



Curry County Ag Updates

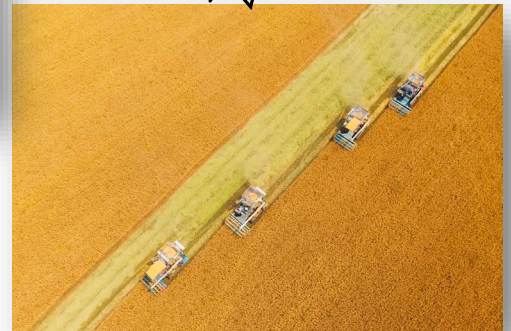
Cooperative Extension Service • Curry County • August – September 2026

Upcoming Events:

- **Clovis Ag Science Center Field Day** – Thursday August 6th, 2026 @ 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Advertisement Attached)
- **2026 Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education New Mexico State Conference** – August 11th – 12th, 2026 in Corona, NM (Advertisement included)
- **Curry County Fair** – August 10th – 15th, 2026
- **Office Closed** – Monday September 7th, 2026
- **NM State Fair** – September 10th – 20th, 2026
- **DIY Aquaponics Workshop** – November 2026 (partnered with Central Curry SWCD)

Contact Information

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Notes from Extension:

Happy Late Summer/ Early Fall, Curry County! As we head into late summer, we here at the Extension Office hope you're finding time to enjoy the growing season while preparing for the busy harvest and fall months ahead. We invite you to join us for the Clovis Agricultural Science Center Field Day on Thursday, August 6, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity to learn about the latest agricultural research taking place right here in eastern New Mexico. Presentations will cover topics including AI applications for soil nutrient cycling, peanut variety updates, biochar and compost use in sorghum production, the economic and environmental benefits of biochar, agricultural water management practices, cotton production research, and innovative nutrient management using dairy tail-end water. The event will conclude with a complimentary lunch, giving attendees an opportunity to visit with researchers, Extension personnel, and fellow producers.

As always, Curry County Extension is here to provide research-based information and practical solutions for your agricultural and horticultural needs. Whether you have questions about crops, livestock, trees, gardens, or landscapes, don't hesitate to reach out. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to seeing you at the field day and other upcoming Extension programs this fall.

If you are interested in having the articles from these summaries, call our office at (575)763-6505 or email us at curry@nmsu.edu.

Natural Ways to Maintain Moisture in Garden Beds

Maintaining moisture in garden beds is essential for healthy plant growth, vibrant blooms, and bountiful harvests. Water is the lifeblood of any garden, but excessive watering can be wasteful, and insufficient moisture can stress plants. The key is to find sustainable methods to keep the soil consistently moist without overwatering. Fortunately, there are many natural ways to retain moisture in garden beds that are environmentally friendly, economical, and beneficial for the soil ecosystem.

1. **Mulching: The Gardener's Best Friend**
 1. Mulching reduces water loss, moderates soil temperature, suppresses weeds, and improves soil structure.
2. **Incorporating Organic Matter into Soil**
 1. Helps absorb water, enhances aeration for roots, and provides nutrients to beneficial microbes and plants.
3. **Choosing Drought-Tolerant and Native Plants**
 1. These plants require less watering, withstand dry spells without wilting, and help reduce the overall garden water use.

4. **Planting Ground Covers and Dense Vegetation**
 1. Bare soil loses moisture rapidly. Covering garden beds with low-growing ground covers or dense plantings creates shade on the soil surface which curtails evaporation.
5. **Creating Shade Structure or Using Natural Shade**
 1. Direct sunlight accelerates evaporation from garden beds. Providing shade during the hottest parts of the day helps keep soils moist longer.
6. **Watering Wisely and At Optimal Times**
 1. Water early in the morning or late evening when evaporation rates are lowest. Using a drip irrigation system also helps.
7. **Utilizing Natural Water retention amendments**
 1. Using Biochar can help improve soil porosity and help retain nutrients along with moisture.
8. **Employing Cover Crops During Off-Seasons**
 1. Planting cover crops such as clover, vetch or ryegrass after main cropping seasons protects bare soils from drying out excessively in winter or fallow periods.

