

USU Extension Receives Grant to Help Refugee and Native American Farmers

Shelby Ruud Jarman

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Utah State University Extension recently received a grant to fund programs that will enhance farming opportunities for refugee and Native American farmers in Utah.

The grant comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

"Strengthening and growing the pipeline of the next generation of farmers and ranchers is vital to the continued success of American agriculture," said NIFA Director Carrie Castille. "We recognize that beginning farmers and ranchers have unique needs for education, training, and technical assistance. Their success, especially in the first 10 years, often hinges on access to reliable, science-based information and the latest educational resources so they can improve their operations' profitability and sustainability long-term."

The grant will help expand three existing incubator farms and create two new farms in Utah. Incubator farms provide affordable access to small parcels of land and infrastructure to beginner farmers to hone their skills and launch farm businesses.

USU Extension will also offer workshops and technical assistance in production, marketing, food handling and safety, financial management, USDA programs, and more. Project partners include the Salt Lake City International Rescue Committee, the Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection, and St. Christopher's Episcopal Mission in Bluff.

Along with assisting refugee and Native American farmers, this project will lead to increased understanding and knowledge of small-scale and urban farming systems, provide income and access to traditional foods for refugee farmers, and provide needed economic development and access to fresh produce in rural Native American communities, said Kynda Curtis, USU Extension professor and economist.

"We are excited to continue current programs for refugee and Native American farmers and expand them over the next three years," she said. "This grant program is vital to the health and economic well-being of the farmers it serves."

To learn more about USU Extension programs, visit <https://extension.usu.edu/>.

Writer: *Shelby Ruud Jarman, Shelby.ruud@usu.edu*

Contact: *Kynda Curtis kynda.curtis@usu.edu*