



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**

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December 13, 2022

### **UDAF Supports the Governor's Budget Recommendations Focusing on Agriculture**

Taylorville, UT — The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) is excited to support the budget recommendations announced by Governor Cox's office on Friday, December 9. Budget recommendations to support agriculture in Utah includes \$200 million for the Agricultural Water Optimization Program, \$3 million for the Utah Food Security Processing Grant Program, and \$18 million for Agriculture Infrastructure, which will be run through the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity.

"These budget recommendations show the governor's commitment to the agriculture community in Utah and local food security," said UDAF Commissioner Craig Buttars. "We are hopeful that we will receive the same support from the legislature in the upcoming legislative session."

The Agricultural Water Optimization program has been in place since 2019 and has brought about huge successes in optimizing agricultural water use, saving over 7 billion gallons of water in the first year of data collection. This program has also seen increasing interest and support from the agriculture community. \$70 million dollars in grants were administered in 2022 alone, funding over 300 projects. For more information on the program, visit the [Agricultural Water Optimization Page](#).

The Food Security Processing Grant Program is a new program created in the last legislative session that administered \$1 million in grants with the goal of bolstering food processing, making local food easier to access, and providing local markets for Utah's farmers and ranchers. In the first round of funding, UDAF received over \$14 million dollars in requests, demonstrating that there is a significant need and demand to increase food processing in the state. Visit the [Food Security Processing Grant Program](#) page for more information.

UDAF is also excited to work with the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity and Six County Association of Governments to facilitate the development of an area for agriculture infrastructure in central Utah to increase the production, processing, storage, and transportation of food. This project would further UDAF's goal to increase food processing and food security in Utah.

For more on the Governor's budget recommendations visit [gopb.utah.gov](http://gopb.utah.gov)

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