

## Penny Lindgren, Advisory Council Chair

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**SEMG Newsletter  
Submissions  
Deadline: 25th of each mo.**

Please submit news,  
articles, events and  
photographs to:  
<mailto:newsletter@sandovalmastergardeners.org>

Editor:  
Kate Shadock

### Happy 2025!

Welcome to 2025! Before leaving 2024 here are some of the amazing accomplishments you have achieved. This is from our November Newsletter tally with additions from last Quarter's survey.

1. We've made over 1,890 direct contacts with the public, on our email helpline, at growers markets, at festivals and fairs.
2. We've escorted nearly 1,000 people through garden tours highlighting sustainable gardening practices in Corrales and Placitas.
3. We've raised over 38,000 pounds of fresh produce for people in our communities who experience food insecurity.
4. We've tended to at least 16 different gardens and projects that have a direct benefit to the residents of Sandoval County.
5. We've offered public classes in beekeeping, seed starting, chiles, landscaping with native plants, gardening in raised beds, the unique challenges of a NM Gardener, drip irrigation, preserving the garden bounty, winter sowing, and sustainability in 2024.
6. We've volunteered over 7000 hours in our county! Not that everything is worth money, but when you multiply this by the 2024 volunteer hour rate (as set by the federal government), this amounts to \$235,000 that is returned to the county.



Thank you to everyone for your hard work, and your willingness to donate your time and energy for the benefit of the county and community.

Now onto the second quarter of the 21st century!

1. The 2025 Master Gardener Training starts this month with Mentor orientation on Jan 9 and intern orientation on Jan 16. Kevin Konetsky, Linda Walsh, and the Education Committee have spent the autumn expertly coordinating the course for Sandoval County.

2. Veteran MGs can access the Master Gardener Training course for educational credits starting Jan 1, 2024. Here is the link: <https://mg.nmsuondemand.nmsu.edu/courses/2025-emg-veteran-training>
3. The Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority (SSCAFCA) Pollinator Demonstration Garden is looking for volunteers. This will be primarily weekend hours, so if you are looking for a way to get your hours on weekends, this is the perfect project. The first team meeting will be in January. If you are interested in participating, please contact Debi Stumpff, Her contact information is on the Members roster.
4. **Better Impact**, a software program sponsored by NMSU for the extension volunteers in New Mexico will be introduced to the SEMGs over the next few weeks. The introduction will be coordinated by the team working on BI including Gil Mogavaro the BI administrator and adult educator Mo Mulligan.
5. Volunteer opportunities abound for 2025. There are several weeks open for volunteering on the Email Helpline, and the Administration Office Plant Watering Project. Both offer Volunteer hours for the Volunteer time, check out the sign up on the website. January has courses scheduled on Composting, Jump Starting your spring garden, and flower photography. Times, course instructors, and locations are on the SEMG website.
6. **Bethany Abrahamson is our new Agriculture Agent.** Bethany received her Master of Science in Biology from the University of New Mexico, where she studied how natural history research collections are used by researchers and the public. As an entomology and nursery inspector for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture for nearly ten years, Bethany worked to protect our state from invasive pests and promote our agricultural industry. Her interests include the intersections between the natural world, art and history, and she is eager to be a part of the cooperative extension team!

**This is very happy news!**

**All the best!**

~ Penny Lindgren

## Welcome, Bethany, Our New Agriculture Agent

Greetings and happy new year! My name is Bethany Abrahamson, and I am the new Extension Agriculture Agent for Sandoval County.

I received my Master of Science in Biology from the University of New Mexico, where I studied how natural history research collections are used by both researchers and the public. As an entomology and nursery inspector with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture for nearly ten years, I helped protect our state from invasive pests, including Japanese beetle and pecan weevil. My interests in entomology and museum studies include the intersections between the natural world, art and history. I hope I can share some of these interests with you and learn from the Master Gardener wealth of knowledge as well.

I am extremely impressed by all the great work being done by the Master Gardener program in this county, in particular your work with Seed2Need and all the home visits and hotline responses that directly assist the people of the county. I am also fascinated by the Sandoval Seed Swap and Share that collects and distributes seeds suitable for growing in the county. It's great to hear how many new interns are being added every season. There are so many excellent projects going on, and I can't wait to jump in!

I would be happy to partner up on new projects and home visits, help research your garden questions, and benefit from all of your Master Gardener expertise. I'm also making suggestions for newsletter articles and other needs in our county that need to be met. If you have any ideas or just want to say hi, you can reach me at my email, [babraham@nmsu.edu](mailto:babraham@nmsu.edu).

I am looking forward to working with you all,

--Bethany Abrahamson

Extension Agriculture Agent

## Meet The New Faces of Sandoval County Extension!

The New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service (CES) delivers practical, research based knowledge and programs that improve New Mexicans' quality of life.



BRITTANY JOHNSON  
COUNTY PROGRAM DIRECTOR

MADELINE GURNEY  
4-H/FCS AGENT

BETHANY ABRAHAMSON  
AGRICULTURE AGENT

## Sandoval County Cooperative Extension Meet-and-Greet

**January 29th**, Sandoval County Cooperative Extension Office **4:00 – 6:00 p.m.**  
711 Camino del Pueblo Bernalillo, NM 87004

**January 30th**, Cuba Soil and Water Conservation Office **3:00 – 5:00 p.m.**  
109 C. Rd. 11 Cuba, NM 87013

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of an auxiliary aid or service to participate, please contact Sandoval County Extension in advance at (505) 867-2582 or [sandoval@nmsu.edu](mailto:sandoval@nmsu.edu).

*"Give every day the chance to become the most beautiful day of your life."*

~Mark Twain

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## JANUARY GARDEN TIPS

1. Plan some time for looking through new garden catalogs this month. Order your seeds, bulbs, and trees and shrubs to have on hand for planting in March/April.
2. Keeping a garden journal is a great resolution for the new year
3. Consider starting seeds by Winter Sowing – see how to article on pages 7-9
4. If you have the space and the light, start seeds indoors
5. Keep watering trees and shrubs when the ground is dry 3-4 inches below the surface. Water perennials when the soil is dry 2-3 inches below the surface.

Source: *Month-by-Month Gardening Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico* Jacqueline A Soule

## Public Training Opportunities

### Ready, Set, Grow 2025 schedule

**Upcoming Webinars in 2025 (all are at 3 pm MST on the THIRD Wednesday)**

*The link to register is embedded in the title.*

- o February 19 - **Assisted Migration** - Dr. Al Freeman, Climate Forester at Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Broadly, Al is interested in the intersection of forest management, climate change, and ecophysiology. More specifically, her PhD research was focused on understanding physiological mechanisms underpinning adaptability of species to changing climate regimes and adaptive forest management.
- o March 19 - **Raising Your Gardening Game** - Drew Garnett, Chaves County Extension Agriculture Agent, will present on the basics of creating your perfectly personal raised garden bed!

## Gardening with the Masters - Loma Colorado Library

Fourth Monday of the month. **The class runs from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm** as the library closes at 8:00 p.m. These classes are not recorded. We encourage you to join us in person, so your individual questions get answered. New Gardening with the Masters classes will be announced here as they are scheduled.

**January 27 – Flower and Garden Photography: Tips and Techniques** – Mike Stoy

**February 24 – Butterfly Clustering for the Home Gardener** – Teresa Harner

**March 24 - Tree Selection & Techniques for Growing Healthy Trees for Central New Mexico** – Tom Neiman

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# Think Trees Conference

THINK TREES NM  
39TH ANNUAL URBAN TREE CONFERENCE  
"BUILDING ON THE BASICS"

February 6th - 7th, 2025

Where: Embassy Suites by Hilton  
1000 Woodward Pl. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87120

Connect with peers and learn from leaders in the diverse field of arboriculture as we enhance our understanding and train together.

## Our 2025 invited speakers include:

- Dr. Neil Hendrickson, tree risk assessment expert and retired Bartlett Tree Research Technical Specialist
- Dr. James Cassidy, rockstar soils scientist from Oregon State University
  - Anne Fenkner, Davey Resource Group Project Developer
    - NMSU Extension Plant Science Specialists
      - Dr. Leslie Beck (weeds),
      - Dr. Joanie King (insects), and
      - Dr. Phillip Lujan (pathologies)
      - and more!

For registration and more information [ThinkTreesnm.org](https://ThinkTreesnm.org)

# Start Seeds Early With Winter Sowing

Compiled from multiple sources – with thanks to Joan Ellis for introducing me to the technique



*Photo: Joan Ellis*

As the days grow shorter and colder, many gardeners may feel it's time to put gardening on hold. But winter offers an excellent opportunity for eager gardeners to get a head start through winter seed sowing in milk jugs. This low-cost, effective technique turns plastic containers into mini-greenhouses, allowing seeds to sprout outdoors during winter. By the time spring arrives, you'll have resilient seedlings ready for transplanting. Here's how to begin.

Sow the seeds in recyclable (milk/water jugs, liter soda bottles, etc.) during the winter.

After sowing, the mini-greenhouse is placed outside to wait for the end of winter. Seeds can be started January – March and will be happy with whatever the weather throws at it, snow coverage or rainstorms. The seeds will begin to germinate in their own time as the weather warms.

## Which seeds to sow?

Not all seeds are suitable for winter sowing. Cold-hardy, perennial, and wildflower species are ideal, as they're naturally exposed to winter conditions in the wild. Good choices include:

- **Perennials:** Coneflowers, black-eyed Susans, Shasta daisies.
- **Herbs:** Sage, thyme, oregano.
- **Native plants:** Milkweed, lupine.
- **Vegetables:** Leafy greens like kale, Swiss chard, lettuce.

## The materials are easy to collect:

- Plastic containers, for example, gallon milk/water containers or salad clam shells
- Potting soil
- Clear duct tape
- Something to put holes in the plastic containers
- Drill,
- Knife,
- Heated screwdriver, or scissors

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- Seeds
- Marking pen
- Labels

### Step by Step:

1. Clean recycled containers in soapy water. Make sure that your container can hold at least three inches of dirt and has enough headroom above the soil for the seedlings to grow. The tops should be clear to let light in.
2. Create drainage holes in the bottom of containers. It is important that there is plenty of drainage, so the seeds don't rot.
3. Make holes in the lid of the container to allow rain and moisture to enter. If you are using milk jugs or soda bottles, simply leave the lids off to allow for moisture and air to enter.
4. If you are using a container that does not open, for example, a milk jug, cut the container in the middle a little over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way around leaving a 'hinge' for opening the entire top portion.
5. Moisten your potting mix (not garden soil, this will compact and not allow air for the roots), and then put the mix in your container. Put in 3" of soil
6. Sow seeds on top of soil, and cover with potting mix according to package directions.
7. Label your container, use tape, and put it on the bottom of your container, write it on your container, also leave a label in the container.
8. Place your winter sown containers outside. Make sure they are in a spot where they will receive moisture and sun. You can start out south-facing, but as the winter turns to spring you may want to move them to east or west-facing, so the seedlings will not bake on a warm afternoon.

When to winter sow? Start when you have time in January, but you can continue sowing as long as nights are still chilly.

It is best to start with perennials that need cold stratification first, and then move on to hardy annuals.

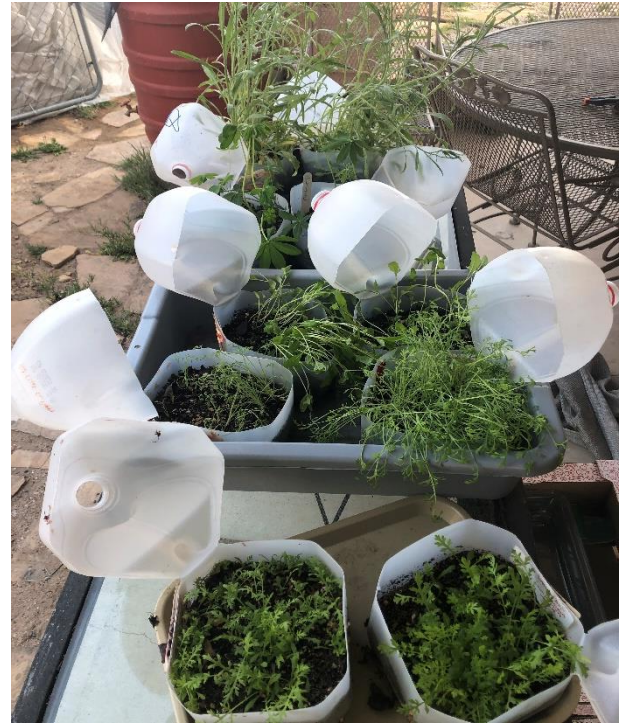
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Not a lot of care is required for your containers once they're outside. Check them periodically and make sure there is condensation inside the containers. If there is none, you will need to add some and tweak your greenhouse by adding more holes to the lid of the container so more water can enter or tape it closed so it does not escape.

Once the weather begins to warm you will need to watch your containers more closely. In order to harden off plants, you can add more holes or even take the lids off.

Winter sowing supplies the 4 things that the seeds need to germinate: oxygen, water, light, and certain temperatures while conserving your resources.



*Photo: Joan Ellis*

Multiple resources are available on-line to walk gardeners through this process. Here are just a few of the more helpful ones I discovered.

- <https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/2022-01/Winter%20sowing%20talk%202022.pdf>
- <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/over-garden-fence/2024-01-15-how-try-winter-sowing>
- <https://beaufort.ces.ncsu.edu/2024/12/winter-seed-sowing-in-milk-jugs-a-gardeners-guide-to-early-starts-and-resilient-plants/>
- <https://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Winter-Seed-Sowing-Handout-Final.pdf>

## Over The Garden Wall

Growing/Gardening News From Around The World

# The Quest to Save the World's Most Coveted Chocolate

Excerpted from Smithsonian Magazine  
September/October 2023



A pod of ancient Nacional cacao offers hope for reforesting Ecuador's Pacific coast, which by some estimates has lost 98 percent of its original forest cover over the past century. The pod of this ancient variety is misleadingly plain. Hard to believe that this shriveled yellow pod contains one of the world's rarest and most coveted cacao beans.

Scholars estimate that Nacional was first cultivated more than 5,000 years ago, in what is now the Zamora Chinchipe province, and ancient traders planted these Nacional trees near the coast. A 2012 study found that European colonists began planting Nacionals themselves in the New World roughly a century after Columbus arrived. The variety soon attained a global reputation for its strong aroma. Ecuador's integration into the world economy in the 19th century was almost entirely dependent on the cocoa trade; in the late 1800s and early 1900s, its popularity exploded as chocolate became a craze in Europe. In Hamburg, Germany, then the center of the global cocoa trade, Nacional was particularly prized.

*Photo: Nacional cacao pod by Johis Alacon*

Then, in 1916, a blight called **frosty pod** rot ravaged cacaos, including Nacionals, and in 1919, **the witches' broom disease** was thought to have finished off Nacional trees for good. Cacao yields in Ecuador plummeted, and growers introduced new hybrid and foreign varieties. The Nacional, with its distinctive and celebrated flavor, seemed to be a thing of the past—the dodo bird of the chocolate world.

But in 2011, to the astonishment of the world, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Agricultural Research Service](#), in collaboration with [Fortunato Chocolate](#), an American-founded company based in Peru, announced it had identified cacao trees in Peru that had ancient Nacional DNA. (While Ecuador was the center of the Nacional trade in the 18th and 19th centuries, Peru also boasted some of these precious trees.) Now, a partnership between local growers and Ecuador's ecological preservationists is pulling this legendary cacao variety back from the brink of extinction.

"We call it the 'Noah's Ark' of ancient Nacional cacao," says Jerry Toth, the 45-year-old co-founder of the [Third Millennium Alliance](#) (TMA), a conservation nonprofit, and the co-founder of [To'ak Chocolate](#), a private company that creates organically grown, top-of-the-line chocolate using Ecuadorean cacao grown by local farmers.

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More than 30 families are now working with Toth to reforest their lands using seedlings from the nearly extinct tree. The rebirth of this once-lost treasure isn't just a miracle for the chocolate-loving world—it's also a milestone in reviving the rich heritage of Ecuador's coastal forests and farming. And it may even offer hope for saving other endangered trees worldwide.

While researching methods to sustainably reforest the mountains of Ecuador's Pacific coast, depleted by logging and deforestation, TMA determined that cacao trees were ideal for their shade tolerance and revenue potential.

"I was like, 'I can start a company that really focuses on cacao at that point of origin and take it to a really high level [of chocolate], and I [can] do with chocolate what wine has been doing to grapes for a long time,'" Toth says. Accordingly, he aimed to mimic the world's most discerning vintners, who prize the purity of old-growth heritage vines. So Toth set out to find some old-growth cacao trees. And no one knew more about old growth in Ecuador than Servio Pachard.

Pachard is a fourth-generation cacao grower and a member of the [Seed Guardians Network](#), an alliance of families working to save heirloom seeds of all kinds in Ecuador. He'd also been informally advising TMA since its inception.

When Toth told Pachard he wanted to find the oldest cacao trees in the country, Pachard immediately recommended the remote valley of Piedra de Plata, where he'd seen old-growth trees as a child—ancient, gnarled things that carried the visible weight of age. Pachard believed these trees might be the last surviving ancient Nacionals in coastal Ecuador.

Toth and his Austrian colleague and partner in To'ak, Carl Schweizer, joined Pachard on a trek to Piedra de Plata to meet with growers who showed off cacao trees planted by their grandfathers and great-grandfathers before the arrival of the diseases thought to have wiped out the trees in the early 1900s. It was a long and sweltering hike through tangles of undeveloped coastal forest. Toth and Schweizer hoped the difficult journey would pay off. Perhaps in part because of the valley's isolation from the rest of the country, these trees survived the epidemics and may have even become resistant to the blight that killed off so many of their brothers, Toth said. When the expedition reached the trees, the trees looked right—so Toth and Schweizer decided to put them to the test in a laboratory.

The pair partnered with the [Heirloom Cacao Preservation Fund](#) and Freddy Amores, a scientist at [INIAP](#), the research institute of Ecuador's Ministry of Agriculture, to analyze the DNA of 47 trees they'd found in Piedra de Plata. To their delight, nine proved to be 100 percent pure ancient Nacional—likely the only ones known in the country. The world's greatest chocolate was alive in Ecuador.

A new problem presented itself: These Nacionals at Piedra de Plata were at least 100 years old and approaching the end of their life span. Most would soon die, and few at this age would even be able to reproduce.

So in 2018, TMA established an outdoor genetic bank nearby in the 2,000-plus-acre Jama-Coaque Reserve in Manabí, where seedlings can thrive. Working with the Agricultural Polytechnic School of Manabí, TMA began replicating ancient Nacional trees through a process known as grafting: The Jama-Coaque Reserve land already had some heirloom cacao planted decades ago, so TMA transplanted ancient Nacional stems onto the rootstock of those heritage trees to create clones of the rare trees.

TMA successfully planted 189 clones within a special parcel of the Jama-Coaque Reserve that was protected from cross-pollination from other cacao varieties. (Cross-pollination would muddy the pure genetic waters, and TMA and To'ak wanted to retain the purity of Nacional.) Toth's goal was having all of those 189 reproduce, sprouting their coveted yellow or orange pods. In the end, nearly all of them did. TMA continues to distribute their offspring to any local cacao grower who wants to help save this historic variety from extinction by creating a suitable market for Nacional. To build

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upon their success for the next generation, TMA is also training a group of farmers in their 20s in the nearby community of Camarones to become grafting experts themselves.

With careful grafting, Toth predicts that within three years, these young trees will provide enough cuttings to reproduce up to 5,000 pure Nacional seedlings each year.



Although farmers in Manabí have long expressed pride in the legacy of Nacional, newer, hybrid cacao varieties produce higher yields much more quickly. So getting farmers to cultivate the ancient seedlings, Toth knew, would require financial help to offset potential losses from a slower-growing, less-fruitful crop. Accordingly, To'ak pays at least three times the standard market rate for hybrid Nacional cacao, and TMA pays additional bridge payments of around \$1,821 per acre over five years to farmers who agree to grow ancient Nacional and hybrid Nacional cacao, which produces less expensive but still-exalted chocolate.

*Photo: Roasting the cacao nibs – Johis Alacon*

In turn, To'ak has become famous for producing some of the most expensive chocolate on the market, in one case \$490 for a single 1.76-ounce bar. That big-ticket bar, and other confections of Nacional, are available online at To'ak's website and through specialty retailers like Harrods and Caputo's.

TMA developed a plan to divide its plantings: 80 percent would be newer hybrids, and 20 percent ancient Nacional. Today, each participating farm receives regular seedlings of this precious heirloom cacao variety.

Currently, 38 families are part of the program. The plan is to scale up to 200 farmers over the next two years. TMA oversees the management of the plants, provides the land, performs the grafting and distributes seedlings to farmers. But To'ak delivers another key element, offering a guaranteed market for the final product.

Meanwhile, TMA continues to work on its broader goal: reforestation, particularly along Ecuador's ecologically delicate coast. In addition to planting cacao trees, TMA has been reintroducing and cultivating a wide variety of other fruit trees and native trees on depleted agricultural lands, forming the basis of the organization's regenerative agroforestry program.

Farmers working with To'ak receive, per acre, around 49 native shade tree seedlings, 243 cacao seedlings and 121 banana cuttings in the first year. In the second year, they get replacements for any seedlings that didn't take. The growers can sell dry Nacional for roughly \$7,300 per metric ton—more than three times the global median for cacao. After covering the costs of harvest and transport, TMA reinvests in the program and then pays 83 percent of the gross directly to farmers.

"We are trying to replicate a forest," Toth says. "This is more than cacao. It is regenerative ag forestry."

The success of the TMA genetic seed bank gives hope to those seeking to preserve other endangered tree species the world over. There are now more than 840 seed banks around the globe.

Other chocolatiers are catching on, too. Already, TMA has two other companies expressing interest in purchasing the resulting ancient Nacional cacao: Mindo Chocolate Makers of Michigan and Nikoa, an Ecuadorean company. "I don't think we will have a problem selling it," Toth says. "As for how people beyond Ecuador can help the ongoing resurrection of the world's favorite chocolate, Toth says this problem has a surprisingly bite-size answer: *Just eat it.* Even

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if you can't afford the \$490 To'ak bar, the company has more modest options, and other chocolatiers in Ecuador are beginning to use Nacional varieties in more affordable blended products.

## Interns & Members – Trips and Volunteer Info

Throughout the year, SEMG provides several opportunities for interns and members to visit public gardens with a guide, labs where garden research is undertaken and commercial locations that are not accessible to the public. Sometimes we even get to tour private gardens with the designer and/or homeowner to see and hear why they made the design decisions. These opportunities are most numerous in the early spring when both gardens and gardeners are resting.

To be current on these openings – keep an eye on our website, in the MEMBERS ONLY section called **PROJECTS AND VOLUNTEERS**. Some of these sessions are initially available only to Interns; and will be open to members, if there are spaces left towards the end of the sign up period. Some are only available to members as part of their advanced training.

On this same link is an ever-changing list of volunteer opportunities where we can give hours in order to both fulfill our requirements for the year and to learn more about SEMG's support of Sandoval County residents.

## Important SEMG Date

**February 10 - cut off for 2025 SEMG membership  
Require that 2024 hours be reported and dues received to  
keep active member status**

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## Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners October, November, December 2024 Quarterly Report

- Total SEMG volunteer hours: 1,055 hours Includes working in gardens, outreach with public, intern training, educational offerings, administration.
- Total add'l (non-SEMG, working at a project garden) volunteer hours: 812 hours (190 volunteers)
- Direct Contacts (refers to 2-way interaction with the public): At Garden Projects and one-time events (Harvest Festival, etc.): Email Helpline: 17 Corrales Growers Market: 23 Rio Rancho Harvest Festival: 150 Home Visits:
- At Public Education Classes: Gardening with Masters held at Loma Colorado Library; SEMGs offered classes at Esther Bone Library as well. Total 5-6 classes.

Of Note: Garden and Outreach Projects: New Beginnings Garden (no report 4th Q) Placitas Elementary School (no report 4th Q) Corrales Growers Market SEMGs fielded many questions about watering. Home Visits (no report 4th Q)

- Seed2Need 6,493 pounds of produce went to food pantries. One of our leaders gave a well-received presentation on Seed2Need goals and accomplishments to a large audience.
- Santa Ana Pueblo Teaching Garden installed several new plants in garden and in containers, installed 'dry creek bed' of stones, prepared pollinator bed and hardscape. It did not hold 2nd monthly workdays due to Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- SSCAFCA Pollinator Garden. Trees planted in the SSCAFCA parking area.
- Rio Rancho Harvest Festival (10/27/24) This was the first time SEMG had a table at the Harvest Festival. We had over 100 contacts with the public, and gave away a large pumpkin that was donated by Just Sprinklers.

- Corrales Family Practice Garden Total harvest for the year was just over two TONS, at 4,149 pounds that went to St. Felix Food pantry. Also held a year-end wrap-up to discuss what worked, what to consider, and what didn't work. This helps us in planning for the following season. The main issue is to control the weeds, plastic mulch seems to work the best. Second plantings also produced well.



*Image: Freepik*

- Advisory Council: Held graduation for 2024 intern class at St Francis, RR, on 11/16 at 10 am with a potluck lunch following. Held elections for 2025 leadership mid-December: **Penny Lindgren- Chair, Roberta Black- VC, Beth Murphy- Treasurer.**
- New Agent hired to begin 1/2/25. Gave (full) financial aid to 5 2025 interns; will provide financial aid for 2 people to do the Junior Master Gardener training in Feb 2025. Better Impact (volunteer software management) rolled out at the end of December. Honored Lynda Garvin at graduation ceremony.
- Outreach Committee: Pesticide policy for Sandoval County was approved by Outreach Committee and Advisory Council. It was sent to Lynda Garvin for review. The new helpline log is operational as the new helpline instructions that are now online. The November meeting held a discussion on future projects and changes for Outreach in 2025.

# Help Wanted

## Help Wanted #1



The Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority (SSCAFCA) Pollinator Demonstration Garden is looking for volunteers. Volunteers will design, plant and maintain a pollinator garden in a large detention area on the SSCAFCA property in Rio Rancho. This area is primarily fed by rainwater runoff from the parking lot and other areas on the property. The intent of this project is to demonstrate to the general public the types of plants (mostly native) that attract pollinators and other wildlife while sustaining on moisture provided only by Mother Nature.

*Photo: Pixaby*

These will be primarily weekend hours, so if you are looking for a way to get your hours on weekends, this is the perfect project.

The first team meeting will be in January. If you are interested in participating, please contact Debi Stumpff. Her information is available on our member's only roster.



*Photo: Carnation - January's Flower - Britannica*