



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**AgriFuture returns June 21**

*Shortened event returns in virtual format, highlighting New Mexico products*

LAS CRUCES – The taste of New Mexico cuisine is one like no other. That’s why this summer, you are invited to indulge in and learn all about New Mexico homegrown and -made products, all from the comfort of your own home.

A shortened version of the AgriFuture Educational Institute will take place from 4 to 5:15 p.m. Monday, June 21. The conference, which is typically a biennial in-person event, will be presented in a virtual format this year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, with hopes of returning to the full conference in 2022. Registration is \$15 per attendee, and the deadline to register is 5 p.m. Thursday, May 13. For more information and for registration details, visit <https://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/agrifuture/>.

AgriFuture is a collaborative event hosted by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and numerous other organizations and agricultural agencies that gives those interested in being a part of the future of agriculture a chance to connect with and learn from current New Mexico agricultural producers. Typically hosted in even-numbered years, the 2020 event was postponed.

Past participant Matthew Denetclaw said that attending the 2018 AgriFuture Conference helped him gain valuable knowledge that he would go on to implement later in his career.

“When I landed my dream career working in agriculture and governmental affairs close to home at the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the privilege of attending the AgriFuture Educational Institute proved to be extremely valuable in building my network with fellow peers and professional mentors, creating a seamless transition in building collaborative relationships that will enhance the future of New Mexico agriculture,” said Denetclaw.

Denetclaw currently works as a technical assistance specialist for the Intertribal Agriculture Council.

Shelby Herrera, who currently serves as the program coordinator of recruitment & retention in the New Mexico State University College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, recommends AgriFuture to college students.

“As a college student at the time, the AgriFuture Conference was a great opportunity for me to connect with potential employers and colleagues, all while advancing my knowledge of the agricultural industry and learning how I could be involved after graduation,” said Herrera. “I would highly recommend attending this conference to all students!”

New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte has been involved with the conference since its inception.

“The AgriFuture concept was born to showcase opportunities in production agriculture,” said Witte. “This year’s event continues that tradition, while using a virtual format.”

This year, the planning committee has come up with an innovative way to engage attendees despite being unable to gather in person. Attendees will receive an Enchanted NM Box prior to the event that will contain a number of New Mexico agricultural products as part of an interactive component. Attendees will be able to sample products from multiple industries of production agriculture in New Mexico, all while learning more about the various industries from producers and about how their marketing strategies changed during the pandemic.

“Success in production agriculture means you have to connect to the consumer among many things,” said Witte. “This year the AgriFuture event will provide an inside look at connecting from farm to consumer. We are excited to showcase how New Mexico products can reach the consumer through this hands-on virtual session. Expect a good time, while learning about direct marketing, AND enjoying some great products.”

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Cutline: The 2021 AgriFuture Educational Institute is a creative way for those interested in production agriculture to become immersed in the industry over a virtual format. The AgriFuture event will take place on June 21 at 4 p.m.



Cutline: The Enchanted NM Boxes that 2021 AgriFuture participants receive will spotlight a handful of unique New Mexico-made products meant to both enjoy and educate. The AgriFuture event will take place on June 21 at 4 p.m.