



**Department of
Agriculture and Food**

Marketing &
Economic Development

2026 Utah Food Security Grant Request for Applications

Applications due 11:59pm on August 31, 2026

Applications cannot be submitted after that time.

For more information, please email udaf-foodsecuritygrant@utah.gov

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Purpose

The purpose of the Utah Food Security Grant Program (UFSG) is to strengthen Utah's food supply chain through strategic investments in agricultural production, processing, storage, distribution, market access, and local food promotion. By supporting grant projects across the food system, from farm to consumer, the program helps expand opportunities for Utah producers, strengthen rural communities, and increase the availability of Utah-grown and Utah-raised food.

Limited food systems infrastructure in rural Utah reduces the availability and affordability of locally produced foods. Gaps in production, aggregation, processing, storage, distribution, and limited market access all contribute to this food insecurity and limited access. Strengthening the rural food system capacity can improve access to healthy foods, while supporting Utah's rural counties and developing a more resilient food supply chain. In 2026, UDAF published a comprehensive Utah Food Systems Study, directed by and funded through 2025 Utah H.B. 510 Agricultural Amendments. The study found meaningful opportunities to strengthen local and regional food systems, and many of those opportunities are being prioritized through this funding. [The full set of findings and recommendations can be viewed here.](#)

With this funding, UDAF will issue grants to Utah-based businesses to:

- Increase Utah's capacity to produce, process, store, distribute, and market Utah-grown food.
- Strengthen in-state food supply chain infrastructure and expand market opportunities for Utah producers.
- Equip producers and food businesses with the tools, resources, and expertise needed to grow and remain competitive.

The 2026 application cycle is funded through the Rural Health Transformation Program, a multi-year initiative funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), through the Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

2026 Funding Information

During the 2026 application cycle, UDAF anticipates awarding up to \$9,265,098.80 using a competitive review process. Project funding is contingent on available funding from CMS.

CMS or their designee has final approval for projects submitted to the UFSG. UDAF reserves the right to offer award amounts less than the amount requested in the application.

	Award Minimum	Award Maximum	Total
Microgrant Awards	\$1,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$200,000.00
Startup Awards	\$10,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$200,000.00
Standard Awards	\$10,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$8,865,098.80
Total UFSG Funding			\$9,265,098.80

To better meet the needs of businesses at different stages of growth, the 2026 UFSG offers three award categories: **Microgrant Awards** (\$1,000–\$10,000), **Startup Awards** (\$10,000–\$50,000) for businesses established within the past 12 months, and **Standard Awards** (\$10,000–\$1,000,000) for established businesses. At least \$2,000,000 will be dedicated to production projects.

Reimbursement Process

This is a reimbursement-based grant. Grant recipients must first sign a contract with UDAF, purchase and pay for approved project expenses, and then submit a reimbursement request with the required documentation. Reimbursement requests must include copies of receipts, paid invoices, canceled checks, or other proof of payment. Reimbursement amounts will be based on eligible, reasonable project costs, and will not exceed the amount awarded in the grant contract.

Proof of financing or a loan is not considered proof of payment. The vehicle must be paid for in full before reimbursement may be requested. Likewise, partial down payments are not eligible for reimbursement until the full purchase price has been paid.

Timeline

Grant applications will be accepted beginning July 21, 2026 through 11:59pm on August 31, 2026.

- Applications Open: July 21, 2026
 - Applicant Webinars: Register for webinars on the UFSG webpage

Updated: 07/15/2026

- July 15, 2026 at 10am - How to get a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- July 21, 2026 at 2pm - 2026 UFSG Request for Applications Overview
- August 5, 2026 at 6pm - 2026 UFSG Application Overview
- August 20, 2026 at 12pm - 2026 UFSG Q&A
- Applicant Regional In-person Information Events: Register for in-person walkthroughs on the UFSG webpage.
 - July 22, 2026 at 4:30pm in Logan, UT
 - July 29, 2026 at 5:30pm in Tooele, UT
 - August 04, 2026 at 12pm in Vernal, UT
 - August 14, 2026 at 4pm in St George, UT
 - August 21, 2026 at 5pm in Moab, UT
- Application Close Date: August 31, 2026 at 11:59pm
- Application Review Period: September 2026
- Awards Provisionally Announced: October 2026
- Contracts signed and completed: October/November 2026
- Project Start Date: October/November 2026
- Funds must be spent and related expenses must be in-hand by September 30, 2027