<https://livetopplant.com/natural-ways-to-maintain-moisture-in-garden-beds/>

13 Simple Solutions for Tackling Weed Control in the Fall

Fall is the easiest season to get ahead of next year's weeds. This is when you stop new seeds from hitting the soil and cover bare areas, so winter germinators never see daylight.

1. **Deadhead and bad seedheads to stop the seed rain**
 1. Every seed you remove in autumn is a weed you don't fight next year.
2. **Mulch bare beds now to block light to winter seedlings**
 1. if the soil surface is exposed, cool-season weeds will sprout. Weed first, then spread a 2 to 4-inch blanket of organic mulch over bare beds.
3. **Wood-chip or gravel your paths for permanent, weed-tough aisles**
 1. A compacted sublayer with a few inches of angular gravel (not round pea gravel) locks together and sheds seed.
4. **Mow-mulch fallen leaves into turf to feed grass and starve weeds**
 1. Nature is amazingly smart and produces lots of her own mulch every fall in the form of fallen leaves. But in our gardens, nature needs a little help. So, once the leaves start to fall, get your mower out and mulch-mow them into confetti.
5. **Sow fall cover crops for living mulch that shades out weeds**
 1. A living cover occupies space, grabs light, and steals nutrients that winter weeds would otherwise use. After harvest, seed quick, cool-season species while the soil is still warm.
6. **Plant ground covers in beds and borders for permanent green weed control**
 1. Where mulch blows or drifts, a well-chosen ground cover locks the surface with living foliage. Dense, site-matched ground covers create a low, shaded canopy that suppresses weed germination between shrubs, under trees, and along edges.
7. **Sheet-mulch or tarp new or weedy beds**
 1. If a bed is more weed than soil, block the light and let time work. Sheet-mulching uses overlapping cardboard (uncoated so you're not adding plastic) on the soil surface capped with compost and coarse mulch.
8. **Prep a stale seedbed, then scuffle or flame the sprout**
 1. A stale seedbed turns weed timing against itself.
9. **Hoe or pull tiny white-thread weeds regularly**
 1. Work when the soil surface is dry, so severed seedlings desiccate quickly and you're not pulling up moist clods that expose new seeds.
10. **Hand-dig tough perennials after rain to get the crown and roots**
11. **Overseed this lawns in fall to crowd out spring weeds**
12. **Clean mowers, tools, and boots so you don't spread weeds**
13. **Keep weed seeds out of mulch and compost**

<https://www.housedigest.com/2010162/solutions-to-prevent-weeds-coming-back-in-fall/>

What to Plant in a Fall Garden

Fall gardening might be the best-kept secret in the vegetable world. The weeds are slowing down, the air is cooler, and most bugs have packed up for the season. And yet—your soil is still warm, which means perfect conditions for sowing seeds. Here is a list of vegetables that you can still plant and harvest before winter!



Vegetable	Days to Harvest	Cold Tolerance
Leaf Lettuce	30–45 days	Good
Arugula	30–40 days	Excellent
Mustard Greens	35–45 days	Excellent
Spinach	35–50 days	Excellent
Asian Greens (Bok Choy, Tatsoi, Mizuna)	30–60 days	Excellent
Swiss Chard	50–60 days	Good
Kale	50–65 days	Excellent
Radishes	21–30 days	Good
Carrots	60–80 days	Excellent
Beets	50–70 days	Excellent
Kohlrabi	45–60 days	Good
Broccoli	60–90 days	Excellent
Snap Peas	55–70 days	Excellent
Snow Peas	55–70 days	Excellent
Mâche (Corn Salad)	45–60 days	Excellent
Claytonia (Miner's Lettuce)	40–60 days	Excellent
Bush Beans*	50–60 days	Poor – Plant Early

<https://www.almanac.com/how-plant-fall-vegetable-garden>

Winter Weather Predictions – Farmers Almanac

As we look ahead to the winter season, many producers and homeowners are beginning to think about what the coming months may bring. The Old Farmer's Almanac is currently monitoring weather patterns, including the developing El Niño, to prepare its Winter 2026–2027 forecast. While the complete outlook has not yet been released, these early forecasts can provide helpful insight for planning agricultural operations, winter livestock management, and home landscapes. We encourage everyone to stay informed as updated seasonal forecasts become available and to use them as one of many tools for making informed decisions. No matter what the season brings, Curry County Extension is here to help you prepare and adapt with research-based resources and support.

