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Chile Labor Incentive Program funding available

LAS CRUCES – As part of the fiscal year 2023 state budget signed by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in March, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture received \$1,000,000 in appropriations to continue the Chile Labor Incentive Program, which was created by the governor in August 2021 to assist chile farmers and processors.

The program supports chile farmers and processors by supplementing the wages of workers to incentivize hiring and retention of the seasonal workforce necessary to harvest and process New Mexico chile crops.

The deadline for all applications is May 1, 2025, and funds will be disbursed on a first-come-first-serve basis until the allocated funds have been fully utilized.

“By having the Chile Labor Incentive Program funding available, we will be able to continue assisting the chile industry by distributing the labor-wage supplemental funding as needed in order to ensure the crop is harvested and processed,” said New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte.

Approximately \$2.8 million in support was successfully delivered to New Mexico chile growers and harvesters after Gov. Lujan Grisham created the Chile Labor Incentive Program in August 2021 in response to labor shortages reported by the industry.

“The Chile Labor Incentive Program provided much needed relief to members of our industry and their ability to harvest and process chile during the 2021 season,” said Travis Day, New Mexico Chile Association Executive Director. “We are thankful to see the program continue providing further relief for our industry, while we work toward long-term solutions to address labor shortage issues.”

Funding application information is available on the [New Mexico Department of Agriculture website](#).

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CUTLINE: As part of the fiscal year 2023 state budget signed by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in March, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture received \$1,000,000 in appropriations to continue the Chile Labor Incentive Program. The intent of the program is to support both the chile farmers and chile processors in their effort to incentivize hiring and retention of the seasonal workforce necessary to harvest and process New Mexico chile crops from the 2021 harvest season through the 2024 harvest season, or until funding has been exhausted. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)

