

New Mexico Chile Nativo

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Cuatro Puertas

- A NM non-profit, community economic development corporation established in 2002.
- Goal is to connect rural and urban economies within a framework that renews NM's biodiversity.

“Grow the Farmer” Initiatives:

- Individual Development Accounts (matched savings accts)
- Social Investment Loan Fund
- Arid Crop Seed Cache – “largest living” NM seed bank
- Seed Breeding and Saving
- Tastings at Farmers' Markets – annual Nativo Chile tasting
- Chile Nativo – Slow Food Ark of Taste/potential Presidia





Seed is the vessel
through which our
civilization continually
spirals.

The act of planting a seed
creates an immediate link
with every human culture
that has ever existed.

Quite simply, seed in its
natural form is sacred, as
is the right to save and
plant it.

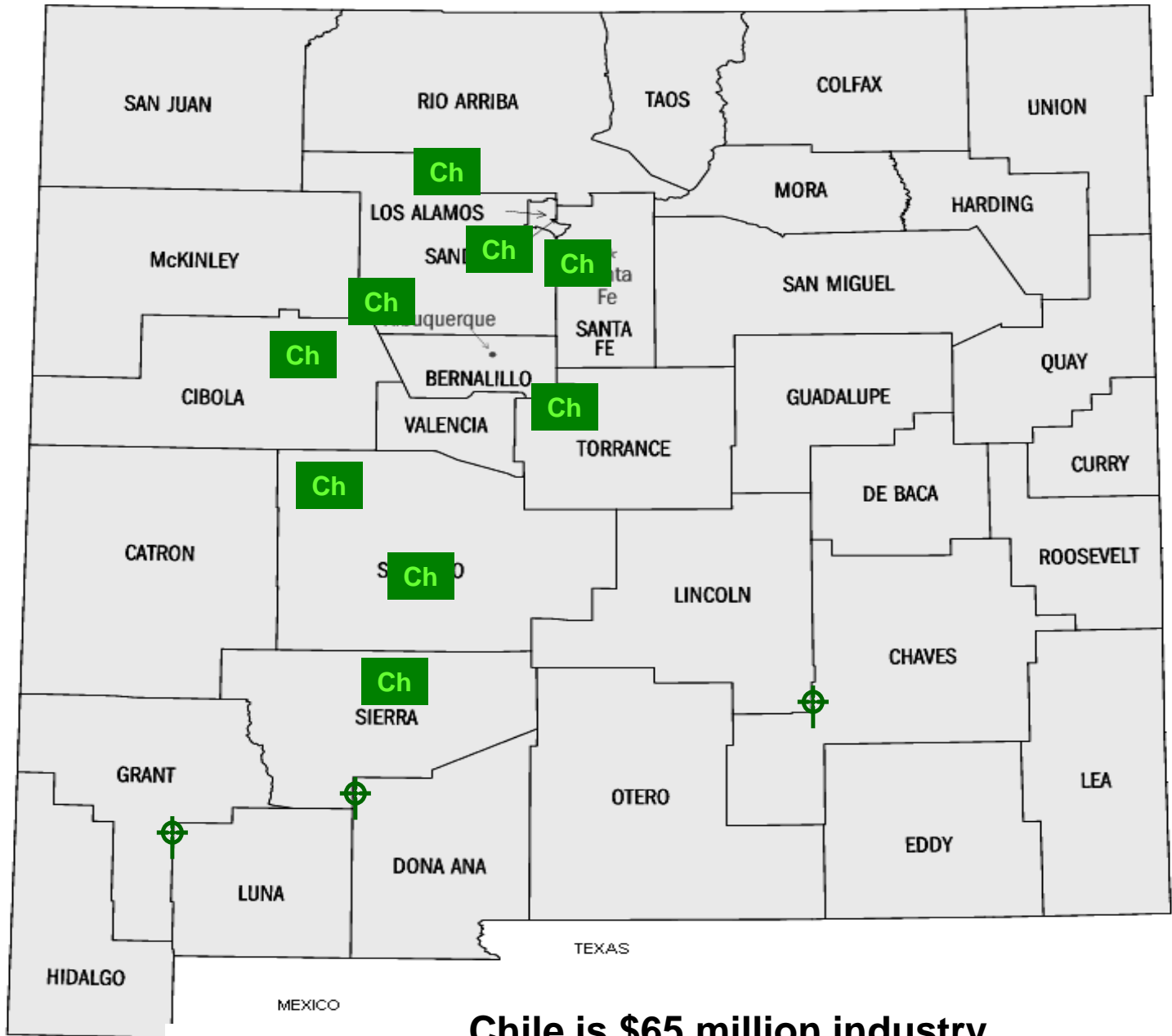


THE NORTH

O K L A H O M A

A R I Z O N A
T O
T H E
W E S T

T E X A S
T O
T H E
E A S T



Chile is \$65 million industry

NM' s Unique Bioregions Prime Conditions for Diversity.