<https://www.almanac.com/winter-extended-forecast-farmers-almanac>

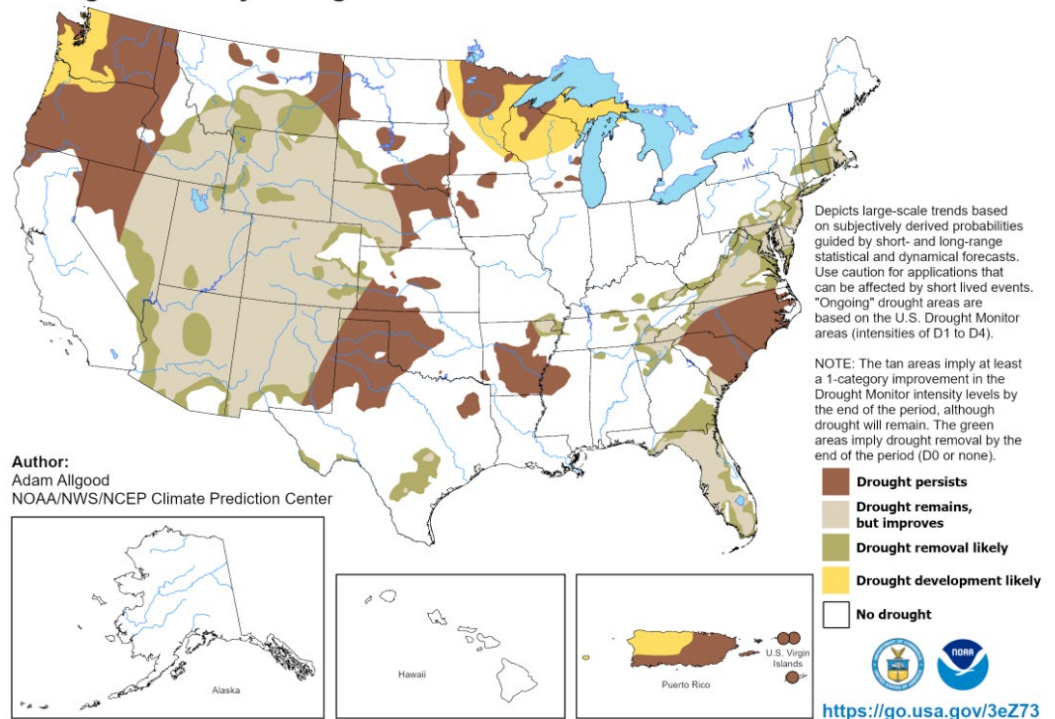
Drought In New Mexico

As drought conditions continue to impact New Mexico, staying informed is an important part of making sound decisions for our farms, ranches, landscapes, and communities. The New Mexico Drought Information Portal provides current drought maps, weather and climate updates, water supply information, wildfire conditions, and links to trusted state and federal resources. Whether you're a producer, landowner, or homeowner, this website is an excellent tool for monitoring changing conditions and accessing practical information to help prepare for and respond to drought. We encourage everyone to explore the available resources and stay up to date throughout the year.

<https://drought.nm.gov/resources.html>

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for July 16 - October 31, 2026
Released July 16, 2026



<https://www.weather.gov/abq/DroughtNEW>

Nitrate in Drinking Water

Nitrate is a naturally occurring form of nitrogen that plants need to grow and is commonly found in soil and water. However, excessive nitrate levels in groundwater can result from human activities such as fertilizer use, septic systems, wastewater, animal waste, and industrial or food processing operations. High nitrate levels in drinking water can pose serious health risks, especially for infants under six months old and pregnant or nursing women. In infants, nitrate can interfere with the blood's ability to carry oxygen, leading to a potentially life-threatening condition known as methemoglobinemia, or "blue baby syndrome." While older children and adults are generally less susceptible, monitoring nitrate levels in private wells is important to help protect the health of families and livestock.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established a maximum contaminant level of 10 mg/L (10 ppm) nitrate-nitrogen in drinking water to protect human health, particularly infants, pregnant women, and nursing mothers, who are most vulnerable to high nitrate exposure. While some people may not experience immediate health effects above this level, concentrations exceeding the standard are considered potentially unsafe. Although there is no federal drinking water standard for livestock, researchers recommend keeping nitrate-nitrogen levels below 100 mg/L (100 ppm) to protect young, pregnant, unhealthy, or nutritionally stressed animals. Livestock producers should also consider nitrate levels in feed and forage, as these contribute to the animal's total nitrate intake.

