



New Mexico Grown
GOLDEN CHILE
AWARDS • 2025

What Is the Golden Chile Awards Program?

The [New Mexico \(NM\) Grown Golden Chile Awards](#) celebrate the nutrition providers and food producers who champion the New Mexico Grown Program.

Who Runs the Program?

The Program is managed by the [NM Grown Coalition](#), a network of public institutions, community-based organizations, and individuals working together to strengthen local food systems.

Who Can Apply?

- Early childhood education (ECE) programs, K-12 schools, and senior centers participating in **1+ of the 5 core areas** (see page 2) can apply even if they did not receive NM Grown funding
- Local food producers, food processors, and food hubs participating in NM Grown

How Do the Awards Work?

The Golden Chile Awards are intended to uplift and celebrate the hard work of all nutrition providers and food producers. Every applicant will receive an award, even if you are just getting started with NM Grown-related activities!

What Do Awardees Receive?

All Golden Chile awardees are recognized at a statewide, in-person awards ceremony in October. In addition, awardees receive two certificates to promote their hard work among colleagues and students: 1) a beautiful poster-sized award certificate printed with their award tier (e.g., Golden Chile, Blossom, Sprout, or Seed); and 2) a certificate of recognition signed by the Governor!

The Golden Chile Awards Inspire Innovation!

Encouraging innovation and expanding NM Grown implementation are program priorities. As such, there are multiple tiers of recognition:



Golden Chile – mature and fruitful program

Blossom – program is reaching maturity



Sprout – program is growing strong

Seed – program has potential



Golden Chile Awards Timeline

- Application released: **April**
- Applications due: **June**
- Award announcements: **August**
- Awards ceremony: **NM Grown Month (October)**



Gardening in preschool (Doña Ana County)

How Are Applications Scored?

The **nutrition provider** application measures NM Grown participation in five core areas:

1. NM Grown Items Available on Menus

- Support local food producers by purchasing PRODUCE+ and MEAT from [approved suppliers](#) and serve fresh and tasty foods!

2. NM Grown Cafeteria Promotions and Culturally Aligned Materials

- Use [Nuevo Thursdays](#) to highlight the NM Grown products and producers you bring into the cafeteria! Eaters can meet their farmers and learn more about their food.

3. Edible Gardens and Outdoor Environments

- Making the connection between the foods we eat and the land we live on supports health. Plant a garden at your site so eaters can gain experience growing local food!

4. NM Grown Eaters' Choice Activities

- Taste tests, culinary challenges, and special events are great ways to inspire innovation and investment in your program!

5. Sustainability of Your NM Grown Program

- Involving students and the community in your program makes it stronger! Integrating NM Grown into policies and staff training, and advocating to leadership, will help ensure your good work is celebrated and sustained.

The **food producer** and **food hub** applications assess implementation in three main areas:

1. Selling NM Grown Products

- Selling [allowable products](#) to nutrition providers in local schools and senior centers connects children and elders to fresh, nutrient-dense, and delicious NM Grown food.

2. Farming Promotion and Community Engagement

- Hosting field trips, visiting schools and centers, and participating in other events that promote local food are all important ways to showcase your operation and strengthen NM Grown.

3. Farming Practices and Sustainability

- Prioritizing agricultural methods that protect soil, water, and other natural resources, and collaborative business practices that expand market opportunities to more food producers can help make NM Grown a resilient program now and into the future.



School garden club
(Silver Consolidated Schools)



NM Grown school meal
(Bloomfield Schools)



Making dry steam corn (Ben Farms)

For questions, please contact:

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