Eligibility

Eligible Entities

This grant is open to individual producers, for-profit entities, non-profit entities, governments, schools, and producer co-ops located in Utah that produce products intended for commercial sale or distribution beyond personal or household use. Projects must use at least 51% of ingredients by weight or product inputs that were grown/raised in Utah, and sell or distribute at least 25% of their products to consumers in rural areas of Utah. Rural is defined as any county except Davis, Salt Lake, Utah, and Weber. Applicants may operate in non-rural counties, but their project must distribute to, or otherwise benefit a rural county. Applicants must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, licensing, and permitting requirements.

All applicants must have an active Unique Entity Identifier to submit their application. Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) can be acquired free-of-charge from the federal government at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). This process can take some time, so applicants are strongly encouraged to

begin the process early, and not to wait until the last week as it is unlikely the UEI will be assigned in time.

All applicants must be properly registered with UDAF or their relevant regulatory body and must be in good standing with any loans provided by the department; applicants with loans in default will be considered ineligible and applicants with delinquent loans may be ineligible.

Meat/poultry processors wishing to apply must be either:

- A state-inspected “equal-to” slaughter and/or processing plant,
- A UDAF licensed custom-exempt slaughter plant,
- A Talmadge-Aiken (TA) or very small federally inspected plant, or
- A USDA inspected meat plant

Eligible Expenses and Projects

The UFSG supports equipment, infrastructure, technology, certifications, and other investments that strengthen Utah's local and regional food supply chain. Eligible expenses must make an immediate increase to the production, processing, storage, distribution, safety, or market access of Utah-grown or Utah-raised food.

Minor construction, defined as building modifications or retrofitting that does not expand the existing building footprint, and upgrades to existing equipment may be funded but are subject to additional restrictions and limited available funding. Applicants should only include these costs when they are necessary to support an eligible equipment purchase or project. New and used equipment purchases are not subject to these restrictions.

The examples below are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Projects that help produce, process, store, transport, market, or safely deliver more Utah-grown or Utah-raised food to consumers in rural Utah are encouraged, even if the specific activity is not listed below.

- **Agricultural Production - Equipment and infrastructure that increase agricultural production or extend the growing season, including:**
 - Tractors, harvesters, tillers, and other farm implements
 - High tunnels, greenhouses, and indoor growing systems
 - Irrigation improvements
 - Frost mitigation equipment and supplies such as weather monitoring equipment and heaters

- Harvesting/storage equipment such as reusable bins
- **Processing - Equipment that adds value to agricultural products or increases processing capacity, including:**
 - Washing, peeling, slicing, chopping, shucking, pasteurizing, or other processing equipment
 - Bottling, bagging, labeling, packaging, and packing equipment
 - Slaughter and meat processing equipment such as hide pullers, band saws, patty machines, etc.
- **Distribution - Equipment and technology that improve the movement of food from producers to markets, including:**
 - Inventory tracking systems to track the location and distribution status of pallets or bins as they move from storage to the wholesale or retail destination. **If you don't have this system, you are encouraged to apply for it to report on your outcomes.**
 - Logistics software to map the most efficient distribution routes, minimizing fuel costs and reducing the time highly perishable food spends in transit
 - Refrigerated trucks, vans, or trailers or renovating existing distribution equipment for cold storage
 - Cold-storage upgrades for existing delivery vehicles
 - Dock levelers and weather seals
 - Forklifts, pallet jacks, and other material handling equipment
- **Dry and cold storage - Equipment and non-construction facility improvements that preserve product quality and extend shelf life, including:**
 - Walk-in coolers, freezers, CoolBots, and cold storage systems
 - Humidity, ventilation, and HVAC improvements
 - Backup generators for cold storage
 - Storage bins and containers
- **Market Access - Equipment, technology, and other investments that help producers reach new customers, access new markets, or expand sales capacity, including:**
 - E-commerce and online sales platforms
 - Point-of-sale systems
 - Inventory systems to track the distribution of products (**note: this is a requirement of grant reporting**)
 - Customer ordering and sales software
 - Equipment or technology required to meet buyer requirements or enter new markets