Because nitrate is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, the only way to determine if your drinking water is contaminated is through laboratory testing. New Mexico offers resources for private well owners, including free well water testing programs, and your local Extension office can help you find a certified testing laboratory. Testing is most accurate during periods of irrigation, heavy rainfall, or snowmelt, when nitrate is more likely to leach into groundwater. Private wells should be tested annually for nitrate, bacteria, total dissolved solids, and pH to help ensure safe drinking water for both families and livestock. If testing reveals high nitrate levels, the water should not be used to prepare infant formula or given to infants until a safe water source is available.

Since nitrate is highly soluble in water; it is difficult and often expensive to remove once it enters a water supply. The most common treatment options include distillation or reverse osmosis, ion exchange, and blending. Distillation is the most effective method, as it removes nitrate and other minerals by boiling water and condensing the steam into clean water. Reverse osmosis also reduces nitrate levels by forcing water through a specialized membrane, although it may not remove all nitrate. Ion exchange replaces nitrate with another harmless substance, while blending combines nitrate-contaminated water with a cleaner water source to lower the overall nitrate concentration. Although blended water may be suitable for livestock in some situations, it is not considered safe for preparing infant formula or for infants to drink.

Cont. Nitrate in Drinking Water

Protecting groundwater from nitrate contamination begins with proper well placement and maintenance. New wells should be located as far as possible from potential sources of nitrate, such as septic systems, animal waste, and fertilizer applications, since nitrate is not naturally filtered out by soil. Wells should also be protected from surface runoff, especially from livestock areas, and properly cased to prevent contaminated water from entering underground. In addition, abandoned wells should be securely sealed to eliminate pathways for contamination. Regular well maintenance and following recommended construction standards can help safeguard drinking water for families, livestock, and future use.

Preventing nitrate contamination starts with responsible nitrogen management. Because nitrate easily moves through the soil into groundwater, it is important to apply only the amount of nitrogen that crops need. Overapplying fertilizer or manure increases the risk of nitrate leaching into water supplies over time. Livestock manure can be a valuable source of nutrients and should be included when calculating fertilizer requirements

By matching nitrogen applications to crop needs and accounting for nutrients already present in manure, producers can reduce fertilizer costs while helping protect groundwater quality.

Sallenave, Rossana. 2026. Nitrate in Drinking Water. New Mexico State University.

<https://pubs.nmsu.edu/m/M114.pdf>



Preparing the Ranch for the Winter Months

Preparing Your Cattle for the Winter

Preparing cattle for the winter starts long before the days get shorter.

Cattle preparation starts with a solid foundation in health and nutrition. Cattle that are healthy and maintaining a good Body Condition Score (BCS) are ready for the winter months. Here are some specific tips to help prepare your cattle.

1. BCS your herd early. Late summer or early fall is the ideal time for BCS, but it is never too late. Set aside some time and BCS your herd, recording their scores for future reference. Cattle with a BCS of 5 or 6 will do better in the winter months. Group cattle with a BCS of 4 separately, and work at increasing their BCS to 5 or 6. Use this guide from Virginia Cooperative Extension to ensure you are accurately assessing BCS.
2. Add feeders to pastures to supplement fall grazing. Move your feeders periodically to minimize soil damage. If hay is fed on the ground, place it in different locations every day to improve the soil quality with the uneaten hay.
3. Beware that some forages are toxic to cattle after frost. Sudan grass is one example that must be avoided for a few weeks after the first frost. Know what is in your fields and do your research to keep your livestock safe.
4. Do a herd health check. Consult your veterinarian for any fall vaccinations that are required. Winter lice, pneumonia, and hoof rot can be problems in colder weather. Taking the necessary steps now can prevent them from entering your herd.

