master Food Preserver program hosted the first ever Statewide Preserving Green Chile program with attendees from four different states
- Dianne presented a poster session at the Joint Council of Extension Professionals Extension Leadership Conference (while also participating on the Planning Team for this conference) and presented on the statewide Mind Matters program for the NEAFCS Annual Session

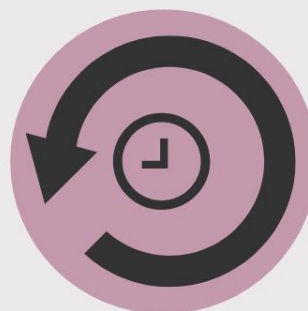


15 MASTER PRESERVERS

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

5 FCS Agents

Agents from 5 counties across Northern and Central New Mexico took over 60 hours of food safety training and offered over 20 new food preservation classes to their counties



500 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

- Pickling
- Kombucha
- Sourdough
- Mustard and Miso
- Kimchi and Kraut
- Pressure Canning
- Water Bath Canning
- Freeze Drying
- Cheese Making
- Fermenting Flourishes
- Beginner Sausage Making
- Curing and Smoking Meat
- Dehydrating and Freezing



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.



- Total series lessons: **116**
- Total students: **1535**
- Bernalillo SNAP-Ed: **55** series classes with **607** adult class participants
- Bernalillo EFNEP: taught **40** youth series classes and **21** adult series classes for a total of **928** participants

- Food insecurity in Bernalillo County: **15%**
 - **101,300** food insecure individuals
- **1 in 5** children are hungry
- **8.4%** of seniors face hunger

95%
OF ADULT SERIES
CLIENTS IMPROVE DIET
PRACTICES

92%
OF YOUTH SERIES
CLIENTS IMPROVE DIET
QUALITY BEHAVIORS

88%
OF ADULT SERIES
CLIENTS IMPROVE
FOOD RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

296
CLIENTS FOR THE SEED
TO SUPPER FOOD
GARDENING COURSE

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



BE BOLD. Shape the Future.
**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 home gardening and horticulture
- 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

- Align 4-H curriculum to Common Core Standards and Next Gen Science Standards
- Provide professional development opportunities on 4-H curriculum integration to school teachers and Kirtland Air Force Base Youth Center Staff
- To incorporate more students from the 4-H schools program in county events by hosting mini county events (fair, contests, etc.) at the schools.
- Expand the hydroponics program into more schools.
- Expand collaborative learning between the Agriculture and Family consumer Science projects.
- Create new Entrepreneurial learning opportunities and curriculum to help youth expand knowledge of business
- Continue to offer opportunities in food preservation and animal husbandry

- Expand food systems programming
- Enhance food education at the individual, local, and regional levels
- Host cooking classes to promote healthy lifestyles
- Ongoing diabetes and pre-diabetes programs throughout the county promoting healthy lifestyles
- Continue to host wellness classes
- Integrate Extension efforts with community-driven economic development programs to strengthen local and regional food systems
- Continue to collaborate with community partners
- Support food entrepreneurs



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE



- 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



Program Assistant

Carla Jaramillo

Administrative Assistant

Taylor Roggow

Part Time Staff

Cindy Davies

Nissa Patterson

Elliott Sachse



BE BOLD. Shape the Future.

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

bernalillo.nmsu.edu

bernalilloextension.nmsu.edu

NMSU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator.

NMSU and the US Department of Agriculture Cooperating.