



NMDA

STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2023

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
State of New Mexico

Cabinet Secretary Jeff M. Witte
New Mexico Department of Agriculture

New Mexico State University Board of Regents

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For more information about the New Mexico Department of Agriculture,
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FOREWORD

The roots binding New Mexico State University and New Mexico Department of Agriculture run deep. The constitution of the State of New Mexico – adopted in 1911, a year before statehood – calls for a “department of agriculture which shall be under the control of the board of regents of the college of agriculture and mechanic arts,” as NMSU was known then.

That single line explains why NMDA is collocated with NMSU in Las Cruces, instead of in Santa Fe. It also explains why NMDA must go before NMSU’s Board of Regents in order to finalize rules and regulations. In effect, NMSU’s Board of Regents also functions as the state’s Board of Agriculture, as Secretary Witte says.

NMDA contributes greatly to the NMSU LEADS 2025 strategic goal of “amplifying extension and outreach.” For New Mexicans beyond just those in production agriculture, NMDA extends its service to you every time you put fuel in your vehicle, shop at the grocery store, bring home a houseplant, and more.

As a native New Mexican, NMSU alumna, and member of the state’s agricultural community, I’m proud to serve on NMSU’s Board of Regents. I look forward to working with NMDA to support its continued service to all New Mexicans.

Dina Chacón-Reitzel, Chair, NMSU’s Board of Regents





Many interesting changes have occurred at NMDA since the publication of our previous strategic plan. We have established new programs in response to the federal legalization of hemp and the implementation of federal food-safety legislation. We have adjusted our organizational structure to better position NMDA for current and future changes, including the addition of a Laboratories Division that centralizes many of the functions NMDA performs to ensure a fair marketplace in New Mexico. A new building is being planned to help accommodate new programs that require new laboratory equipment to handle current and future analyses.

Many interesting changes have also occurred across New Mexico agriculture, as the 2017 Census of Agriculture revealed. New Mexico was one of the few states with a continued increase in the number of agricultural businesses. Women accounted for 41 percent of the primary operators at these businesses. New and beginning producers made up 26 percent of the state's total number of producers.

NMDA invited input from a variety of stakeholders throughout New Mexico to help us update our strategic plan. Many of them spoke passionately about the need to better inform the people whose connection to agriculture is limited. NMDA will continue doing its part to spotlight the good work of the state's farmers and ranchers, especially by bringing together agricultural groups at public events where people can learn about and literally taste New Mexico agriculture.

I'm hopeful about New Mexico agriculture because I know firsthand how hardworking and innovative farmers and ranchers are. We will continue working on their behalf, and we will continue our commitment to serving all New Mexicans.



Jeff M. Witte, Director/Secretary, NMDA

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

*"There shall be a department of agriculture which shall be under the control of the board of regents of
[New Mexico State University]..."
New Mexico Constitution,
Article XV, Agriculture and Conservation,
Section 1. [Department of agriculture]*

The original New Mexico Constitution, ratified in 1911 and the basis for statehood in 1912, created the state department of agriculture. In 1955, NMSU's Board of Regents unified a number of regulatory services and the individuals responsible for administering them under a single administrative organization: the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.

Today NMDA is a producer-consumer service and regulatory department responsible for various statutes legislated since its inception. NMDA's mandate has changed over the years in response to changes in population, the needs of agribusiness, and technological advancements. NMDA remains committed to serving its constituents by periodically reviewing statutes and fee structures, as well as offering compliance assistance and education in an effort to maintain a safe and secure food supply, promote a fair marketplace, and secure our natural resources. We also remain committed to expanding value-added agriculture in local, state, national, and international markets.

Since 1978, the director of NMDA has served as the secretary of agriculture on the Governor's Cabinet. As such, the director/secretary is the official representative of New Mexico agriculture to state and federal government. The director/secretary also serves on NMSU's Executive Committee and Administrative Council. NMDA's relationship with NMSU means the board of regents serves as the state board of agriculture, thus solidifying the importance of agriculture to both the university and the state.

