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Ribbon-cutting ceremony held for NMDA State Laboratory Buildings

Demolition of current NMDA Headquarters Building to begin soon

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LAS CRUCES, N.M. – The New Mexico Department of Agriculture held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new state laboratory buildings today on the New Mexico State University Las Cruces campus. The large, new building houses the State Metrology Lab, State Petroleum Lab and the State Seed Lab. Adjacent to the new building is the State Chemist Lab, which was an existing NMDA structure repurposed to accommodate the lab.

New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte said the new labs will continue to allow NMDA staff to carry out the agency’s mission of promoting a fair marketplace and working cooperatively with the public and private sectors.

“New Mexico consumers and businesses will benefit from these state-of-the-art facilities and will receive timely and accurate results from regulatory testing and service samples,” said Witte. “Whether it’s petroleum products, feed, seed, fertilizer, pesticides or the state standards for weights and measurements, these facilities will serve all New Mexico residents, directly or indirectly.”

State Metrology Laboratory

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) issues mass and volume standards to all states to provide uniformity throughout the country, and the State Metrology Lab maintains the Official State Standards for New Mexico. The use of these standards ensures a fair and equitable marketplace for producers, sellers and consumers. All mass and volume test standards used by state inspectors, producers and weights and measures repair agencies are certified. This is performed annually with all lab measurements being conducted under conditions and techniques that are recognized as recommended laboratory practices by NIST. The Metrology Lab supports the work of NMDA’s Standards and Consumer Services Division by calibrating weights and measuring devices utilized in inspections and performing calibration

services on a fee basis for industry. The laboratory is accredited to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)/International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 17025:2017 standard, which confirms that lab's ability to deliver reliable results.

State Petroleum Laboratory

The State Petroleum Laboratory analyzes official samples to enforce petroleum product quality standards and specifications. Samples are collected weekly by petroleum standards inspectors and shipped to the Petroleum Lab for analysis. Turnaround time for analysis is generally one-to-two days, at which time inspectors are notified of results. If problems are encountered, follow-up investigations and samples may be required. Products not meeting state specifications must be corrected immediately, or they will be placed off sale. They will remain off sale until corrections are made and verified by laboratory analysis. The Petroleum Standards Lab is a state-of-the-art facility capable of analyzing in excess of 10,000 samples per year.

State Seed Laboratory

The State Seed Laboratory determines the quality of seed used for planting. Seed testing yields information about seed lots to determine if seed being offered for sale meets the guarantee stated on the label and to provide information to the industry for labeling purposes. The seed laboratory supports the work of NMDA's Agricultural Production Services Division by analyzing official seed samples collected by inspectors.

State Chemist Laboratory

The State Chemist Laboratory performs a wide variety of tests on feeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Primarily a compliance and regulatory lab, its primary mission is to provide analytical support services to NMDA's Agricultural & Environmental Services Division. This lab also ensures that New Mexico's citizens receive quality products, including animal feed (including pet food), commercial fertilizers and commercial pesticides. These services ensure a level playing field for manufacturers and promote responsible environmental stewardship. In support of this effort, the lab analyzes samples of these types collected by NMDA inspectors from across the state. The laboratory is also accredited to the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standard.

Each new laboratory design has created more efficiencies for handling samples and artifacts and has added new equipment to increase capabilities, especially in the State Metrology and Petroleum Labs. The lab construction project was made possible with departmental funds, general funds and a severance tax bond for a total amount of \$16.2 million. For more information about the function of the labs, visit the [NMDA website](#).

NMDA also held a symbolic groundbreaking ceremony today for its headquarters building, as the existing building will soon be demolished to make way for the construction of a new building. The construction cost of the new NMDA Headquarters Building will total \$21.4 million, including \$10.9 million in capital outlay funding and \$10.5 million in General Obligation Bond funding voted on by New Mexicans last November. The existing building, which houses the majority of NMDA employees, was constructed between 1973 and 1975.

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Cutline: The New Mexico Department of Agriculture held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new state laboratory buildings July 13, 2023 on the New Mexico State University Las Cruces campus. The building pictured houses the State Metrology Lab, State Petroleum Lab and the State Seed Lab. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)



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Cutline: The New Mexico Department of Agriculture held a symbolic groundbreaking ceremony July 13, 2023 for its new headquarters building on the New Mexico State University Las Cruces campus. Constructed between 1973 and 1975, the existing building (pictured) will soon be demolished. (Photo courtesy New Mexico Department of Agriculture)