

NMDA recognizes 51st National Agricultural Week

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LAS CRUCES, N.M. — The New Mexico Department of Agriculture is celebrating the 51st National Agriculture Week – observed March 17 to March 24 – acknowledging and recognizing the essential work that all farmers, ranchers and agricultural professionals do to feed, fuel and clothe communities in New Mexico and across the nation.

“With a growing population to account for, the agriculture industry has more mouths to feed and communities to provide resources to than ever before,” New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte said. “An important part of National Ag Week isn’t just celebrating today’s accomplishments, but also embracing opportunities that will lead the ag industry to thrive tomorrow and in the future, for generations to come.”

Organized by the Agriculture Council of America, National Agriculture Week encourages Americans to understand how food and fiber products are produced, appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant, and affordable products, value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy and acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food, and fiber industry. Awareness efforts in communities across the U.S. are just as influential, if not more influential, than the broad-scale effort.

The highlight of this week was National Agriculture Day, which was March 19. It carried the theme “Agriculture: Growing a Climate for Tomorrow.” This theme highlights the important role agriculture plays in ensuring a sustainable future. New Mexico’s producers implement sustainable agricultural practices including planting cover crops, applying no-till or strip-till

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conservation practices, crop rotation and rotational livestock grazing.

This year's celebration of agriculture and its importance in peoples' day-to-day lives is especially moving, as it coincides with wildfires having burned over one million acres of ranchland and farmland in recent weeks in the Texas Panhandle, and New Mexicans continue to recover from wildfires that burned large portions of the Land of Enchantment in 2022. These disasters are powerful reminders of the unique challenges faced by agricultural producers across the Southwest.

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