NMDA has been directed by a short list of long-tenured leaders. Dallas Rierson was the first director of NMDA, having served from 1955 to 1971. Dr. William P. Stephens was appointed in 1972 and served until 1988. Frank A. DuBois was named in 1988 and retired from the post in 2003. Dr. I. Miley Gonzalez was appointed later that same year and served until his retirement in 2010. The NMSU Board of Regents appointed Jeff M. Witte in May 2011.

VISION

NMDA benefits the public by promoting the viability and advancement of New Mexico agriculture and affiliated industries.

MISSION

NMDA promotes a fair marketplace, food protection, marketing, and economic development; supports the beneficial use and conservation of natural resources; and works cooperatively with the public and private sectors.

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

In the spring of 2019, shortly after Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham assumed office, NMDA engaged a broad set of stakeholders to review and update its strategic plan.

NMDA's statutory authority and obligations do not change dramatically from one strategic planning period to another. What differentiates one NMDA Strategic Plan from the next, then, are the emerging issues of that time: agricultural policy at the state and federal levels, marketing and trade challenges and opportunities, and emergent technologies.

Our strategic planning process involved internal participants from throughout NMDA's ranks. It also included members of the broader agricultural community (farming, ranching, and food processing) and regulated industries (pesticide applicators, petroleum marketers, and others) with an emphasis on those most affected by NMDA's mandates and work throughout the state. The collective input from this group of internal and external stakeholders informed the strategic plan before you.

NMDA's Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 includes four overarching Priority Areas with associated Goals and Objectives. The sections labeled "Key Indicators" appear throughout the plan to help you visualize what NMDA staff members do on a regular basis in order to help the department meet its service-oriented mission.

NMDA's Strategic Plan coincides with the strategic planning process for NMSU, known as NMSU LEADS 2025. That plan consists of four goals, including "amplifying outreach and extension." As part of the university system, NMDA contributes to this goal by consistently providing a wide variety of services in communities across the state. NMDA also furthers NMSU's outreach and extension goal by maintaining a public presence on behalf of New Mexico agriculture.



PRIORITY AREA 1

MARKETPLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC GOAL

Develop, implement, and promote domestic and global marketing activities in order to foster economic development.





OBJECTIVES

- Assist agricultural producers/processors and their associations with the domestic and international trade and marketing of New Mexico commodities and value-added products in current and emerging markets.
- Coordinate programs for agricultural production, processing, marketing, promotion, and distribution through public and private partnerships, including legislative efforts.
- Provide outreach to the agricultural industry on market opportunities.
- Support agricultural and value-added industries through programs and initiatives.
- Provide leadership input to shape rural economic development policies and programs.

KEY INDICATORS

- Supporting New Mexico farmers, ranchers, and other agribusinesses through a variety of marketing, promotional, and sales activities.
- Working with producers, produce brokers, food manufacturers, and distributors to establish and support a long-term domestic and international market for New Mexico's raw commodities and value-added agricultural products.
- Inspecting commodities (onions, chile, peanuts, etc.) to ensure they meet quality standards.
- Inspecting commercial shipments of plants to ensure New Mexico meets international phytosanitary standards.
- Providing opportunities for companies and organizations to develop their own markets through the New Mexico Specialty Crops Program.
- Implementing the New Mexico Green Chile Promotion throughout the United States.
- Coordinating the promotion of New Mexico processed foods at the New Mexico State Fair, featuring dozens of companies and hundreds of products.
- Facilitating the sale of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to schools through the Farm-to-School Program, as well as at New Mexico's farmers' markets through USDA's Women, Infants, and Children's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.
- Preserving livestock producers' market access through timely, accurate disease diagnosis.
- In cooperation with USDA, annually publishing the New Mexico Agricultural Statistics Bulletin.
- Providing guidance on agritourism: helping producers conduct feasibility studies, advertise, promote, and develop their businesses.
- Fostering rural stability by providing opportunities to agricultural producers and processors for domestic and international market discovery and development.

PRIORITY AREA 2

FOOD AND FEED PROTECTION

STRATEGIC GOAL

Ensure a safe and secure food supply.





OBJECTIVES

- Identify and provide resources for food protection, which includes food safety, food defense, and food security.
- Conduct outreach to state officials and stakeholders to inform them of food protection issues and engage them in food protection policy.
- Identify food protection challenges and potential solutions in partnership with domestic and international public and private sector entities.
- Support industry in its adoption of traceability technology.

