



State of Utah

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For Immediate Release

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UDAF and USBE Announce \$250,000 Utah-Grown Incentive Program to Benefit Children and Utah Farmers

Salt Lake City, UT – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Child Nutrition Program will be administering \$250,000 in collaboration with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) for a farm to fork Utah-grown school meal incentive program. This program aims to improve school meal quality and support Utah farmers during the 2021-2022 school year. Money will be paid out to schools as part of their per-meal state reimbursement. School districts that spend a higher portion of their funds on unprocessed Utah-grown food products will receive a higher per-meal state reimbursement.

Each year, Utah school and childcare centers serve over 88 million meals and snacks to children. As cost is a major barrier cited by both schools and farmers as to why more minimally processed Utah-grown fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat are not included in school meals, this program serves to overcome that barrier and increase access to fresh, locally grown foods. With this program, Utah joins ten other states offering a locally-grown incentive program for school meals including New Mexico, Colorado, Michigan, Oregon, Minnesota, and New York.

“Farm to school programs and incentives such as this are a win for all involved; children are able to receive nutritious, fresh produce and develop a stronger connection with agriculture, producers are able to access a large, consistent market, and the economic benefits strengthen local economies in urban and rural areas alike.” – UDAF Commissioner Craig W Buttars.

“Utah’s farms and school food programs both often operate on shoestring budgets, making it difficult for schools to consistently purchase local food and develop strong relationships with Utah farmers. By providing extra funds to schools that purchase Utah-grown products, we make it possible to pay farmers fair market value for their food and for schools to provide fresh nutritious meals to as many students as possible.” – Kathleen Britton, USBE Director of Child Nutrition Programs



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