

Santa Fe City and County, Advisory Council on Food Policy
Thursday, October 9, 2025,
9:00AM-11AM

Hybrid meeting: In-Person at Santa Fe County Extension offices: 3229 Rodeo Road,
Santa Fe, NM,87507 and on Zoom

A. CALL TO ORDER 9:13am

B. ROLL CALL

Nate Crail - Present

Maria Sanchez-Tucker - Present

Eric Renz-Whitmore - Present

David Sundberg - Present

Susan Perry - Present

Emigdio Ballon - Excused

Tejinder Ciano - Not present

Said Assali - Excused

Jasmine Meyer - Excused

Peter Ives – Excused

Coy Maienza - Excused

We do not have a quorum.

Staff:

Helen Henry

Pam Roy

Guests:

JoDee Powers

Michelle Stizza, NMSU Cooperative Extension Office

Hvtce Miller, SF County

Catherine Nolte, Advocacy and Policy Specialist at The Food Depot

Amanda Bregel, The Food Depot

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –October 9, 2025 [ACTION]

Prioritization and Agenda Order No quorum

D. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES – September 11, 2025 [ACTION] No quorum

E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Our host from the Cooperative Extension Office, Michelle Stizza, welcomed everyone.

Guest Catherine Nolte, new Advocacy and Policy Specialist at The Food Depot introduced herself.

F. INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS

1. Federal Updates

Pam and Eric. shared out about the Santa Fe Forward survey. Peter is involved with this. Some people are going to an upcoming convening in Denver around this hosted by the Lincoln Institute. It would be good if we could all contribute and make sure that food is really integrated very well into the plan.

Pam and Hvtce spoke about the NM Legislature's special session which was called to address changes at the federal level in the federal reconciliation (budget) bill that will have significant impact on New Mexico. Food assistance was a big part of the special session. The reconciliation bill created gaps in food assistance (SNAP) and medicaid funding which will leave a massive discrepancy in basic on the ground support for people in NM. The reconciliation bill has also created big changes in agriculture and conservation programs. There are some things in the reconciliation bill (such as the commodities program) that initially sound good, but do not necessarily support small and medium scale farmers, especially in our state.

Of note: Per this reconciliation bill, S Corporations can now benefit from federal subsidies. The grants that are available benefit large farmers who can have shareholders who get the benefit of this money. This comes at the expense of security net programs like SNAP. We need to focus on what we can do at the local level in order to offset these changes.

Pam mentioned that Farm toTable is reporting out on a lot of the changes at the federal level in a publication called [Field Notes: AgriPolicy Brief](#).

In a recent development, USDA staff have been moved out of DC to an office in the midwest, which means that a lot of career employees will leave the agency. Our closest regional office will be in Denver. FSA offices have lost staff.

Because of the tariffs, larger crops such as soybeans are not being purchased from other countries now and will now possibly be focussing on the new commodities program.

Pam talked about the new Field Notes: AgriPolicy Brief newsletter and the roundtables which connect people working in NM with federal delegates to create a synergy and feedback loop to keep important conversations going.

David said the Administration announced that states will have to roll out the new SNAP benefits by Nov 1. The struggle with that, for multiple reasons, is that states are going to be charged a percentage of the SNAP benefits that are provided to state recipients based on the number of mistakes they make. Pam thinks that there may be some leeway for NM as it works to reduce the error rate.

Hvtce said that they have been discussing solutions at the legislature, for example, like the software that they utilize to reduce the error rate, but these kinds of things take time to implement, train staff and educate the recipients have to understand the reporting requirements. And this is complicated by not knowing when timelines or guidelines are going to change. Communication is key for us in this situation.

Pam gave a number of statistics that the state addressed in their special session funding. The funding from this session goes through June 30th of 2027, but the Governor vetoed some things related to this timeline which might give the legislature a little more leeway when they come into this session if they want to add more money in.

Amanda said that they are in the process of working through the problems that are induced by federal changes/cuts. There are waivers that may apply to us but people are still trying to figure where things stand.

David said that with the federal shutdown, the initial statement was that SNAP benefits are funded at the federal level through October. But the money's not in the bank for November. So if the government continues to stay shut down and there's no one in office or funds to be transferred over, even though people haven't technically lost their benefits, they may not receive payments on... for their SNAP benefits or other other types of subsidized programs starting November 1.

WIC is also being affected. Kellogg Foundation has stepped up to fill the gap but they can't do this forever.

The state also bolstered Workforce Development to help people meet the new work requirements.

The federal program - Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) - has been discontinued but we are advocating for the farm to food bank to be supported and for the state legislature and the Office of the Governor to prioritize this program, and to fund it. We are also advocating for two bills at the federal level that would support this.

Hvtce - the question is when will these funds be available? We're required to expend the money, but getting it is a challenge. This is creating an administrative burden. We don't want to have a lapse in funding because then we need to catch up.

David mentioned that they had gotten a Regional Food System Infrastructure grant to purchase refrigerated trailers, then sublet out for free to farmers, but because of timing (three years collapsed in five months) and financial resources, this will be difficult to get off the ground. Administratively, this is a huge burden. It would be good to have access to resources to fill emergency funding gaps.

The cost of fixing problems is greater than preventing them.

Hvtce said that the message that they are receiving is to use the money that they have available right now, although for the county, for example, is making sure to set aside money for emergencies that may happen. This will need to be available now and in the future.

Pam also mentioned water issues - there will be a comment period for the water security planning act. Also issues around the use of produced water from the oil and gas industry.

Action: We follow up with Hvtce to get a resolution to the City and County.

2. Critical Timeline of the impacts of Federal funding cuts in the state. [Action]

3. Update to the Food Plan - summary comments [Action]

Action: Move to next meeting

G. PRESENTATIONS:

Tour of Santa Fe County Extension grounds and services
(Michelle Stizza)

H. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Website re-build and transfer- Update from Helen Henry and Sue Perry

In progress: Funding has been approved and still needs to go through all the processes to get the money to us, hopefully next week.

Sue and Helen met. Helen will send out the production document to everyone on the Council for comments.

I. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL

Member check-in

J. ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

1. SFFPC progress Reports to City Council and County BCC-start date?

Peter was absent, so no updates.

2. New member update

We are starting the process of getting Catherine Nolte join the Council. Cooking with Kids is still in the process of hiring someone to replace Shana and then we can start the process for that person to join the Council. In addition, there is one more open seat, so recommendations are welcome.

3. Next Meeting: November 13, 2025: Hybrid

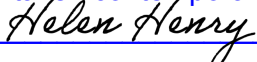
Possible future meeting at The Food Depot.

4. Topics for future presentations

Action: Pam suggested that we have a presentation from the Connect program.

K. ADJOURNMENT 10:27am, those on site will continue with the tour.

These notes were taken contemporaneously and may contain errors and omissions.

Signed by  Helen Henry.

I verify that these notes have been approved by a quorum of members of the Santa Fe Food Policy Council.

Signed by Susan Perry, Co-chair or, Peter Ives, Co-chair