KEY INDICATORS

- Protecting the food supply in coordination with various industry representatives, as well as local, state, and federal partners.
- Conducting outreach to farmers and providing On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR) to help them comply with the Produce Safety Rule of the U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act.
- Inspecting and analyzing commodities, animal feed, and pet food to verify the integrity of ingredients, accuracy of label statements, and absence of contaminants or residues.
- Inspecting dairy farms and processing plants.
- Diagnosing diseases in New Mexico livestock and companion animals through the Veterinary Diagnostic Services Division.
- Conducting the Egg Grading Inspection Program, which ensures eggs and egg products are wholesome (not adulterated) and properly labeled and packaged to protect consumers.
- Supporting the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association, which represents dozens of farmers' markets statewide.
- Helping lead the Farm-to-School Program, which increases the access to fresh New Mexico-grown fruits and vegetables for local schoolchildren.
- Supporting access to fresh fruits and vegetables sold at New Mexico's farmers' markets as part of the USDA-backed Women, Infants, and Children's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.
- Coordinating the state's Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 in response to emergency events that involve agriculture and natural resources.
- Collaborating with the Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center to build industry's capacity to respond to agricultural incidents and emergencies.
- Conducting trainings and exercise programs for department staff; first responders at the local and state levels; and industry members.
- Participating in the rapid response to livestock-disease outbreaks in cooperation with New Mexico Agriculture Livestock Incident Response Team (NM-ALIRT, consisting of veterinarians statewide); New Mexico Livestock Board; and NMSU's College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.
- Maintaining AgroGuard, a statewide agriculture-focused program modeled after neighborhood-watch programs.
- Maintaining close working relationships with neighboring U.S. and Mexican border states in the areas of food protection, border security, and trade.

PRIORITY AREA 3

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

STRATEGIC GOAL

Achieve regulatory compliance through cooperative relationships with industries, agencies, and the public to ensure consumer protection and a fair marketplace for agriculture and affiliated industries.





OBJECTIVES

- Support a fair marketplace through the consistent application of laws and compliance programs.
- Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders regarding regulations and compliance issues affecting agriculture and affiliated industries.
- Provide consumer and industry protection through timely development and consistent administration of programs.
- Conduct outreach and develop educational tools to foster compliance.

