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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State agencies, community groups accepting applications for NM Grown Golden Chile Award**

SANTA FE – Applications are now available to apply for the 2nd annual NM Grown Golden Chile Award, an honor that reflects applicants' commitment to connecting children, students, and seniors to New Mexico Grown food.

Application information is available online on the NMDOH website on the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities program section at <https://www.nmhealth.org/publication/view/general/7534/> with the applications for each category available at <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/pchb/hknm/resources/>.

Community organizations serving locally grown foods in their nutrition program are eligible to apply for this recognition, including preschools, schools, and senior centers as well as local farmers and food producers participating in NM Grown. Applications are due June 10th.

The NM Grown Coalition is a network of public institutions, non-profit and community-based organizations and individuals working together to strengthen community food systems across New Mexico.

Awards will recognize applicants' progress with serving locally grown food in meals and snacks, establishing edible gardens, providing nutrition education and culturally-appropriate lessons, as well as engaging staff, families and/or communities in NM Grown programming.

The Golden Chile Award's four-tiered recognition program is designed to acknowledge all levels of involvement in New Mexico's local food movement -- Seed (potential), Sprout (growing strong), Blossom (reaching maturity) and Golden Chile (mature and fruitful).

A virtual ceremony for all awardees is scheduled for mid-September.

This is the second year the Coalition will recognize all applicants for linking farmers to institutions, thus strengthening New Mexico's farming economy and increasing access

to healthy food. In 2021, the Coalition honored 13 school districts, five senior centers, and one preschool.

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**NMDOH**

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