

## **NM Farmers, Ranchers Urge Congress to Pass Farm Bill**

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**PHOTO: Farmers, ranchers and food advocates will attend an event in Santa Fe today calling on Congress to pass a new Farm Bill. Courtesy New Mexico Department of Tourism.**

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SANTA FE, N.M. - Urging Congress to pass a new Farm Bill is the focus of an event in Santa Fe today. Farmers, ranchers and others linked to agriculture are expected to attend the "Day of Action for a Full and Fair Farm Bill" at the Santa Fe Farmers' Market.

Paula Garcia, executive director of the New Mexico Acequia Association, an agricultural advocacy group, said passing a new Farm Bill is critical for the state's rural economy. It funds programs important to the state such as Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, she said.

"It is vital to support farmers and ranchers in New Mexico," Garcia said, "and if there isn't a Farm Bill that's passed, it's going to have very negative consequences for rural economic development and our agricultural economy around New Mexico."

The Farm Bill, which lasts five years, expired at the end of September. Garcia said the bill also backs programs that reach out to the future farmers of America.

"Programs that are intended to diversify food production in this country by encouraging beginning farmers, by encouraging small-scale farmers, by encouraging minority farmers," she said.

Today's event, planned as part of World Food Day, is coordinated with more than 400 organizations nationwide, all of which signed a letter urging Congress to approve a new Farm Bill. The event starts at 11 a.m. with a news conference at the Farmers' Market/Railyard.

More information is online at [lasacequias.org](http://lasacequias.org).

**Troy Wilde, Public News Service - NM**