

Farmers Feeding Utah Partners to Help Salt Lake Elementary Schools

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The need for food assistance in Utah has increased by 300 percent this year. This creates an abundance of families who don't know where their next meal will come from.

According to Heidi LeBlanc, Utah State University Extension professor and director of the USU Hunger Solutions Institute and Create Better Health Utah programs, many families don't have extra funds to have a Christmas, and many don't even have enough food for the two weeks schools are shut down for the holidays.

"When school is in session, these families are able to receive free breakfast and lunch," she said. "But when that is not available, it can cause a huge amount of stress for them."

LeBlanc said the Miracle of Agriculture Foundation's Farmers Feeding Utah program partnered with the Foundation for Kids, an organization that raises funds and support for abused, foster and at-risk children. This month they delivered 38,000 lbs. of potatoes and boxes of cherries to five elementary schools in the Salt Lake Valley.

"USU Extension, Create Better Health and the Hunger Solutions Institute were honored to be part of the endeavor to help these families," she said. "One woman at the school started crying and said how much the families needed the food. We are grateful we have a program that can help ease their burdens."

LeBlanc said the USU Extension Create Better Health blog includes easy potato recipes so that kids can help with the food preparation. [Click here](#) for recipes.

Farmers Feeding Utah has helped over 18,200 families and donated over 1 million lbs. of food since its inception in April 2020. The program not only helps families and individuals in need, but it also helps farmers in need by purchasing their produce with money that is donated to the program.

USU Extension Vice President Ken White said the program is helping inspire public confidence and support in American agriculture and meeting hunger needs at the same time, calling it a win-win for everyone.

"We have friends and neighbors all over the state who are struggling with food insecurity right now, and we are committed to doing all we can to help them," he said.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Farmers Feeding Utah, please visit farmersfeedingutah.org.

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