- Certification and Training - Certifications and training that help businesses meet industry standards, comply with buyer or regulatory requirements, or access new markets, including:
 - Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
 - Third-party audits/certifications (e.g. SQF, Kosher)
 - Other certifications or training that support food safety, regulatory compliance, market access, or business growth
- Cooperative marketing initiatives that promote Utah-grown or Utah-raised products and benefit multiple producers or food businesses
- **Food Safety - Equipment and systems that improve food safety and regulatory compliance, including:**
 - Commercial washing and sanitation equipment such as sanitizer dispensing systems for three-compartment sinks
 - Food safety monitoring equipment such as pH meters, water activity meters, and temperature and humidity sensors
 - Steam-cleaning and sanitation systems
 - Certification and Training - Certifications and training that help businesses meet industry standards, comply with buyer or regulatory requirements, or access new markets, including:
 - Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)
 - Preventive Controls Qualified Individuals (PCQI)
 - Better Process Control School (BPCS)
 - Other food safety improvements that support safe handling and storage

Preference Points

Preference will be awarded to projects that:

- Expand meat rendering capacity through equipment or related activities.
- Establish or expand participation in farm-to-institution markets as a direct result of the proposed project.
- Increase access to locally grown or raised food in tribal communities or tribal areas of Utah.
- Benefit multiple Utah producers or support shared-use infrastructure such as co-packing facilities, commissary or shared-use kitchens, food hubs, or shared farm equipment.

Eligible Agricultural Products

This grant is intended to support production and processing of fresh, nutritious, and whole or lightly to minimally processed foods available in rural areas of the state intended for human consumption. Beef, poultry, pork, lamb, bison, dairy, eggs, grain, fruits, vegetables, legumes, microgreens, and fungi, and some value-added products are all eligible agricultural products, provided they meet the processing guidelines outlined below.

Applicants are not required to exclusively produce or handle eligible agricultural products. Grant-funded projects must increase the production, processing, storage, distribution, or availability of at least one eligible unprocessed, lightly processed, or minimally processed agricultural product.

Eligible Agricultural Product Guidelines

- **Unprocessed Foods- Always Allowed**
 - Unprocessed foods are the edible parts of plants, animals, algae, and fungi, such as a whole mushroom or a potato. All unprocessed foods that may legally be sold in Utah are allowable.
- **Lightly Processed Foods- Usually Allowed**
 - Agricultural products that retain their inherent character qualify as lightly processed, and are typically allowable. Food handling and preservation techniques that do not change the inherent character of an agricultural product include cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking, and grinding; drying/dehydration; washing; applying high water pressure or “cold pasteurization”; packaging; vacuum packing and bagging; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning fish; and pasteurization. Ground beef, frozen berries, and wheat flour are examples of allowable lightly processed products.
 - Honey, maple syrup, and other syrups extracted from plants are not allowed as part of this grant, regardless of whether they otherwise meet the definition of lightly processed.
- **Minimally Processed Foods- Sometimes Allowed**
 - Minimally processed foods are those produced by baking, boiling, bottling, canning, juicing, pickling, freeze-drying, and non-alcoholic fermentation. In

order to be allowable, **products in this category must not have more than 2 grams of added sugars per serving. (per American Heart Association recommendations.)**¹ Sources of added sugar include but are not limited to maltose, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, allulose, high fructose corn syrup, agave syrup, molasses, cane sugar, corn sweetener, raw sugar, maple syrup, honey, and fruit juice concentrates. Products also must not contain any artificial colors, non-nutritive artificial sweeteners or natural zero-calorie sweeteners such as stevia/monk fruit, or artificial flavoring. Minimally processed foods that meet these additive requirements are allowable. Canned fruits and vegetables, cheese, yogurt, jerky, and bread are examples of allowable minimally processed products, provided they meet the requirements concerning additives.

