

# LAS VEGAS DEMONSTRATION & TRAINING FARM

2022 SEASON



*Figure 1: photographed far right, Sen. Pete Campos*

*Report & Photos Collected By: Karlee Rogers, Program Coordinator*

*Leonard Ludi, Farm Manager*

*Ivan Rodriguez, Farm Assistant*

*NMSU Cooperative Extension Service*

## **NMSU Cooperative Extension Service (CES)**

### **Agribusiness Accelerator Demonstration and Training Farm in Las Vegas (NM) (a.k.a. LV D&T Farm)**

#### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

##### ***Goals and Activities***

NMSU Cooperative Extension Service (CES) Agribusiness Accelerator Demonstration and Training Farm in Las Vegas, NM (a.k.a. LV D&T Farm) is pilot project that seeks to promote economic development in northeastern New Mexico, with an initial focus in the San Miguel, Mora, and Guadalupe Tri-County area. Specific project goals are (1) to increase the supply, accessibility, and consumption of locally produced food, (2) to increase value-added agribusiness activity, and (3) to foster entrepreneurship, business development, and job creation in the region. The LV D&T Farm is a collaborative effort between NMSU's College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Science (ACES), Cooperative Extension Service (CES), and Arrowhead Center.

The LV D&T Farm addresses challenges and opportunities for improving farm and ranch productivity, increasing production levels, and strengthening local supply-chains, including food hubs to move locally produced food to local markets, consumers and beyond; increasing value-added food and other product activities; and, conducting entrepreneurship training programs for stakeholders in the region.

The LV D&T Farm trains “new” farmers in the planning, production, and sale of fresh vegetables and fruits for local and regional markets. Training includes workshops, field demonstrations, and mentoring in all aspects of vegetable and fruit production. The farm provides the “farmers in training” with access to land, water, equipment, and tools.

The LV D&T Farm serves as a model for replication across the state for growing and sustaining successful farming and agribusiness ventures that will increase job and income levels and enhance the welfare of New Mexico families and communities.

##### ***Strong Support Provided by Senator Pete Campos and Las Vegas City Schools Superintendent Larryssa Archuleta***

Without the support of Senator Pete Campos, securing state funding, and the Las Vegas City Schools Superintendent Larryssa Archuleta providing access to land and water at the old Memorial Middle School, the LV D&T Farm would not have become a reality.

##### ***LV D&T Farm Completes Its Third Season***

The LV D&T Farm’s inaugural 2020 season focused on building out the farm’s infrastructure. Covid restrictions severely limited group gatherings and farmer training. Eighteen (18) participated in the 2021 second Season’s activities. Twelve (12) participated in the 2022 third

Season's activities. Summaries of the first two seasons are posted on the LV D&T Farm website (<https://lvdtfarm.nmsu.edu/>). This report provides highlights of the third season's activities.

**For information to participate in the LV D&T Farm's Fourth Season, registration begins January 2023 contact: Karlee Rogers, (505) 429-5173, [krrogers@nmsu.edu](mailto:krrogers@nmsu.edu)**

*The LV D&T Farm welcomes visitors for a first-hand view and a day at the farm.*

***COME JOIN US AND MEET THE TEAM***

*Karlee Rogers, Program Coordinator*

*Leonard Ludi, Farm Manager*

*Ivan Rodriguez, Farm Assistant*

*Michael Patrick, Program Director*

## 2022 LV D&T Farm Annual Report

### Fall/Winter Session: October 2021 – January 2022

#### Winter Crops Trial and Error

We experimented with winter crops in the hoop house with a few participants who chose to continue into the winter season. We planted turnips, beets, cilantro, and other varieties of greens. While fighting a terrible case of aphids the cilantro, turnips, and beets faired the best.



### Spring/Summer Session: April 30<sup>th</sup> – October 2022

Beginning our 2022 season was difficult considering we experienced the largest and most destructive wildfire in recorded history in New Mexico. Burning from April until June in the southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains in San Miguel County, Mora County, and Taos County, east of Santa Fe. The fire officially burned 341,735 acres, making it the largest wildfire in state history. At the time of recruitment and throughout a better part of the season, the communities of San Miguel and Mora County were under high stress which discouraged a large amount of participation. Despite the chaos, we were able to gather enough people to create something beautiful for the community to enjoy.





