

# UTAH FOOD SECURITY COUNCIL™



Established in 2022 by Senate Bill 133, the Utah Food Security Council provides recommendations at a policy level to make sure more Utah families, especially those with children, have access to food. The council seeks to coordinate statewide efforts in addressing food security by developing goals and messaging for nutrition education, ensuring consistency in federally funded programs, promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles, advancing Utah food products, and disseminating messaging to state agencies.

## HIGHLIGHTS

2

New collaborative grant applications

5

Public presentations on council work and successes

33

Multi-sector community partnerships

4

Success stories

1

Toolkit created

7

Active sub-committees

13

Media appearances

3

Press releases

### **The Utah Food Security Council launched their comprehensive website**

to enhance accessibility and outreach.

This marked a significant milestone in their mission to address food insecurity.

This new online platform serves as a central hub for community resources, providing valuable information to those looking to contribute to the cause and to those in need.



## MEMBERSHIP

15

Council Members

73

Active Community Members



The Utah Food Security Council has become a vital platform for organizations and individuals from diverse sectors to join forces in addressing food insecurity. Without this collaborative space, many of these partnerships would not have taken root. For example, the American Heart Association of Utah and Idaho is now working alongside other groups to address food access issues, while WasteLess Solutions, focused on reducing food waste, has been working with the council's Food Recovery sub-committee to expand reach through new alliances. Additionally, the Center for Anticipatory Intelligence at Utah State University is teaming up with the Hunger Solutions Institute to launch a food security symposium in 2025. The symposium will unite experts across fields to address food insecurity by fostering innovative solutions, and strengthening cross-sector collaboration. The council's meetings go beyond discussion; they serve as a catalyst for impactful initiatives, such as the development of the Hunger Solutions Podcast and comprehensive fact sheets detailing programs that address nutrition insecurity across the state. These collaborative efforts are driving real, lasting change and ensuring Utah is on the path to a more food-secure future.

## SUBCOMMITTEES

### Communications

The Communications sub-committee launched awareness campaigns and facilitated community outreach, spreading vital information about food assistance programs and encouraging community involvement. Their work has significantly increased public awareness and engagement in food security efforts.

### Food Recovery

The Food Recovery sub-committee is a dedicated team working to reduce food waste and redirect surplus food to those in need. Their initiatives not only help alleviate hunger but also promote sustainability and environmental stewardship.

### Homelessness

The Homelessness sub-committee is researching the unique challenges faced by those without stable housing. Partnering with service providers, they will develop strategies to ensure access to nutritious food for this at-risk group.

### Mapping

The Mapping sub-committee is developing comprehensive maps to identify resources available for Utah's vulnerable populations. This invaluable data will allow the council to allocate resources more effectively and reach areas with the most need.

### Policy

The Policy sub-committee has advocated for legislation that supports food security initiatives, ensuring sustainable funding and resources. Their efforts impacted several policy changes that provided greater support for food-insecure families in Utah.

### Local Food Promotion

The Local Food sub-committee is working on innovative approaches to highlight and promote Utah's local foods. Their initiatives included educating consumers about local food options and developing partnerships to increase their use across the state.

### Evaluation

The Evaluation sub-committee tracks the impact of the council's initiatives, providing critical feedback and data to refine and improve strategies. Their efforts ensure that every initiative is documented and can be shared with Utah legislative leadership for informed decision-making.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

31,109

Social Media Reach

3

Press Releases

7,277

Website Visits

13

Media Interviews

1

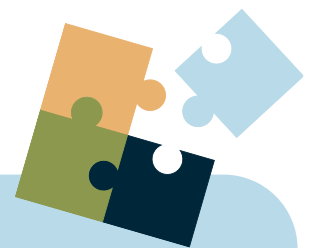
Journal Publication



## COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council is composed of fifteen members as defined in State Bill 0133:

