



For Immediate Release
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Governor Bill Richardson Applauds Winner of Governor's Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge

ALBUQUERQUE – Governor Bill Richardson tonight announced the winner of the inaugural Governor's Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge. Badlands Burgers, of Grants beat out 19 other contestants in the cook-off challenge, which was staged this afternoon on the State Fairgrounds.

"It is my pleasure to award **Badlands Burgers** with the prestigious title of Best Green Chile Cheeseburger in New Mexico," Governor Richardson said to a significant crowd of onlookers during the award presentation immediately following the cook-off.

"I want to congratulate all of the contestants who entered this friendly competition on their excellent burgers, and I want to thank them for participating in what will become an annual event to promote one of New Mexico's true culinary delights," the Governor said.

"The Governor's Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge has been one of the most anticipated events of the Fair," said State Fair Commission Chairman Luke Otero. "The turnout was fantastic, the competition was fierce but friendly, and I think we've got some very satisfied judges."

Governor Richardson officially kicked off the event at 3:15 p.m., and judging began at 4 p.m., with one burger considered roughly every five minutes until all 20 were tasted and scored. Each burger was anonymous to judges, who utilized a point system based on taste, balance of ingredients and appearance. Each contestant was required to use New Mexico-grown green chile. The anonymous scores were then tabulated by EXPO New Mexico accounting staff.

For its winning effort, **Badlands Burgers** received a special plaque and automatic entry into the New Mexico Tourism Department's Green Chile Cheeseburger Trail.

The official judges for the cook-off were Benjie Segovia, New Mexico Department of Agriculture Chile Marketing and Promotion Specialist; Cheryl Alters-Jamison, world-renowned multiple-James Beard Award winning cookbook author; and Chef Tyson Putman, Chairman of the American Culinary Federation, Rio Grande Valley Chapter.

The Governor's Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge was sponsored by The New Mexico State Fair, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the New Mexico Restaurant Association, the

Central New Mexico Community College Department of Culinary Arts/Hospitality & Tourism and the American Culinary Federation Rio Grande Valley Chapter.

Governor Richardson issued the statewide culinary challenge after the Buckhorn Tavern in San Antonio, New Mexico garnered the state national attention on the Food Network's "Throwdown with Bobby Flay." In a July episode, Buckhorn owner Bobbie Olguin defeated host Bobby Flay in the battle for the best green chile cheeseburger and had viewers all over the country craving a bite of one of New Mexico's culinary treasures. The Governor's Green Chile Cheeseburger Challenge was open to commercial restaurants statewide, and garnered a total of 21 entries from across the state.

Alphabetical roster of contestants follows:

- 300 Club (Holiday Bowl; Albuquerque, NM)
- Airport Grille (Alamogordo, NM)
- Ancient Way Cafe (Ramah, NM)
- Badlands Burgers (Grants, NM)
- Bibo Bar & Grille (Seboyeta, NM)
- Burger Boy (Cedar Crest, NM)
- Chef Damon's Restaurant (Taos, NM)
- Chef's Bistro (Albuquerque, NM)
- Circle T Restaurant (Belen, NM)
- Don's Chuck Wagon (Blanco, NM)
- El Pinto Restaurant (Albuquerque, NM)
- Embudo Station (Embudo, NM)
- Fat Sat's Bar & Grill (Belen, NM)
- Home of the Laguna Burger (Laguna Superette; Laguna, NM)
- Independence Grill (Albuquerque, NM)
- Katrinah's East Mountain Grill (Edgewood, NM)
- Monte Carlo Steakhouse (Albuquerque, NM)
- O'Niell's Pub (Albuquerque, NM)
- Paso Monte Grill (Alto, NM)
- Shepherder's Café (Albuquerque, NM)

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