Preparing your Ranch for the cold

The ranch is the other half of the equation in preparing for colder months.

1. Identify windbreaks for your herd or groups of cattle. Make sure sufficient wind protection is available at each location. Fix or add windbreaks and shelters, as necessary, keeping in mind that cattle often prefer wooded areas to shelters for protection.

2. Identify and prepare winter grazing fields. Cattle can graze through almost a foot of snow, although supplemental feed will also be needed. Test your winter forages. Understanding the nutrient value of forages is imperative, whether you produce your own or purchase forage from another rancher. Work with an animal nutritionist or Cooperative Extension educator to balance the ration for your cattle and add supplements where needed.
3. Keep a supply of extra forage in case bad weather strikes and feeding requirements increase.
4. Create a water plan. Water is an essential nutrient for cattle. What water sources are available in cold months, and are there secondary water sources available? How will freezing temperatures affect access to water by cattle? Each animal will need between seven and twelve gallons per day. Cattle prefer to drink warmer water and will consume less if it is cold. Consider stock tank heaters or hauling warmer water out to cattle to keep their intake up.
5. Prepare a winter calving location, if necessary. Winter calving is normal in some geographic areas, and temperatures can be problematic for young calves. Prepare areas for cattle now by adding feeders, checking shelter, and fixing fences. Ensure you are checking on cattle regularly, and have shelter prepared for pairs to keep warm once calves are born.
6. Prepare a spot in the barn, or a pen dedicated to treatment for cattle that may need medical or nutritional assistance.
7. Complete fall maintenance on all of your equipment, including chutes, gates, and tractors. Make any necessary repairs now. If you use your chute in the winter, always work the chute, specifically the squeeze, tail gate, and head catch, a few times to warm it up prior to sending cattle in to ensure it is working properly before allowing animals to enter the chute.
8. Add lighting. Make it easier for you and your employees to get your work done with less daylight hours by adding lighting to key areas, or invest in additional flashlights and headlamps. Replace the batteries on any existing flashlights and headlamps.

<https://arrowquip.com/blog/cattle-ranching/preparing-ranch-for-winter>

On Behalf of the Clovis Ag Science Center:

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
Agricultural Experiment Station
Agricultural Science Center at Clovis



CLOVIS AG SCIENCE CENTER FIELD DAY



AUGUST 6, 2026
08:00 AM - 12:00 PM



2346 State Road 288
Clovis, NM 88101

Presentations Include:

- AI for Soil and Nutrient Cycling in Semi-Arid Agriculture
- Peanut Variety update for eastern New Mexico and west Texas
- Yield Response of Biochar and Compost Application in Sorghum
- Economic and Environmental Benefits of Biochar in Sustainable Agriculture
- Water Management Practices in Agriculture
- Circular Buffer Strips effect on Cotton Production
- Microalgae-Based Remediation and Nutrient Management of Dairy Tail end Water

The Clovis Agricultural Science Center is hosting a field day. Come and join us to learn about current research projects happening at the Center. Lunch will be provided.

For more information, scan the QR code.

IF YOU REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CONTACT MARIA NUNEZ AT (575) 985-2292 OR MTNUNEZ@NMSU.EDU BY JULY 30TH.



1 CEU will be offered for this field day.

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND EDUCATOR. NMSU AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING.

On Behalf of the Central Curry Soil and Water Conservation District:

Central Curry SWCD

Land Improvement Funding Opportunities Available



BRUSH, VEGETATION & NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL



CONVENTIONAL FENCING



VIRTUAL FENCING



PRESCRIBED BURNING



RANGELAND IMPROVEMENTS



SUB-SOILING & SEEDING



WATER INFRASTRUCTURE



WATER FACILITIES

Scan the QR code and input your information to receive messages about upcoming meetings and other opportunities



Email: centralcurry@gmail.com
Website: centralcurryswcd.org

On behalf of Tomorrow's Water :




Are you and your community looking for ways to provide water for future generations?

Tomorrow's Water could be part of the solution.

Tomorrow's Water connects people, playas, and the Ogallala Aquifer to help towns and communities secure their water future.