- Through traditional practices, landrace varieties have been developed and adapted to local microclimates.
- Chile Nativo must endure high solar radiation, arid and windy conditions, and a broad range of temperatures from highs of 95F to nighttime lows of 65F.
- Low-input; Drought tolerant and Resistant to disease and pests
- The thin to medium skins make Nativo varieties excellent for drying, as they will not lose weight or flavor, due to excess water in the cell walls.



Characteristics

- Identified by specific pod shape, size and taste. The chiles range in length from 2 to 7 inches.
- Some are long and smooth; others curled and crinkly.
- The shoulders, the widest part below the stem, vary in width from $\frac{3}{4}$ - $1 \frac{3}{4}$ inches.
- Names usually reference locality where they were cultivated.
 - Alcalde, Chimayo, Cochiti, Dixon, Escondida, Española, Isleta, Jarales, Jemez, Nambe, San Felipe, San Juan (Ohkay Owingeh), Santo Domingo (Kewa), Velarde, and Zía.



“Hatch Chile” Does not Exist

- In 1888, Dr. Fabian Garcia, a horticulturist at New Mexico State University (NMSU), started the chile improvement program.
- Goal to produce a stable canning chile with less heat, larger, fleshier, smoother, tapered, and shoulderless.
- Breeding lines included the chile pasilla (long and dark brown) and colorado (a red chile).
- Dr. Garcia bred the New Mexico No. 9, released in 1921. First standardized variety of a new pod type called the *New Mexican*.
Launched NM as a leader for industrialized chile farming, processing and canning.
- In 1958, a milder chile called *NuMex 6-4*, was released, which became and remains the industry standard.
- NMSU continued to develop a total of 21 modern chile cultivars including: *Sandia* (1956), *NuMex Big Jim* (1975), and *Española Improved* (1984).
- “Hatch” varieties are Big Jim, Nu-Mex 6-4 and Joe Barker.



Gastronomic Uses

- “Red or green?” Most common question when ordering a meal in New Mexico.
- In New Mexico, chile is a staple food; not a condiment.
- Usually eaten in some form at every meal, usually as a sauce.

- Green or Red
 - Fresh,
 - Fresh roasted/frozen/dried
 - Roasted and dried
 - Roast fresh green chile and freeze enough to last year. Led to the development of large, thick skin chiles that have lots of water but no taste. Commercial producers chemically peel the chile.
- Red Only
 - Dried in ristras for pod use
 - Thrown into stews, corn and bean dishes in pieces
 - Fine ground into powder



Chile Roasting



Viabile Economic Tool

- Industry growers earn .50 -75 p/lb of chile.
- Nativo farmers make \$2.00 - \$6.00+ p/lb.
- NM has one of the highest rates in the US of direct sales - farmer to consumer. Growers markets increased: 45 in 2004 to 76 in 2014.
- Picker Wages: Nativo average \$7-9 p/hr vs. .85 per bucket (20 lbs) for industry ~averaging \$46-48/day; travel and wait time not included.
- Sustainable because of adapting seed; pesticide free
- Enhances biodiversity
- Food security and access to healthy food (desert's vitamin C)
- Revives rural and peri-urban economy and tourism
- Helps farmers retain their water rights and land



NM Chile Advertising Act (Expansion 2013)

Applies to ALL capsicum annum

- July 2012. Requires compulsory registration of farmers and chile processors who sell a chile or chile product that bears the name “New Mexico Chile.”
- Must provide certification form with each sale
- Allows 5% by weight of non-NM chile and blending
- “Expansion” went into effect in 2013. Mandates any chile using the name of any city, town, county, village, pueblo, mountain, river or other geographic feature or features located in New Mexico.
- Eliminates “cease and desist” to “stop-sale, use or removal”
- Allows restaurants to use “New Mexico Style” when dish contains no NM chile