Photo Courtesy: 1 Firefighter Terry McShane

## FARM PREP.

**March 12, 2022:**

### Orchard Care

In November of 2021 we received a donation of three new apple trees (different varieties) to add to our existing orchard to complete one full row, thanks to Mike Bode. On **March 12<sup>th</sup>**, Mike returned to help the farm team properly prune all fruit trees in the orchard. Our peach tree produced 5 peaches this year, last year we only got one!



**March 24, 2022:**

**Land Preparation**

Land was prepped with tractor by turning under all green manure and creating furrows for flood irrigation and row cropping.



**April 1, 2022:**

**Head Gate Opened**

The acequia ditch master opened the head gate, allowing us to utilize water. We took the opportunity to fill our tanks and flood irrigate using the alfalfa valve that was placed last June for the first time. Four rows of peas and three rows fava beans were planted at this time. Also, 3 community beds were planted to have something green when participants arrived for the season.



**April 8-22, 2022:**

**Hoop House Renovation**

We removed all raised beds to change the layout for spring and summer planting, which we designated to a tomato crop (UWC inspired).



**April 25, 2022:**

**WATER**

We were allowed to flood irrigate for the second time.



**April 30, 2022:**

**Participant Introduction Meeting!**



**May 3, 2022:**

**Tomato Transplants**

We transplanted a variety of 21 tomato plants donated by Peter Skelton.



**May 11, 2022:**

**Raised Bed Preparation**

Farm team and participants began to prep and amend soil in raised beds to get ready for planting.





**May 12, 2022:**

**Strawberry Patch**

Ivan transplanted strawberries, creating a small 2 row patch. We mimicked its natural habitat by adding mulch to the base to keep the soil cool and moist. No strawberries were harvested this season.



**May 14, 2022:**

**Workshop One: Planning your “32 sqft. Farm “**

The farm team lead a hands-on workshop going over the construction of raised beds, how to prep soil for planting and how to decide what they want to grow. Participants began to plant seeds in their beds as well as finish planting 7 additional community beds with each focusing on one type of crop on (May 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.)



**May 20, 2022:**

Leonard and Ivan collaborated to ventilate the hoop house and installed two windows on both doors for the hot days.



**May 24, 2022:**

### Chile Crop

Ivan donated over 100 “Lemitar” green chile plants for our participants to enjoy. Unfortunately, we were not able to keep the initial 5 rows we transplanted due to lack of water. We had a successful chile crop (3 rows), but we did not harvest all before losing it to a major frost.



**May 28, 2022:**

**Workshop Two: Drip Irrigation Systems**

Participants learned how to prepare and install drip systems onto their raised beds, as well as adding them to the furrow crops.



**June 2, 2022:**

We transplanted 7 pickling cucumber plants (donated by Peter Skelton) on one side of the hoop house, creating a small jungle in the end. Eventually, one side of the hoop house had to be opened to access the vining cucumber plants. We were able to enjoy many cucumbers!



**June 11, 2022:**

**Workshop Three: Furrow Cultivation**

Participants acquired the skill of properly and effectively utilizing a hoe to cultivate (weed) the furrow crops without damaging the plant or drip tape.



**June 18, 2022:**

**Landscaping**

Together we laid out commercial grade weed barrier and covered it with wood chips to eliminate weeds and mud around the raised bed garden area.



**June 30, 2022:**

**Drought Tolerant Cover Crop Trials**

The farm team got together and planted 4 trials of 10 different varieties of cover crop (40 plots) intended for weed control and monsoon water only. We did this for another research project lead by NMSU's Rich Pratt and Tim Vos.



**July 9, 2022:**

**Workshop Four:**

Ivan led two mini workshops; first topic was a demonstration on container gardening using Hügelkultur method by planting 4 types of zucchinis from seed. The second topic, Ivan shared his recipe for a refreshing glass of Agua Fresca with a hands-on activity in honor of national watermelon month. Unfortunately, the zucchini plants were overrun with squash beetle.