KEY INDICATORS

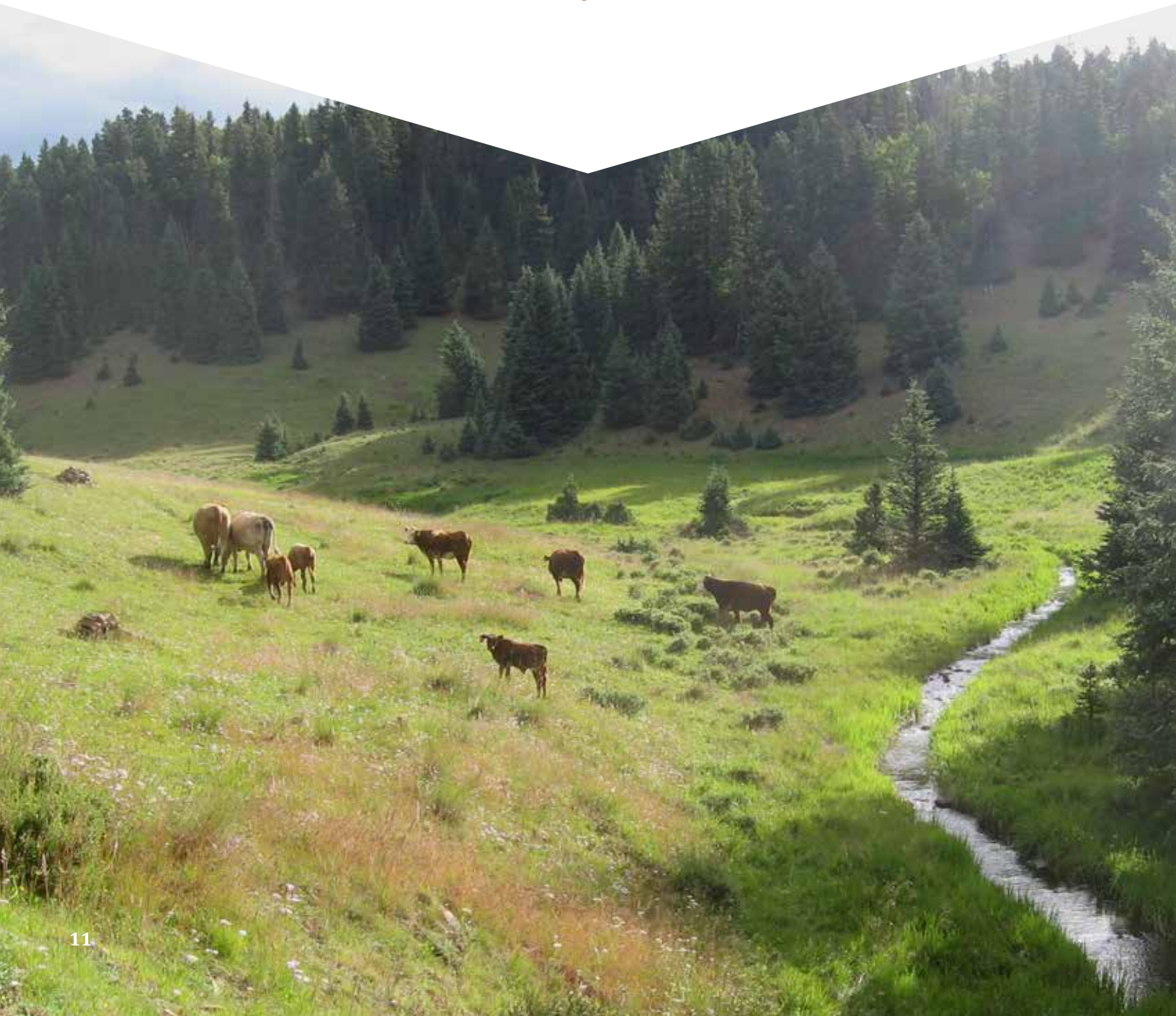
- Inspecting wholesale and retail establishments to ensure consumer goods meet standards of quality, quantity, and labeling.
- Ensuring that products match their description in order to protect consumers and businesses, and to prevent unscrupulous trade practices.
- Collaborating with federal partners in meeting the goals of consumer protection, regulatory compliance, and a fair marketplace.
- Partnering with state, federal, and tribal regulatory agencies to monitor, reduce, and eliminate diseases that could impact the public and/or agricultural industry.
- Conducting outreach to farmers and providing On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR) to help them comply with the Produce Safety Rule of the U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act.
- Licensing hemp growers and conducting related outreach to ensure that hemp production is in compliance with state and federal laws.
- Inspecting and surveying commercial plant shipments for invasive pests and diseases of economic concern.
- Protecting public health, the environment, and the food supply by ensuring the lawful use of pesticides according to their labels.
- Protecting animal and public health, as well as the food supply, through timely and accurate diagnosis of animal disease.
- Sampling feed, seed, and fertilizer sold in the state and conducting laboratory testing to ensure their quality.
- Inspecting all dairy farms and processing plants to prevent pathogenic bacteria and antibiotic residues from entering the food supply, as well as to maintain compliance with the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance.
- Administering the state's Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program, which helps ensure the quality of fruits, vegetables, and nuts.
- Administering the New Mexico Chile Advertising Act to protect chile (and chile products) grown in the state.
- Assisting New Mexico producers wishing to enter the organic market with certification services, education, and consultation.
- Annually inspecting commercial weighing and measuring devices, including gasoline and diesel pumps; bar-code scanners; and scales of all types (produce scales at the grocery store, livestock scales on ranches, etc.).
- Through laboratory testing, ensuring product quality for gasoline, diesel, kerosene, brake fluid, antifreeze, and lubricating oil.
- Providing calibration support for weights and test measures to the Standards and Consumer Services Division, as well as to industry and the general public on a fee-for-service basis.

