# Agricultural Science Center at Farmington

The Farmington Agricultural Science Center (ASC) was uniquely established at the invitation of the Navajo Nation and San Juan County residents on 254 acres to meet the needs of the San Juan Valley and Four Corners region. The Farmington ASC is one of the only 1862 Land-grant university research centers located directly on sovereign First Nations land. Research at the ASC has supported fundamental and applied science to benefit Northwest New Mexico for over 50 years, with a specific focus on working with the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP)/ Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI), hundreds of local landowners around the La Plata, Animas and San Juan Rivers, backyard growers and urban stakeholders across the Four Corners region.

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE**
**farmingtonsc.nmsu.edu**

## MISSION

The mission of the New Mexico State University Agricultural Science Center at Farmington is to conduct research, demonstration, and educational programs that will best fill the needs of the agricultural community of San Juan County and the Navajo Nation in particular, and the State of New Mexico, Four Corners Region, and United States in general. – 1968 Charter

## VISION

Building agricultural and community resilience with innovative science that respects regional cultural values in the Four Corners Region (Navajo Nation and beyond).

## VALUE ADDED TO NEW MEXICO

- Located on the Navajo Nation and the only New Mexico ASC located on the western side of the Continental Divide
- Center pivots and drip irrigation research
- Hydroponics and greenhouse
- Agricultural photovoltaics, beneficial use of land under solar panels
- Cropping systems: grapes, fruit, medicinal herbs, potato, corn, alfalfa, beans, ancient and heritage grains, winter malted barley, Kernza, chili pepper and others
- Soil health: cover crops, agroforestry, environmental and agricultural soil quality monitoring following the Gold King Mine spill of 2015

## Research Focus

Research at the Farmington Agricultural Science Center (ASC) supports informed agricultural decision-making through studies in controlled environment agriculture, agricultural photovoltaics, specialty crops, precision agriculture, water- and nutrient-efficient cropping systems, and soil health. Guided by a community advisory committee, research is multidisciplinary and shared through NMSU, Cooperative Extension Services, field days, and other outreach. The ASC also provides hands-on research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, with many internships funded by federal and university programs, including the USDA, National Cancer Institute/National Institutes of Health (NMSU/Fred Hutch Cancer Center U-54 Partnership for the Advancement of Cancer Research and Bridges to the Baccalaureate programs), National Indian Youth Council, NMSU Indian Resources Development (IRD) and National Science Foundation. Most interns are Diné students from Northwest New Mexico.



**The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) is an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico, improving the lives of New Mexicans through research, teaching and Extension.**

## Recent Impacts

Solar or photovoltaic (PV) panels could be co-located in agricultural production to provide shade to crops using agrivoltaics (AV). Additionally, plants provide a reciprocal benefit to PV panels. Water released from plants during evapotranspiration cools their surrounding environment, including the panels, and therefore increase PV efficiency. This is especially important in hot, arid climates that are planning to adopt solar energy. In AV systems farmers and growers are able to provide additional protection to their crops and generate income through electricity to utilize for their operations or sell back to the grid.

The Seeds of Change program in elementary schools plays an important role in teaching Navajo children about healthy eating and gardening, as well as sustaining cultural traditions. Yet, teachers often lack the knowledge and skills to incorporate gardening and nutrition into their curricula. Funded through the USDA, the Seeds of Change program is an immersive training for teachers based on the Yéego Healthy Eating & Gardening curriculum that will train 60 teachers in Navajo-serving schools over three years. The first cohort of 20 teachers kicked off in June 2026. This program is expected to reach more than 1,500 Navajo youth and increase healthy eating and gardening behaviors.

Identifying sorghum or sudangrass cover crops that are comparable to, or better than, sorghum-sudangrass hybrids in producing aboveground biomass and suppressing weeds will help increase ecosystem services and enable growers in New Mexico to produce their own seeds. Findings contribute to improved sustainable farming practices for farmers, particularly those wishing to use grass cover crops to transition to climate-adaptive organic farming. Farmers in New Mexico can produce sorghum cover crop seeds and reduce seed costs when adopting summer cover crops to transition to organic farming.





### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2025, ASC Farmington staff engaged over 1,600 K-12 students through tabling at invited Science Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math Festivals and field trips to the ASC Farmington. This included over 400 third, fourth and fifth graders attending our annual Farm Day and pumpkin giveaway. Partner school districts included Central Consolidated School district and Farmington Municipal Schools among others.

New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity employer and educator.
NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.