**July 16, 2022:**

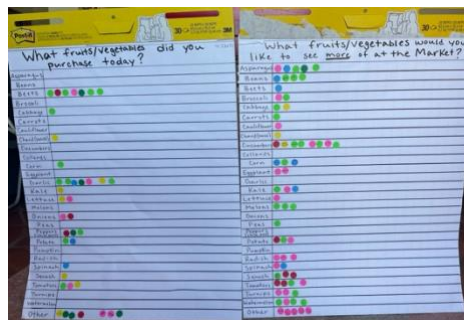
Participants mulched all raised beds and hoop house using alfalfa to add nutrients into the soil as well as trap moisture into the soil.



**July 23, 2022:**

**Farmers Market Consumer DOT Survey**

We conducted this survey to determine what the consumer is interested in purchasing or would like to see more of at their local farmers market.



**August 13, 2022:**

**Workshop Five: Composting**

Participants learned how to construct a compost “bin” with used pallets and how to properly layer the compost pile for successful composting.



**August 15, 2022:**

**Cover Crops**

We hand broadcasted winter barley as a cover crop for green manure next spring.



2: Leonard hand broadcasting Barley (post on Instagram)

**September 8, 2022:**

**Storage Shelf**

Ivan put together a shelf with scrap lumber to store tools for participants to keep things organized.



**September 9, 2022:**

**Hauling Water**

Water availability had been scarce during the months of July and August, due to severe flooding, water quality was not favorable to pump into our storage tanks. We resorted to hauling water from Leonard's personal well (numerous times), as well as from a storage pond in Sapello, NM, with second year participant Alfredo Maestas.





**September 10, 2022:**

**Workshop Six: Preserving the Harvest**

We were glad to host NMSU's Mora County Extension Agent, Suzanne DeVos-Cole, for a basic canning demo. She provided plenty literature and equipment to adequately demonstrate the best technique for canning anything of interest.



**September 23, 2022:**

We finally erected our carport by American Steel Carport Company, to be utilized as a shaded area for participants to get out of the sun, outdoor class, etc., as well as a water catchment system. Gutters, water tanks and adding tables will take place during the off-season months.



**September 24, 2022:**

**Workshop Seven: Cover Crops and Ecosystem Services**

Tim Vos presented a very informative lecture on the effectiveness of cover crop rotation and the importance of biodiversity to enhance ecosystem services. We were gratified with the public acknowledgement and presence of Sen. Pete Campos to engage with us on this topic of discussion. Sen. Campos experienced first-hand what he has supported to make possible here in our community.



**Sen. Pete Campos** @senpetecampos · 1h ...  
Tim Vos, PhD-Farmer/Educator-Organic Farming Systems/Agroecology Specialist presented an extensive lecture on the benefits of ground cover. Dr. Vos shared information in a way which farmers could relate! We're fortunate to have a dedicated team-farmers growing their own produce!



**Sen. Pete Campos** @senpetecampos · 1h ...  
NM State Senate colleagues-I'm unable to be w/you today-I'm attending-a harvest celebration-an uplifting occasion-after all we've been through in the Las Vegas area. Years ago we secured funding-thanks to YOU-NMSU-LEONARD LUDI-OTHERS-we now have the toils of labor to show for it!



**October 3, 2022:**

We were able to finish fencing off our two acres we're allowed with the help of a few men from the group.



**October 8, 2022:**

**Community Peace Radio with Pat Leahan**

We went live at KFUN Radio station with host Pat Leahan. We announced recruitment for our 2023 season as well as our accomplishments and struggles of our most recent season. We were backed with a participant of ours, Patricia Smith, as she was announcing some important 4-H information. Always a great time and conversation on Community Peace Radio!



**October 22, 2022:**

**Farmers Market: Final Harvest**

Although we had an extended growing season with the warm temperatures, we experienced a first frost 2<sup>nd</sup> week of October which encouraged us to harvest what was salvageable and take it to market. At this time, most participants had cleared their personal beds and kept their harvest to enjoy. We harvested tomatoes, Swiss chard, carrots, beets, shallots, and a variety of salad greens. It was a successful way to end our 2022 growing season!



2022 Participant Harvests and Daily Activity Pictures:

