



Diversity in Our New Normal

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What a time to talk about diversity! As we continue to adjust to these challenging times due to COVID-19, extension agents have been busy brainstorming and thinking outside the box to take care of our clientele. As an agent of Mexican descent, living in the second-largest county in New Mexico, and so close to the border, diversity is a big part of who I am. New Mexico, our land of enchantment, is a very diverse state.

Many of us sometimes feel that it is impossible to meet the needs of our communities, which may be true if we want to meet one hundred percent of the needs. However, keeping a positive attitude can help us realize that as long as we keep an open mind, we can do our part. Being so close to the border, providing programs in Spanish has been one of my goals because I want our Spanish speaking community to benefit from the wonderful Extension programs. All my programs are provided in both English and Spanish, which is easy being that I am bilingual. However, how do we provide programs during these challenging times? Providing programs online can be a challenge, however, not impossible.

Diversity includes everything that we are and that we are not. Providing online programs may be something we may not be accustomed to or even be comfortable doing. At New Mexico State University, we hosted Kitchen Creations, which is a four-week diabetic cooking class. The program was transformed into a virtual class that teaches participants to plan meals to help them manage their diabetes. Cooking videos were created to teach participants how to make the recipes that go along with each lesson. The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive!