1. The executive director of Department of Health and Human Services or designee  
**Natalie Loots**, Department of Health and Human Services
2. The executive director of the Department of Workforce Services or designee  
**Frank Vega**, Department of Workforce Services
3. The state superintendent or designee  
**Kimberly Loveland**, Utah State Board of Education
4. The commissioner or designee  
**Katie Mazzie**, Utah System of Higher Education
5. The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Food or designee  
**Craig Buttars**, Representative Natalie McHale, Department of Agriculture
6. Member who represents USU Extension  
**Justen Smith**, Representative Ashley Butler, Utah State University Extension
7. Member who represents Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program  
**Paula Scott**, Utah Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
8. Member who represents the Utah Women, Infants, and Children Program  
**Rachel Bowman**, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
9. Member who represents the Utah SNAP-Ed program  
**Lea Palmer**, Create Better Health (Utah SNAP-Ed)
10. Member who represents a food assistance organization  
**Nisay Lao**, Granger Community Christian Church
11. Member who represents an advocacy group that addresses federal nutrition program  
**Gina Cornia**, *Chair of Council*, Utahns Against Hunger
12. Member who represents an organization that promotes healthy eating and active lifestyles in the state  
*Vacant Seat*, [Previously Laura Holtrop Kohl from Healthy Environments Active Living (HEAL)]
13. Member who represents an organization that provides refugee resettlement services in the state  
**Sarah Adams**, International Rescue Committee
14. One member who represents the Utah Farm Bureau Federation  
**Spencer Gibbons**, Representative Aubree Thomas, Utah Farm Bureau
15. One member who represents a tribal government in the state  
**James Toledo**, Utah Division of Indian Affairs



## Community Partners in 2024

USU Nutrition, Dietetics & Food Sciences | Get Healthy Utah | Utah Department of Transportation Utah | Commodity Supplemental Food Program | American Heart Association of Idaho and Utah | United Way of Northern Utah | Wasteless Solutions | Green Urban Lunch Box | Utah Agriculture in the Classroom | University of Utah | American Academy of Pediatrics Utah | Intermountain Healthcare | Brigham Young University | Bear River Health Department | Summit County Health Department | USU Center for Anticipatory Intelligence | Salt Lake County Health Department | USU Student Nutrition Access Center | USU College of Agriculture & Applied Sciences | Utah County Health Department | USU Applied Sciences, Technology & Education | Utah Valley University | Unite Us | Salt Lake Community College | Midvale Community Building Community | Salt Lake County Sustainability Department | Comunidades Unidas | Davis County | Utah Farm to Fork | Department of Workforce Services Homeless Services | U of U Basic Needs Collective | USU Center of Community Engagement | U of U Center for Community Nutrition | Department of Veterans Affairs | FourPoints Health | Community Action Services | Utah Food Bank | Weber State University | Salt Lake County Aging and Adult Services | Tabitha's Way | Bountiful Food Pantry | Kroger Corporate



More than 90 professionals from various sectors have attended at least one Food Security Council meeting. These professionals, who are not required to be there, choose to participate out of a genuine desire to contribute to the work. Their presence and active involvement underscore the importance of food security and the widespread interest in addressing this critical issue.



Organizations and individuals from varied backgrounds—including health services, education, agriculture, nonprofit sectors, and local government—regularly come together, bringing a wealth of knowledge and resources to the table. Their collaborative efforts are leading to innovative solutions and a broader reach, amplifying the council's impact across the state.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The Utah Food Security Council is focused on expanding its impact through strategic planning and collaboration. Key initiatives for the future include:

- **Developing a comprehensive action plan** to guide the council's future efforts and ensure a cohesive approach to tackling food insecurity.
- **Finalize the policy matrix** developed by the policy sub-committee to strategically guide and prioritize the council's future efforts.
- **Creating a common measurement system** to track and evaluate the collective impact of the council's initiatives, allowing for better coordination and progress tracking.
- **Seeking external funding** for collaborative projects aimed at addressing food security challenges across the state.
- **Strengthening existing partnerships** while actively building new ones to broaden the council's reach and influence.
- **Sharing successful programs and knowledge**, both within Utah and beyond, to drive innovation and strengthen food security efforts across regions.



follow council progress and find success stories at  
[utahfoodsecuritycouncil.org](https://utahfoodsecuritycouncil.org)