PRIORITY AREA 4

NATURAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIC GOAL

*Promote farmers' and ranchers' responsible utilization, management,
and conservation of natural resources.*



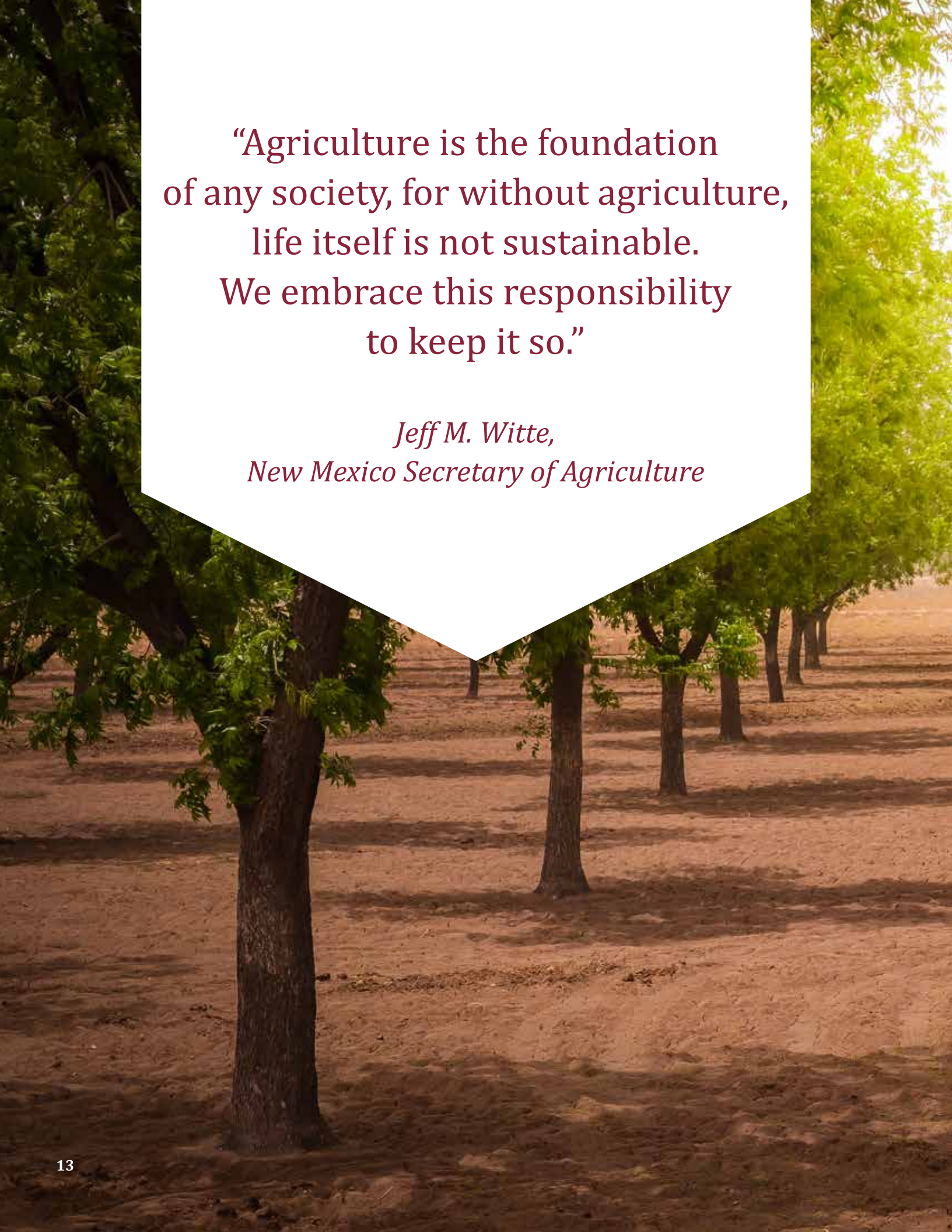


OBJECTIVES

- Promote natural resource management under the principles of multiple use and sustained yields across ownership boundaries.
- Participate and collaborate with public and private entities in natural resource policy and planning processes to promote the beneficial utilization and conservation of natural resources.
- Support agriculture through programs, policies, and outreach regarding management, protection, and conservation of natural resources.
- Support agricultural interests in natural resources and alternative-energy development.
- Support research to promote the long-term viability of agriculture and the state's natural resources.

