



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Sarah Roderick
Communications Assistant, New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Sroderick@nmda.nmsu.edu
Office: 575-646-1864

Aug. 30, 2022

Salsas, cheeseburgers battle it out at state fair
The fiery taste of New Mexico can be found at state fair competitions

[Haga clic aquí para español.](#)

ALBUQUERQUE – Everyone knows New Mexico is the place to get a green chile cheeseburger and salsa, however, who makes the best? You’ll have to attend the New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge and Battle of the Salsas at the New Mexico State fair to find out.

The 2022 Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge will take place 12 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 12 in the Agriculture Building Courtyard. This contest has seen some tough competition in recent years, by bringing in New Mexico’s most renowned restaurants for a chance to claim savory victory.

Competitors prepare their burgers live before the mouth-watering goodness is passed to the judges. The panel of judges will consist of prominent figures in New Mexico’s community to determine the champion of this twist on an American classic.

Fairgoers will also have a chance to taste the traditional competition as well. Fairgoers are invited to watch the event before being allowed to taste and rank the competitors themselves. Only a limited number are able to participate and are admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Once the judging is completed, both Judge’s Choice Winners and People’s Choice Winner are crowned.

Oso’s Grill from Capitan, New Mexico won big last year by claiming both the Judge’s Choice and People’s Choice awards. Brian Cleckler, owner and chef of Oso’s Grill, said the competition has done amazing things for the company.

“This is a great competition for New Mexico, as it creates a huge draw for New Mexico products and shows the many flavors found in our state,” said Cleckler. “I have had people come from across the United States come in and want to try our burgers since the competition, It has done great things for the business.”

New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte said this is a great way to celebrate the unique foods found in the state.

“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 the community to celebrate and enjoy some of the best food in the state. Using New Mexico home-grown agriculture products to make one of our favorite meals is a great way to celebrate the agriculture industry in New Mexico!”

However, the Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge isn’t the only thing bringing some spice to the fairgrounds. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) announces the return of the spiciest competition at the New Mexico State Fair, the Battle of Salsas. Be warned, this is a battle of the taste buds and will crown the best salsa in the Land of Enchantment.

The spice-tacular battle will take place at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 10, also in the Agriculture Building Courtyard. The first 150 people in attendance will serve as judges. Each judge will be given individually-packaged salsa samples, a bag of tortilla chips and a ballot. After judges try all the salsas, cast their votes and submit their ballots, the result will be tallied, and the top three winners will be announced as the most enchanting salsas in the land.

Last year’s winner of Battle of the Salsas was The Bossy Gourmet with its Hatch Green Chile Salsa. Since winning Battle of the Salsas, Lenny Pelifian, The Bossy Gourmet CEO, said business has been booming for the company.

“The win opened up a lot of avenues for us, even in other states,” said Pelifian. “Our business has grown 45% since the win, everything has just taken off since the competition. This competition is great, as people get the opportunity to taste New Mexico products from across the state.”

This contest has become a long-standing tradition at the fair and is a great way to showcase one of New Mexico’s signature foods through a friendly and spicy competition. “Battle of the Salsas is a great way to taste your way through the vivid flavors of New Mexico,” said Witte. “It is an even better way to support New Mexico products and New Mexico agriculture.”

For more information about the mouthwatering Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge or Battle of the Salsas, please visit the [New Mexico State Fair website](#) or contact the NMDA Marketing and Development Division at 575-646-4929.

###

Find us at:

Please bookmark the new NMDA website: NMDeptAg.nmsu.edu

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @NMDeptAg

YouTube: NMDeptAg
LinkedIn: New Mexico Department of Agriculture



Cutline: Which green chile cheeseburger is the best? You'll have to attend the New Mexico Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge at the New Mexico State Fair to find out. The 2022 Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge will take place on Monday, Sept. 12 in the Agriculture Building Courtyard. (Photo courtesy of New Mexico Department of Agriculture)



Cutline: The Battle of the Salsas will take place on Saturday, Sept. 10 in the Agriculture Building Courtyard. Each judge will be given individually packaged salsa samples, a bag of tortilla chips and a ballot. After judges try all the salsas, cast their votes, and submit their ballots, the result will be tallied and the top three winners will be announced as the most enchanting salsas in the land. (Photo courtesy of New Mexico Department of Agriculture)