New Mexico Fast Facts - 2014

State's Child Poverty Rate: 30%
State's Overall Poverty Rate: 21.5%
StrikeForce State Since: 2012
Number of StrikeForce Counties: 30
Total Outreach Events: 246
Number of Community Partners: 110
Total USDA Projects: 1,667
Total USDA Investments: $198.6 million

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Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners
Luna County
Middle Region Council of Governments
Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development Capacity
New Mexico Acequia Association
New Mexico State University
Santa Clara Pueblo
Santo Domingo Pueblo
Santa Fe Farmers Market Institute
Southwestern Regional Housing & Community Development Corp.
Taos Pueblo
Zuni Pueblo

StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity
NEW MEXICO

Currently, 85 percent of our country’s persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation’s future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA’s StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than $16.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across twenty states. In 2015, StrikeForce expanded to include Oklahoma and Puerto Rico. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 880 counties in 21 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America’s economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

The Santo Domingo Pueblo is tucked in the hills between Albuquerque and Santa Fe and like many of the state’s tribal communities, has high levels of child poverty and hunger. Following a visit by Agriculture Secretary Vilsack in 2013 and many StrikeForce outreach efforts, tribal leaders have gained new insight into the range of resources USDA has to comprehensively address community challenges.

Tribal leaders worked with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to improve ancient irrigation systems, conserving water and improving farm productivity. "With regard to the USDA investment, we couldn't have done it without them," said tribal official Jonathan Garcia. Now, new homes financed by USDA Rural Development are being built on the pueblo.

Access to healthy foods is also a challenge. Pueblo residents live in a food desert with no full-service grocery store nearby. Recently, Santa Fe Community Foundation’s innovative mobile grocery store, MoGro, started weekly stops in Santo Domingo. Shoppers can use their USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) benefits to purchase fresh vegetables and other products, many of which are produced locally by Native American and other growers. To support this work, MoGro has received funding from USDA Rural Development and the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, as well as community foundations. Additionally, a USDA-funded partnership with Johns Hopkins University’s Center for American Indian Health has improved access to nutrition information and tips to stretch grocery budgets.

Multiple USDA agencies and external partners have joined forces and combined efforts to assist members of the Santo Domingo Pueblo and their neighbors in the Land of Enchantment.
StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity in New Mexico
www.usda.gov/strikeforce

1,667 Projects in 2014 = $198.6 Million Invested

165
Jobs Created or Saved

2,709,358
Summer Meals for Kids

253
Farmers Assisted

4,867
Home Investments

518
Conservation Efforts

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

STRIKEFORCE MAP SERIES FINAL: New Mexico Persistent Poverty StrikeForce Counties with Tribal Reservation Overlay

Legend

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