



State of Utah

SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DIEDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Agriculture and Food

CRAIG W BUTTARS
Commissioner

KELLY PEHRSON
Deputy Commissioner

For Immediate Release

Contact: Bailee Woolstenhulme
baileewoolstenhulme@utah.gov
(385) 320-2140

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UDAF Awards \$25.5 Million in Water Optimization Grant Funding

Taylorsville, UT – The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) has awarded \$25.5 million dollars in grant funding to 140 new recipients, including farmers and water conservancy districts, of the Agricultural Water Optimization Program. These projects were awarded from a total of 195 applications received.

“We are amazed at the response we have received from Utah’s farmers and ranchers and their eagerness to participate in the water optimization program,” said Commissioner Craig Buttars. “The large number of participants show that Utah’s agriculture community is working to be part of our water saving solution.”

The Agricultural Water Optimization program was initially funded in the 2019 Legislative Session with the purpose of reducing consumptive water use while maintaining or improving agricultural production; improving water metering to provide real-time, accurate measurements; and to improve and protect surface water and groundwater quality by reducing the overwatering of crops. Finished projects from the initial round of funding have a reported savings of 21,459 acre feet of water, equaling about 7 billion gallons of water.

During the 2022 Legislative Session, the Utah Legislature funded this program with \$70 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. These 140 projects are the first to be funded from the ARPA funds. Eligible applicants can receive a 50/50 cost-share grant up to \$500,000 to complete their projects; a water/irrigation management plan is required for all funded projects.

Applications for the next round of funding will be open from August 1 - 31. For more information and to learn how to apply, visit

ag.utah.gov/farmers/conservation-division/water-optimization-program/

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