KEY INDICATORS

- Serving on various boards, commissions, and task forces as requested to provide the department's perspective.
- Serving on the Governor's Climate Change Task Force and convening a related committee at NMDA to support the sustainable use of natural resources and to foster greater resiliency in agriculture.
- Partnering with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the state's 47 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) in support of their activities.
- Administering the Acequia and Community Ditch Fund, which awards grants to acequias and community ditches working toward the adjudication of their water rights.
- Administering the Healthy Soil Program to help farmers and ranchers improve their soil health through soil assessment and on-the-ground projects; and supporting related outreach and education efforts among the agricultural community and the broader public.
- Partnering with a wide array of federal, state, and local government agencies as well as private industry to address the spread of noxious and invasive plant species in the state.
- Helping organize and coordinate efforts to control noxious weeds through New Mexico's locally led Cooperative Weed Management Areas.
- Tracking and reviewing proposed federal rules and regulations (regarding endangered species, land use planning, natural resource management, and more) to ensure that decision makers rely on sound science and consider potential economic impacts.
- Analyzing the potential effects on agriculture of proposals related to invasive species, drought, and climate.
- Partnering with the agricultural industry and federal agencies to provide expertise in the development of the Farm Bill.
- Coordinating with state and federal agencies to determine potential avenues for drought relief for the agricultural sector.
- Monitoring wildfire situations and leading the Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 response to assess and address the emergency needs of the agricultural sector.
- Supporting private landowner associations in their consideration of wind and solar energy (and the transmission thereof) by attending meetings and providing related updates.
- Monitoring the impacts of traditional and alternative energy development on agricultural producers and the effects of such development on private property rights.

A photograph of a row of trees in a dry, sandy landscape. The trees are green and have dark trunks. The ground is light brown and sandy. The background shows more trees and a clear sky.

“Agriculture is the foundation
of any society, for without agriculture,
life itself is not sustainable.
We embrace this responsibility
to keep it so.”

*Jeff M. Witte,
New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture*



NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Director/Secretary

Provides overall leadership and establishes policy for the operation of the department; serves as liaison between agricultural producers and state and federal agencies.

Budget and Support Services

Reviews and administers budgeting, financial reporting, accounting systems, vehicles, inventory, purchasing, and building functions. Provides direct support to the department for sponsored programs in budgeting and accounting for grant and restricted-fund awards.

Governmental and Legislative Affairs

Acts as liaison between NMDA, legislative officials, and various agricultural/economic development organizations throughout the state. Tracks bills affecting NMDA and/or the agricultural industry during sessions of the New Mexico Legislature.

Human Resources

Manages all personnel matters and provides coordination for the functions associated with staffing, compensation, employee relations, training, and development.

Industry and Agency Programs

Coordinates interaction with agricultural and industry organizations, as well as state and federal government agencies, affiliated with department programs. Addresses emerging issues of importance to the agricultural industry in New Mexico.

Information Technology and Communications

Oversees all phases of information technology, including policies and procedures associated with computer applications. Provides application development, implementation, and support for personal computers, servers, and mobile devices.

Public Information

Gathers, produces, and provides information about NMDA and the state's agricultural industry to the public through traditional and social media, as well as outreach events.

NMDA DIVISIONS

Agricultural and Environmental Services includes the *Pesticide Management Program*, which administers pesticide-use laws through product review and registration; applicator competency testing and licensing; and inspections of licensed facilities for compliance with state and federal regulations. The *Entomology and Nursery Industries Program* conducts pest-detection surveys, enforces state and federal plant pest quarantines to prevent the establishment of new pests of economic concern; collaborates with federal and state agencies to facilitate the trade of live plants and products; licenses and inspects businesses engaged in the production or sale of live plants to help ensure plant quality; and licenses and inspects hemp farms for compliance with state and federal laws.