- **Moderately and Highly Processed - Not Allowed**
 - Moderately and highly processed foods are not eligible under this grant. These include products that have been substantially altered from their original agricultural ingredients or are formulated with levels or types of added sugars, artificial colors, artificial flavors, non-nutritive artificial sweeteners, or natural zero-calorie sweeteners that do not meet the minimally processed food requirements outlined above. Examples may include candy, soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages, sweetened baked goods, and other highly formulated food products.

Ineligible Products

- Alcohol
- Animal feed
- Honey
- Maple syrup and other tree syrups
- Animal feed and forage products
- Fiber, wool, cut flowers, alcoholic beverages, supplements, or specialized products (including tobacco, hemp, kratom, medical cannabis, and other psychoactive products)

¹ *A product is generally considered low in a certain nutrient if it contains 5% or less of the recommended daily value. The [American Heart Association](#) recommends limiting added sugars to no more than 6% of total daily calories, which is equal to approximately 36 grams for men per day and 25 grams for women per day. Based on these limits, a “low in sugar” product will contain 2 grams or less of any added sugars per serving.

- Specialized products such as hemp, kratom, medical cannabis, dietary supplements, and other psychoactive or mood altering products
- Products made with artificial colorants, flavors, or sweeteners
- Products where more than 50% of the ingredients originate outside of Utah

Ineligible Projects and Costs

Ineligible grant costs include, but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of land or buildings
- Major construction, building expansion, significant retrofitting of buildings, or cosmetic upgrades to buildings
- Livestock, seeds, plants, trees, animal feed, or forage
- Fencing
- Personnel
- Research
- General operating expenses, unrelated supplies, or replacement parts not directly tied to the approved project
- Advertising or promotional campaigns that primarily benefit a single business.
- Any expenses incurred before the contract is signed

Projects may also be disqualified if they:

- Are not headquartered in Utah;
- Use less than 51% of ingredients or inputs by weight grown/raised in Utah;
- Cannot distribute at least 25% of the food handled through the agreement to rural areas of the state (counties other than Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, and Weber counties);
- Primarily support personal or household food production rather than commercial production, processing, distribution, or consumer access;
- Contain only ineligible food items;
- Contain only ineligible costs, or;
- Have an incomplete application.

How to Apply

Applicants must complete and submit their proposal online using the [Submittable system](#). We strongly encourage applicants to begin the application process early. Please read through all information on the page carefully before submitting your application. For

assistance with the Submittable platform, view [“Help for Applicants” articles](#) or reach out to udaf-foodsecuritygrant@utah.gov.

Application Information

The application form on Submittable is composed of two elements: an eligibility screen, followed by the application form.

Eligibility Screen

1. Is your organization headquartered in Utah, and is your proposed project located in Utah? If applying on behalf of a tribe, is your proposed project located in Utah and does your tribe have lands in Utah?
2. Are at least 51% of the ingredients/inputs by weight in your product grown or raised in Utah?
3. Do products associated with your application contain more than 2 grams of added sugar per serving, or any amounts of artificial colors, artificial sweeteners, or artificial flavoring?
4. Can you currently distribute, or will this project enable you to distribute, at least 25% of the food handled through your project to rural areas of Utah (counties other than Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, and Weber)?

Application Questions

This section details the questions that will be asked in the application. In all narrative sections, do not use your organization name in the project title so that applications can remain blind to the review committee.

1. **Project Title** This title will serve as the identifier for your project.
2. **What county will serve as the primary location for your project activities?**
3. **Select your project’s primary agricultural sector(s).**
4. **What percent of your ingredients/ agricultural product inputs are grown or raised in Utah?**
5. **Describe the source(s) of your products/ingredients.**
6. **Has your business been in operation for at least one year?** (Applicants in operation for less than one year will be considered for the Startup Award category.)
7. **Does your organization participate in farm-to-institution sales? (Sales to schools, childcare centers, hospitals, etc.)** Select yes, no, or that you intend to begin participating as a direct result of this grant project.

