



The Battle for Authenticity

New Mexico Certified Chile™ is a Global Standard Worth Fighting For

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Beneath the blistering sun and vivid New Mexico skies, a quiet war is raging. It is being fought with labels and legacy. At its heart is New Mexico Certified Chile. It's critical that New Mexico protects its chile heritage, keeping the authenticity of one of our most unique assets alive now and for generations to come.

You might ask, what is New Mexico Certified Chile? The New Mexico Chile Association started the New Mexico Certified Chile™ program to ensure you're getting the *real* thing. When you see it at restaurants, chile stands or the grocery store, you can be certain you're getting New Mexico chile and supporting your neighbors who grow it. Certified Chile is grown only here in New Mexican soil, and it's our mission to protect, promote and advocate for the entire industry dedicated to growing this very special crop, especially as this cherished industry is shrinking.

Notable chile varieties grown in the Land of Enchantment include New Mexico 6-4, Big Jim, Sandia, Chimayó and Española Improved. These cultivars are part of the broader New Mexican pod type, which also includes Anaheim and other NuMex varieties developed by New Mexico State University.

"New Mexico Certified Chile isn't just about flavor, it's about preserving our state's identity and honoring generations of farmers who have poured their hearts into this land," said New Mexico Chile Association executive director Kari Dominguez. "When you choose Certified Chile, you're supporting local communities, protecting a treasured tradition and ensuring the world gets a taste of the real New Mexico. Authenticity matters, and so does the story behind every bite."

Born from centuries of tradition, New Mexico Certified Chile stands as the last line of defense against a growing wave of fraud in the chile industry. This program responds to the economic challenges of harvested acreage in New Mexico, which has declined sharply over the past decades, while imports of chile from other countries have soared.

The New Mexico Chile Advertising Act (NMCAA) ensures the sale of authentic New Mexico 'chile pepper' products. Under the NMCAA, it is unlawful to knowingly or unknowingly advertise or sell chile in a way that misleads consumers to believe it was grown in New Mexico. It's a legal firewall meant to protect truth, heritage and hard work. But laws alone can't stop every counterfeit.



New Mexico chile production has decreased significantly over the past 30 years. Statistics show the beloved industry is shrinking. As of 2016, the acres harvested are only 30% of what it was in 1990. While numerous factors contribute to this decline, a significant cause is New Mexico chile imposters.

New Mexico Certified Chile offers more than legislation; it offers a mark of truth. A seal burned into every pod, every ristra, every bite promises authenticity straight from New Mexico's soil. It is leading the charge, a beacon of integrity in a marketplace clouded by falsehood.

"This is not just about chile. It's about pride, heritage and standing up for what makes New Mexico unique," Dominguez said. Every Certified Chile pod represents our culture, our history and our commitment to quality. By demanding authenticity, we're not only protecting our farmers, but also ensuring that future generations can savor the true spirit of New Mexico."

Behind every true New Mexico Certified Chile is a seal that speaks for the soil. To learn more or join the cause, visit newmexicochile.org.

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About New Mexico Certified Chile

New Mexico Certified Chile (NMCC) is dedicated to supporting the NM chile industry by increasing demand for NM chile. We strive to create an atmosphere of chile being for of the NM culture, heritage and pride. Our mission is to cultivate the world-renowned varieties grown only here in New Mexican soil and to protect, promote and advocate for the entire industry dedicated to growing this very special crop. NMCC is a program of the New Mexico Chile Association.