Healthy playas recharge groundwater and naturally improve water quality. Communities can proactively address a declining water supply by restoring playas and adopting irrigation practices that reduce the impacts from aquifer overuse.

With the right management, your playa can work for you — improving water quality, supporting your land, and protecting resources for the next generation.

Take the first step.
Contact the Tomorrow's Water team today.

Alina Vulcan
Playa & Water Conservation Outreach Specialist
Eastern New Mexico
575-201-3139
alina.vulcan@pljv.org



Scan the QR code or visit TomorrowsWater.org

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental

DIY Aquaponics Workshop




Be on the lookout!!
November 2026
Curry County Extension Office
600 Woods St., Clovis, NM 88101
Partnering with Central Curry Soil and Water Conservation District

Have you ever wondered if your fish tank could grow plants too? Join Curry County Extension and the Central Curry Soil and Water Conservation District for a beginner-friendly introduction to aquaponics! Learn how to use your existing home fish tank to grow healthy plants while creating a balanced environment for your fish. No experience is needed—this program is perfect for anyone interested in learning a fun and sustainable way to garden indoors.

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of an auxiliary aid or service to participate, please contact John Doe in advance at (575) 763-6505 or latimor5@nmsu.edu.

Curry County Extension Services | latimor5@nmsu.edu | 575-763-6505

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The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences is an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico, improving the lives of New Mexicans through academic, research, and Extension programs.

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New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service

2026 Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education New Mexico State Conference *Envisioning a Practical Future in Rangeland Management*

When: Tuesday, August 11, 2026 from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Where: NMSU Corona Range & Livestock Research Center

Address: 8 miles east of Corona on County Road CO20 - #4 University Rd., Corona, NM 88318

***Pre-register (no registration cost) beginning July 20, 2026 at: <https://nmsare.nmsu.edu/>

Conference details and speakers:

8:30 am – 8:55 am: Registration

8:55 am – 9:00 am: Welcome Remarks, Drs. Leslie Beck and Phillip Lujan, WSARE Program Coordinators

9:00 am – 9:55 am: Range Monitoring Technology, Dr. Casey Spackman, NMSU-Extension Range Management Specialist

10:00 am – 10:45 am: NMDA Laws & Regulations / Endangered Species, Mr. Nathan Abrahamson, NMDA-Inspector, Sr.

10:45 am – 11:00 am: Break

11:00 am – 11:30 am: New World Screwworm: Biology and Management, Dr. Caleb Hubbard, NMSU-Assistant Professor/Urban Entomology

11:30 am – 12:00 pm: New World Screwworm: Applications for NM Ranchers, Dr. Sam Smallidge, NMSU-Extension Wildlife Specialist



United States
Department of
Agriculture

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of an auxiliary aid or service to participate, please contact Dr. Phillip Lujan, 2 weeks in advance at (575) 646-1822 or pl11@nmsu.edu

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New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service

2026 Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education New Mexico State Conference *Envisioning a Practical Future in Rangeland Management*

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm: Working Lunch

Updates from WSARE, Drs. Leslie Beck and Phillip Lujan, WSARE Program Coordinators

Carrizozo SWCD: District Updates For Area Ranchers, Mr. Fernando Najera, District Manager

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm: Water Conservation and Monitoring, Dr. Atinderpal Singh, NMSU-Extension Water Management Specialist

1:45 pm – 2:35 pm: Spray Drone Herbicide Applications in Rangeland Settings, Dr. Varsha Singh, NMSU-Extension Weed and Brush Specialist

2:35 pm – 3:00 pm: Closing Remarks and Surveys



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College of Agricultural, Consumer
and Environmental Sciences
Cooperative Extension Service
Extension Plant Sciences



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Department of
Agriculture



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Cooperative Extension Service
Extension Animal Sciences & Natural Resources

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Hi Everyone!

This conference is **FREE** along with lunch but does have a seating capacity of **50 people**. If you are interested in applying for this conference, try to register as soon as possible!

They have given us the registration link for the rsvp:

<https://rsvp.aces.nmsu.edu/sustainable2026>

There is also an alternative if the rsvp is full. If you wish to attend but cannot, there is a zoom link as well:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/81552417933>

Meeting ID: 815 5241 7933

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