- 8. Does your project benefit multiple producers or support a shared-use initiative?** (Examples may include co-packing facilities, commissary or shared-use kitchens, food hubs, or shared farm equipment.) Select yes, no, or that the project will begin benefiting multiple producers or supporting shared use as a direct result of this grant project.
- 9. What county or counties do you distribute your products to, or will you distribute to with this grant funding?** Please note that to be eligible, a producer needs to distribute at least 25% of their products beyond Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, or Weber counties.
- 10. What percentage of your products are currently distributed in rural Utah counties** (counties other than Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, or Weber)?
- 11. Will this percentage change as a result of this project, and by how much?**
- 12. Does your project include meat rendering equipment/activities?**
- 13. Describe your current capacity for production, processing, storage, distribution, etc, and how it will improve with this project. Include the expected overall percentage increase.**
- 14. Describe any market research or analysis you have done that demonstrates this project will fulfill an unmet need.** This does not have to be a formal analysis or report; requests from customers or business partners are also valuable data. Do not use your organization name in this section so that applications remain blind.
- 15. How much grant funding are you applying for?**
- 16. In order of priority, list the items you are requesting grant funding for, the cost for each item, if they should be categorized as production or processing, and whether any are conditional upon a different equipment purchase/facility upgrade.**
- 17. Realistically, how quickly will these upgrades be installed and become operational?** Select either: Within 6 months of grant award, or 6 months to one year.
- 18. How will your proposal impact the amount of fresh, nutritious, minimally-processed food available in rural areas of the state?**
- 19. How will you accurately track required data (e.g. sales volume, product category, distribution into rural Utah)?**
- 20. Will your proposal improve food access in tribal communities? How so?**
- 21. Describe your business plan or operating model and how the proposed project supports the long-term viability of the operation. Explain how the project and grant-funded investments will be sustained after the grant period ends,**

including how the applicant will cover ongoing operating, maintenance, or other associated costs without relying on continued grant funding.

- 22. This is a reimbursement grant. Will you have sufficient funds available as soon as the contract is signed to purchase approved project items before reimbursement is received?**

Ranking Criteria:

Ranking Criteria	Maximum Points
1. The proposal demonstrates significant potential to increase the availability of fresh, nutritious, or minimally processed foods in rural areas of the state and will have a strong positive impact on the overall food supply chain in Utah	25 points
2. Percentage by weight of ingredients sourced from Utah-grown/raised products	86-100% = 15 points 71-85% = 10 points 51-70% = 5 points
3. Project timeline - how quickly will the project be implemented and begin having an impact?	Within 6 months = 10 pts 6 months to one year = 5 pts
4. Project benefits multiple Utah producers or supports shared-use infrastructure or services that expand food system capacity, such as co-packing facilities, commissary or shared-use kitchens, food hubs, or shared farm equipment	10 points
5. Applicant organization is involved in farm to institution sales, or project	7 points

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will increase farm-to-institution sales	
6. Percentage of products currently distributed in rural Utah counties	76-100% = 5 points 51-75% = 4 points 26-50% = 3 points 0-25% = 0 points
7. Proposal demonstrates capacity to accurately track relevant data regarding the amount of food handled through the agreement being distributed to and remaining in rural Utah	5 points
8. Applicant is located in rural areas of the state	5 points
9. Project meets a demonstrated market need	5 points
10. Applicant has a viable and sustainable business plan and the ability to cover ongoing project costs without continued grant funding	5 points
11. Proposal will improve food access in tribal communities	4 points
12. Proposal includes meat rendering equipment/activities	4 points
Total Points:	/100 points

Review Process

Following the application deadline, eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by a selection committee using the ranking criteria outlined above. Additional project information may be required during the review process. Applicants will be notified according to the timeline provided in this Request for Applications.

Contact

For questions or assistance, please contact udaf-foodsecuritygrant@utah.gov.

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