Agricultural Production Services is a new division that combines the department's human food and animal feed programs. Through a cooperative agreement with FDA, the *Produce Safety Program* inspects produce farms for compliance with the U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act's Produce Safety Rule. In cooperation with the Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center, APS also trains owners and operators to meet the rule's requirements. The *Agricultural Biosecurity Program* works closely with the Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center to train first responders in, as well as respond to, the food and agricultural component of emergency events. The program's quarterly "Food Safety Update" brings together local, state, and federal food safety officials to discuss current events as well as cultivate interdepartmental relationships. The *Dairy Program* inspects and permits dairy farms, dairy processing facilities, and milk sampler/haulers; monitors raw milk quality from all dairy farms and samples milk products from all dairy processing facilities to ensure they meet Pasteurized Milk Ordinance standards; and samples and analyzes various cheese products to ensure food safety. The *Feed, Seed, and Fertilizer Program* regulates the distribution of feed, seed, and fertilizer through product registration and inspections.

Agricultural Programs and Resources provides technical and administrative resources and planning assistance to soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) and the agricultural industry. APR monitors, investigates, analyzes, and disseminates information to shape policy decisions affecting the viability of agriculture and the sustainability of New Mexico's natural resources. APR administers the Healthy Soil Program to help farmers and ranchers improve their soil health through periodic assessment and on-the-ground projects, as well as related education efforts. APR also administers the Agricultural Workforce Development Act, which provides students with hands-on internships at farms, ranches, and other agribusinesses across the state.

Laboratories is a new division whose work supports other divisions of NMDA; each laboratory also offers its services to industry and the general public on a fee-for-service basis. The *State Chemist Laboratory* provides support to the Agricultural Production Services and Agricultural and Environmental Services divisions in the analyses of feed, fertilizer, and pesticides. The *Metrology Laboratory* provides calibration support for both weights and test measures to the Standards and Consumer Services Division. The *Petroleum Laboratory* provides petroleum sample analyses to the Standards and Consumer Services Division. The *State Seed Laboratory* provides various seed testing services to the Agricultural Production Services and the Agricultural and Environmental Services divisions.

Marketing and Development works to identify new (and expand existing) domestic and international markets for New Mexico agricultural commodities, livestock, and processed foods; designs and implements promotions of local commodities such as green chile, onions, and pecans; develops the state's production of specialty crops; inspects produce for quality standards; reports market news and agricultural statistics; licenses produce brokers and packers; and provides USDA-backed organic inspection and certification to farmers, ranchers, and food processors.

Standards and Consumer Services includes the *Consumer Services Program*, which provides weighmaster licensing and inspection of weighing and measuring devices, packaged commodities, eggs, and dairy products. Consumer Services performs inspections and registrations in accordance with the New Mexico Chile Advertising Act and conducts Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) inspections under USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. The *Petroleum Standards Program* inspects petroleum-measuring devices (i.e., fuel pumps) and the quality of the petroleum products (gasoline, diesel, etc.) they dispense.

Veterinary Diagnostic Services is the state's only full-service veterinary diagnostic laboratory. VDS works to deliver the most accurate diagnostic results in a timely fashion. Working with veterinarians, livestock producers, pet owners, and regulatory agencies, VDS incorporates state-of-the-art instruments to provide precise answers. VDS functions under ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation, which certifies that VDS is able to produce precise, accurate test data. VDS is part of USDA's National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), which works to detect biological threats to the nation's food animals in order to protect animal and public health, as well as the U.S. food supply. NAHLN lists VDS as a Level 2 laboratory based on its high capability and capacity.





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Pesticide Management, 575-646-2134

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Agricultural Programs and Resources, 575-646-2642

Laboratories, 575-646-1551

State Chemist Laboratory, 575-646-3318
State Seed Laboratory, 575-646-3407
Metrology Laboratory, 575-646-4759
Petroleum Laboratory, 575-646-6731

