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Sept. 1, 2021

**Battle of the Salsas and New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger  
Challenge return to 2021 State Fair**

*Celebrations of favorite New Mexico foods take place Sept. 11 and Sept. 13*

ALBUQUERQUE – Clear your calendar and prepare your taste buds, because the New Mexico Department of Agriculture is excited to announce that both the Battle of the Salsas and the New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge are back at the 2021 New Mexico State Fair.

The Battle of the Salsas is Saturday, Sept. 11 at 1 p.m. in the Agriculture Building courtyard. This contest has become a long-standing tradition at the fair. It's a great way to showcase one of New Mexico's signature foods, as well as highlight the Land of Enchantment's salsa producers.

Rachel Schneider, owner of Ol' Gringo Chile Company, said the Battle of the Salsas is the perfect opportunity for New Mexico companies to showcase their commercially-produced salsa.

"Ol' Gringo Chile Company has been entering – and winning – top honors since 2014," said Schneider. "The recognition that our brands (Ol' Gringo Chile Company, Andele Restaurant and Aztec) have received over the years has helped put our little company on the map with consumers. It's a competitive field, with more than 30 New Mexico brands of all different sizes vying for the public's attention in past contests. We are honored to put our products next to others to earn the public's vote. We appreciate New Mexico Department of Agriculture's Taste the Tradition program and the New Mexico Chile Commission for presenting a platform for all of us to showcase and celebrate what we love doing."

The first 150 people in attendance will serve as judges. Each judge will receive individually packaged salsa samples, a bag of tortilla chips and a ballot. After judges try all salsas, cast their votes and submit their ballots, the results will be tallied, and the top three winners will be announced.

Of course, the Battle of the Salsas isn't the only competition bringing the heat at the New Mexico State Fair this year.

The New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge will take place on Monday, Sept. 13 at 12 p.m. in the Agriculture Building Courtyard. This contest sees some of New Mexico's most renowned restaurants go head-to-head in a fiery matchup as they compete for the title of best green chile cheeseburger in New Mexico.

A panel of judges consisting of prominent figures in New Mexico's community determine which restaurant can call itself the green chile cheeseburger champion.

Competitors prepare their burgers live before they're presented to the judges, who taste each one and judge them blindly before crowning a champion.

In addition, fairgoers are invited to watch the challenge take place before being allowed to taste and judge the burgers for themselves. Only a limited number are able to participate and are admitted at a first-come, first-serve basis. Once the judging is completed, both a Judge's Winner and People's Choice Winner are crowned.

New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte said the event is a great way to gather the entire community together and celebrate the agriculture industry.

"The green chile cheeseburger is an iconic food in New Mexico," said Witte. "The New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge at the New Mexico State Fair is a fantastic contest that gathers every part of the community to celebrate and enjoy some of the best food New Mexico has to offer. It's incredible to watch restaurant owners, leaders in our community, and spirited fairgoers come together to take part in this event. Using New Mexico home-grown and -made agriculture products to make one of our favorite meals is the perfect way to celebrate some of the best parts of the New Mexico agriculture industry. Come out and be a part of the fun! See you at the fair!"

If you want to enjoy some tasty New Mexico agriculture products and put your taste buds to the test, don't miss the Battle of the Salsas and the New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge. For more information about both events, visit the New Mexico State Fair website at [www.statefair.exponm.com](http://www.statefair.exponm.com) or contact the New Mexico Department of Agriculture Marketing and Development Division at 575-646-4929.

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Cutline: Fairgoers put their tasting skills to the test by sampling salsas at the 2018 New Mexico State Fair. The Battle of the Salsas and the Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge are returning to the 2021 New Mexico State Fair. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)



Cutline: Competitors prepare mouthwatering cheeseburgers while fairgoers watch on at the 2018 New Mexico State Fair. The Battle of the Salsas and the New Mexico Green

Chile Cheeseburger Challenge are returning to the 2021 New Mexico State Fair. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)



Cutline: The top three winning products are lauded at the 2019 Battle of the Salsas. The Battle of the Salsas and the New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge are returning to the 2021 New Mexico State Fair. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)