In April of 2020, Utah State University (USU) Extension Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed), Hunger Solutions Institute, and USU Institute of Government and Politics partnered with Utah Farm Bureau and the Miracle of Agriculture Foundation to create the Farmers Feeding Utah program. The goal of the program is to serve farmers by supporting agriculture and help people in need by providing food and nutrition. Over the past year, many individuals, agencies, and businesses have supported the Farmers Feeding Utah miracle projects by providing almost 1,500,000 pounds of food to more than 23,064 families, stocking 31 pantries throughout Utah, and working with 32 farmers. USU is incredibly proud to be a partner in this important effort, yet donations, sponsorships, and other support are needed for us to be able to continue providing these miracle projects.

USU President Noelle Cockett described USU’s support of Farmers Feeding Utah well when she stated, “As the landgrant university that is proud to count so many farmers and ranchers as alumni, I can think of no better way to help them during this difficult time than through this project, which helps needy families as well. I’m proud to have our ‘Hunger Solutions Institute’ and USU Extension play such a significant role in helping individuals and families in Utah – including our own students – get the food they need. I would encourage current and former Aggies everywhere to visit FarmersFeedingUtah.org and consider how you may be able to contribute.”

USU Extension values this partnership and supports the efforts to provide these Farmers Feeding Utah miracle events by:

1. Creating food access to families in need. USU has collaborated with the Department of Workforce Services to assist families faced with intergenerational poverty and other SNAP eligible individuals throughout Utah. The
organizations have worked to establish a new food system that links Utah farm-raised healthy food products with food insecure Utahns in rural, urban, and tribal communities.

2. Providing high-quality, nutritious food. The USU Extension Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) program works diligently to improve healthy food access for Utahns with limited resources by creating partnerships, such as Farmers Feeding Utah, and by offering nutrition education. In addition, providing these high-quality food products may help decrease obesity and chronic disease in low-income individuals, thus helping families and individuals establish healthier eating habits through improved healthy food access.

3. Inspiring public confidence and support of American agriculture.

Our work with Farmers Feeding Utah has amplified our capacity to connect Utah State University, Utah government agencies, community leaders, elected officials and policy makers. Examples of these community partnership outcomes include:

1. Educational opportunities surrounding food insecurity and food production for federal, state, county, and city elected official and staff via 1) participation in USU and Farm Bureau food distribution events, and 2) connection with current research in relevant topic areas.
2. USU’s Hunger Institute working with the Utah AFLCIO to expand their food pantry offerings and distribution to members in need.
3. The Cache County food pantry has extended their positive impacts through a collaboration with USU’s Latinx Cultural Center and Cache Refugee Immigrant Connection (CRIC).
4. Navajo Nation in Utah were provided live sheep for sustenance and to heal because it’s tradition that “Sheep is Life.”
5. The passage of HCR019 Concurrent Resolution Recognizing Farmers Feeding Utah as part of the 2021 Utah State Legislative Session.

USU Extension and USU Institute of Government and Politics is honored to be part of the Farmers Feeding Utah program. Since the program’s inception, nearly 1.5 million pounds of food have been distributed to families in need. This amounts to over 3 million dollars of retail value and approximately $80 worth of food per family served. The USU Hunger Solutions Institute, USU Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed), USU Institute of Government and Politics, and USU Extension honor the work of all those who improve the communities where they live. Food security is strengthened when communities work together to solve local problems. We support this project and hope you will join in supporting these efforts as well.

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