Marketing and Development, 575-646-4929

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BOARD OF AGRICULTURE



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Vice Chair



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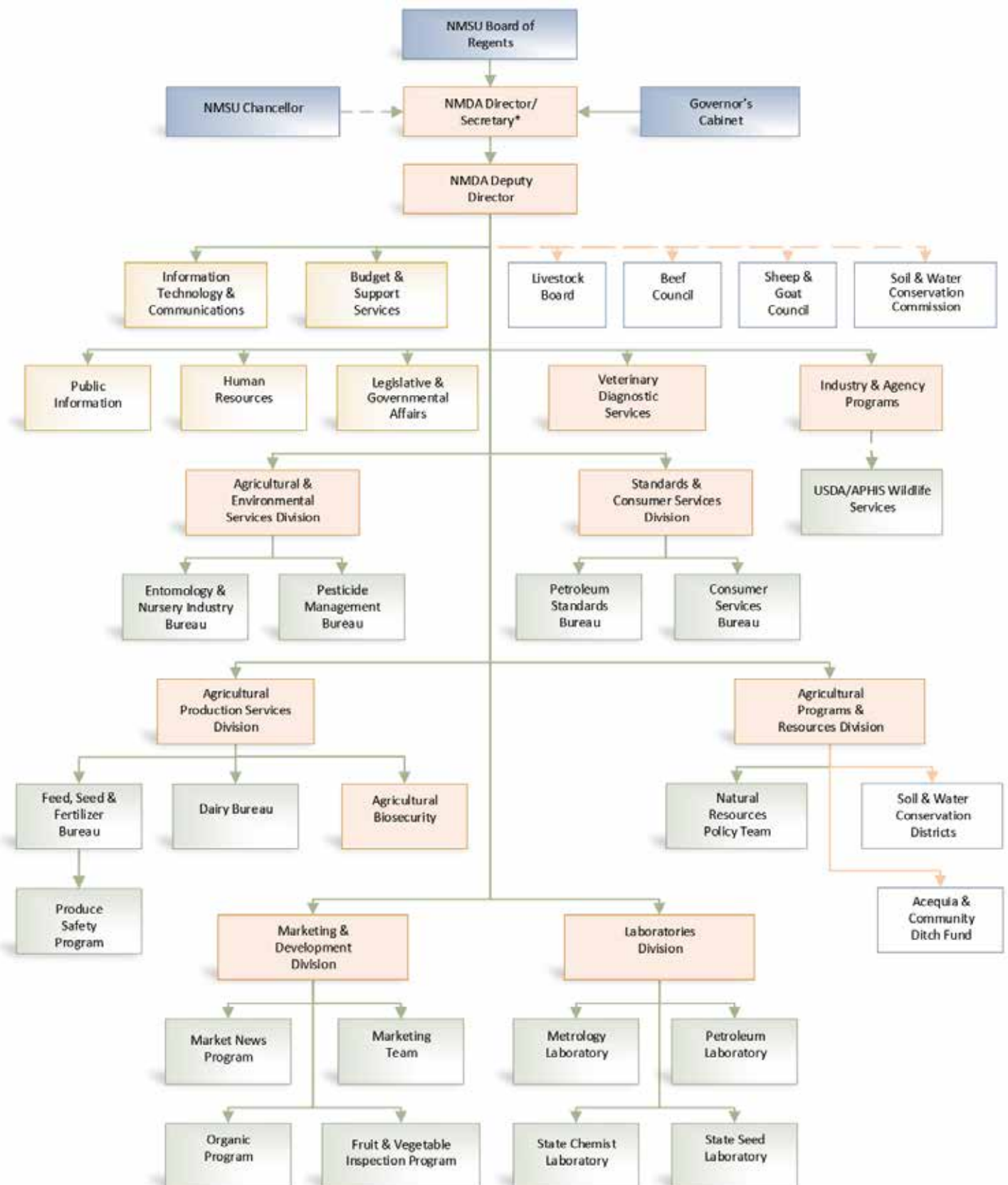


Debra P. Hicks
Member

** NMSU's Board of Regents also serves as the New Mexico Board of Agriculture*

76-1-2. Powers and authority of board of regents. In addition to all other powers and authority that the board of regents of New Mexico state university may have in other areas, the board of regents of New Mexico state university, relative to the New Mexico department of agriculture, has power and authority to: A. administer and enforce all laws of this state over which the board of regents or its agents have been granted jurisdiction and authority; B. adopt rules of procedure for the adoption of regulations; C. adopt, and file in accordance with the State Rules Act [Chapter 14, Article 4 NMSA 1978], regulations as may be necessary to carry out its duties; D. administer or enforce, through the department of agriculture, all regulations adopted by the board of regents

NMDA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



* The Director/Secretary is the only political/exempt appointee in the department (appointed by the NMSU Board of Regents).

NMDA



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