



COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: May 19, 2026

ITEM TITLE, PRESENTER: Consideration and Approval of a 2026 Cooperative Agreement Between San Juan County and Utah State University, Presented by Talia Hansen, Economic Development Director

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the MOU

SUMMARY

San Juan County Economic Development is requesting approval of a Cooperative Agreement between San Juan County and Utah State University (USU) related to the Regional Agriculture Incubator & Business Development Initiative. The agreement establishes a collaborative partnership to support rural business development, workforce training, agricultural education, and technical assistance activities throughout San Juan County and surrounding rural and Tribal communities.

The agreement term runs from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026. Under the agreement, USU will support project activities identified in the project scope, specifically activities 1.0, 2.0, and 4.0 outlined within Appendix A of the agreement. These activities include:

- Vertical Farming and Agricultural Framework Development
- Indigenous Agriculture and Cultural Knowledge Programming
- Farming and Agriculture Education Programs

The initiative is designed as a countywide economic and workforce development effort delivered through rural business hubs, coworking spaces, community centers, and educational partnerships. The project focuses on strengthening small and emerging businesses, entrepreneurs, workforce participants, and agricultural producers through technical assistance, workshops, mentorship, and education programming.

The agreement outlines responsibilities for both parties, including coordination, program implementation, invoicing, and compliance with applicable laws and grant requirements. The County will provide reimbursement to USU for approved project-related activities as identified in the agreement budget.

HISTORY/PAST ACTION

Utah State University Extension has been a longstanding regional partner supporting agriculture, education, and community development programming within San Juan County. This agreement

formalizes collaborative responsibilities associated with implementation of the project activities identified within the Rural Business Development Grant-supported initiative.

FISCAL IMPACT

The project is funded through approved Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) project funds and associated program funding sources.

No additional County General Fund appropriation is requested beyond approved project funding allocations.