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Valencia County Matanza a Successful and Safe Tradition

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) would like to thank the Belen Hispano Chamber of Commerce, The New Mexico Livestock Board, and the citizens of Valencia County for their outstanding participation and excellent management of the 6th Annual Hispano Chamber Matanza that was held Saturday, January 28.

“The tradition of matanzas goes back centuries to the first Hispanic settlers of New Mexico and is an important event for the preservation of this state’s great culture,” Ana Marie Ortiz, Director of NMED’s Field Operations Division, said. “At this year’s Matanza, about 4,000 people came to partake of the cultural food prepared and cooked on site and thanks to the cooperation of everyone involved it was a successful event with safe food.”

Twenty-five teams competed in the fundraising event for prizes in butchering, slaughtering and preparation of traditional matanza foods.

“The Department appreciates the opportunity to work with the event sponsors, local organizations, and citizens in and around the state to provide educational guidance and public health oversight at events such as this,” NMED Secretary Ron Curry said.

State regulations charge NMED with the authority to ensure safe food handling and preparation measures are followed in order to protect public health against possible food-borne illnesses from improperly prepared foods. Nationwide, there are an estimated six million to 33 million illnesses and as many as 9,000 deaths every year due to food-borne diseases.

For more information, contact Adam Rankin, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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