

UC Cooperative Extension Butte County

2023 Update



Rice Farming Systems Advisor: *Luis Espino*

During 2023, my research focused on management of tadpole shrimp, armyworms, and rice diseases. I also collaborated with other UCCE academics in projects related to rice varieties, weedy rice, and alternative management systems. We are investigating the viability of a reduced-tillage system following a fallow year and several no-tillage systems. In addition to co-organizing our winter grower meetings, this year I organized an organic rice meeting to assess the research and outreach needs of organic growers. Also, I worked with the UCCE rice team to offer a two-day Rice Production Workshop back in March and update the Rice Production Workshop Manual, which is available for free on the UC Rice website.

Orchard Systems Advisor: *Luke Milliron*

Orchard research and education was critical in 2023, a difficult economic year for orchard farmers. The year started with the popular North Valley Nut Conference in Chico, discussing cutting edge research in almond and walnut production. As the orchard season got underway, my program helped address some of the numerous problems growers faced, including bacterial blast/canker damage in almonds. Walnut growers, although experiencing better weather conditions than the early blooming almonds, continued to face difficulties farming with a low crop price and high farming costs. My program worked individually with growers developing creative and cost-effective solutions to almond and walnut production challenges.



Integrated Pest Management Advisor: *Sudan Gyawaly*

The integrated pest management (IPM) program continued providing IPM educational services through newsletter articles, one-on-one farm calls, and presentations at grower meetings throughout the Sacramento Valley. This year, my program started monitoring the populations of important pests of almonds, walnuts, and peaches to track their development and provided the degree day information to his clientele. The IPM research efforts in 2023 involved surveying the web-spinning spider mite populations and evaluating the mating disruption of navel orangeworms in walnuts. I intend to share the results of these studies in upcoming grower meetings.

4-H Youth Development Advisor: *Nicole Marshall-Wheeler*

In the 2022-2023 program year, the Butte County 4-H Youth Development Program served 501 youth with support from 119 adult volunteers. Our 4-H Community Club Program serves each community in Butte County through 13 clubs. This summer, Butte County 4-H expanded its reach by providing professional development to 44 afterschool educators on "Cooking Academy", a healthy living curriculum for afterschool programs. This curriculum reached 766 youth from 10 school sites across Butte County.



Community Nutrition, Health and Food Security Advisor: *Veronica Van Cleave-Hunt*

I joined UCCE as a Community Nutrition, Health, and Food Security Advisor in July. My post-graduate research focus was on the eating experiences of individuals on the Autism Spectrum, and the impact of these experiences on fruit and vegetable intake. I started working for the CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE Butte Cluster program at the beginning of 2019. I have a passion for gardening and cooking, and the potential that these skills have to improve the lives of people from all walks of life.

Master Gardener Program Coordinator: *Jennifer Lange*

The interview process for the Master Gardeners training class of 2024 is in full swing, with a remarkable influx of applications. Our workshop series has been a resounding success, even making it to the front page of the Chico Enterprise Record! The recent Fall Plant Sale exceeded all expectations and stands as one of our best yet. We're expanding our educational outreach and partnerships by collaborating with The Dorothy F. Johnson Center, which will support our outreach for both educators and the public. And, embracing the digital age, we're starting a Summer Zoom Workshop series, designed to connect with and educate an even broader segment of our community.



Dairy Advisor: *Betsy Karle*

The dairy program has been evaluating manure management technologies, dairy calf management and health, and disease prevention and treatment strategies that improve antibiotic stewardship. Results from studies were presented at local meetings, World Ag Expo, and in various industry publications and papers were published in the Journal of Dairy Science and the journal Antibiotics. Heading into 2024- economic and feasibility analyses of management practices that are supported by research will be a priority.



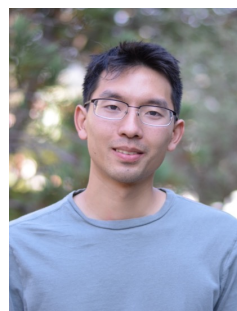
Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor: *Tracy Schohr*

I am conducting extension, education and applied research focusing on livestock production, water, agribusiness, and sustainable range and pasture management. I host trainings and provides technical assistance on drought strategies, predators, animal health, regulatory compliance, and more. In 2023 I co-hosted an Ag Legacy training for farmers and ranchers at Chico State and I have future trainings planned for 2024. My research program includes investigating post-fire grazing cattle distribution on public lands, fire impacts to ranching, rangeland drought resiliency, and goat grazing effectiveness to reduce fire fuel loads. My program is developing solutions to the complex issues facing commercial livestock producers in the region.



Forestry and Natural Resources Advisor: *Ricky Satomi*

The forestry program develops solutions to improve the resilience and recovery of local forest ecosystems. This year, I provided targeted workforce trainings, developed reforestation monitoring tools, and introduced a new forestry education program for community educators. Trainings topics include GIS, reforestation, forest stewardship, and home hardening. In addition to ongoing efforts with the Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT) and California Project Learning Tree, a new FIT-Focus session is being offered to train educators on advanced forestry topics. My research program currently examines the effectiveness of post-fire vegetation management while also developing literature to support the emerging forestry workforce.



Orchard Crops Advisor: *Jaime Ott*

As a new orchard systems advisor covering Butte County, I spent 2022 meeting growers, PCAs, and farm managers to learn about their operations and their research and extension needs. I conducted grower meetings and field consultations covering a wide range of topics, from irrigation to disease management to pruning. In collaboration with other advisors, I conducted a small research trial on thinning prune crops before and during bloom, especially relevant in a year with huge crops like 2023. With campus collaborators, I worked on a sucker control trial in prune, collecting the data needed for an IR4 registration for a new chemical tool for sucker management.



Orchard Systems Advisor: *Clarissa Reyes*

I am the new Orchard Systems Advisor in Sutter-Yuba, Butte, and Placer, specializing in walnut, peach, and kiwifruit crops. As an advisor, I aim to apply university-based research to support the needs of local growers. Previously, I worked as a UCCE research assistant in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties in almond, walnut, prune, and olive for the past two years. I am experienced with evaluating experimental crop rootstocks and varieties and developing drought-adapted management practices.



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