



In New Mexico, agriculture continues to face a manifold of challenges that affect and sometimes threaten the viability and economic strength of our businesses. To face these challenges, the ladies felt that we must develop leaders who more fully understand the world around us in terms of social, economic, and political realities, as they exist among the people we help feed and clothe.

In New Mexico, where our agriculture is as diverse as the culture and lands, we are particularly stressed by continuous encroachment of the lands that support our livelihood. Women are key players to most agricultural businesses in New Mexico. For this reason, New Mexico's agricultural women have formed the "Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference" (WALC) to address the issues we face, to create a vital network, to provide education, and to build something of value.

WALC was created and organized in 2000 by "El Sueno de Corrazon Ranch" owned by Helen Hunt (Hunt's ketchup). She was a strong believer not only in promoting agriculture in NM but promoting women in agriculture and recognizing their contributions.

She believed that the industry should be the one to help put it on. A committee of women from different agriculture groups was established and played key roles in putting the conference together. Issues affecting women, workshops on agriculture and everyday life, speakers from around the state and nation were on hand to make the first four conferences a success.

For the first four years the WALC was done on a yearly bases, but because of finances it has turned into an every other year endeavor. In 2003 Ms. Hunt decided the WALC was something she had started it had become an entity she felt couldn't fund any longer. In 2004 the NM Farm and Livestock Bureau Women's Leadership Committee decided to house the WALC and take the lead.

Planning organizations include New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau; Farm Credit of New Mexico, ACA; New Mexico Department of Agriculture; New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association; NMSU Cooperative Extension Service; New Mexico Beef Council; Dairy Producers of New Mexico; New Mexico Agriculture Leadership; and NMSU College of Agriculture and Home Economics, as well as individuals from the private sector. Participants come from a variety of backgrounds including education, extension, production, finance, and marketing.

The 2007 Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference (WALC) will be hosted on April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> in Albuquerque, NM at the Hilton. This year's conference will be the 6<sup>th</sup> annual with 100 attendees expected. This year's program will focus on leadership and include a panel of agriculture women leaders for across the U.S., as well as fun and educational workshops. Program objectives include providing participants with awareness, enthusiasm, leadership, education, and networking opportunities.

The 'Diamond in the Rough' award will be presented to an outstanding woman in New Mexico agriculture who, through her efforts and contributions, has made New Mexico's agriculture industry a more prominent sector in the state.



## Diamond in the Rough Award Information

The **Diamond in the Rough** award has been created to recognize an outstanding woman in New Mexico agriculture and highlight her efforts and contributions. Initiated by the Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference (WALC) and its various sponsors, the award (previously called the Corazon Award) has been given at the WALC conference during a special awards ceremony. The 2007 Conference will be April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Albuquerque, NM. All Nominees will be recognized and the recipient will be given a beautiful commemorative plaque. Past recipients include:

1997 - Ruby Roybal  
1999 – Stella Montoya and Jane Schafer  
2000 - Mary Agnes Jaramillo and Yetta Bidegain  
2001 – Carol Humphries and Jane Frost  
2003 – Caren Cowan and Viola Jeffers  
2005 – Margene Harris

Please help us recognize the women who work to make New Mexico Agriculture better, and nominate a deserving woman! She can be a farmer, educator, rancher, volunteer; anyone dedicated to agriculture.

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For information on the upcoming Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference, please contact:  
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