

Quarterly News & Events December 2021

UCCE San Mateo and San Francisco Counties

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As 2021 draws to a close

I want to take the opportunity to reflect on a year that continues to challenge us but was filled with many accomplishments at the same time. Our **4-H** program engaged youth in creative ways rolling out a new countywide Archery and Drone program.

Master Gardeners hosted numerous virtual presentations and horticultural workshops, starting several new community projects this year. Our **Master Food Preserver** program has become increasingly successful through their online workshops as COVID-19 forced many to stay home enabling the discovered joy and value of food preservation. Our **Nutrition Education** team continue their essential program delivery in collaboration with schools through virtual class time, positively impacting students throughout the county. **Elkus Ranch** delivered small group tours and environmental programs to social and educational learning pods and via camps. Our teams and **volunteers** continue to work diligently to extend researched-based information and education to our communities contributing in so many positive ways!

As we enter the holiday season, I wish all of you the very best and hope you have a safe holiday season. Please take extra precaution during holiday gatherings and as you travel to spend time with family and friends. Happy Holidays to all!

Frank McPherson, UCCE County Director



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



And a BIG THANK YOU to all our volunteers who make our programs successful!

PROGRAM HAPPENINGS

Nutrition



Garden Education at General Pershing

by Elaine Silver & Marisela Ceron (CFHL)

Partnering with General Pershing Preschool in Daly City, the **CalFresh Healthy Living** Program in San Mateo County offered hands-on gardening lessons and support for General Pershing's on-site garden this October.

CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE (CFHL) worked to create an edible garden, with additional support from the organization **Rebuilding Together Peninsula**, who supplied 10 planter boxes and the dirt to fill them. Elaine Silver, Nutrition Educator with CFHL, assisted in filling up the planter boxes with the needed dirt and Mary

Vollinger, also with CFHL, delivered the first batch of seedlings for the garden for the project. Marisela Ceron, another CFHL Nutrition Educator, then began working directly with preschool children at the site, planting the seedlings. 120 children in five classes participated in the planting of kale, cilantro, cauliflower and lettuce starts. Each classroom is responsible for their own garden bed, and the children are working with their teachers to care for the plants.

Marisela is planning to use the ***It's Fun to Be Healthy*** curriculum from **CATCH ECE** to teach garden-based nutrition education lessons and the children are looking forward to harvesting their crops in the spring!



Sharing Seeds of Knowledge: CFHL + SMCOE

by Will Easlea (CFHL)



Calfresh Healthy Living, UCCE San Mateo Educator, Will Easlea, participated as a community-based partner for the **San Mateo County Office of Education's Teacher Fellowship** program. This ten-month program provide teachers with more content and knowledge related to teaching climate science. The Food cohort gathered at the **HEAL** Project in Half Moon Bay to learn more from **Calfresh Healthy Living, UCCE, San Mateo Public Health**, and the **HEAL** Farm itself.

The workshop included 3 hours of garden and nutrition lessons modeled by the community-based partners. The lessons came from various curricula including the **TWIGs** curriculum and **Nutrition to Grow On**. **Calfresh Healthy Living, UCCE** San Mateo is proud to have been asked to participate, and excited to see what new partnerships sprout in 2022!

Master Food Preservers



MFP Holiday Preservation Workshop

by Maeve Knoth (MFP Volunteer)

The ongoing collaboration between the **San Mateo/SF Counties Master Food Preservers** and the **San Mateo County Library System** ended the year with a successful virtual class entitled "**Savory Jams and Jellies for the Holidays**". The hour-long workshop included specifics on preparing three recipes: **Roasted Garlic Jelly**, **Lemon Ginger Marmalade**, and **Balsamic Red Pepper Jelly**. All three jams go particularly well with cheese and crackers and make elegant homemade gifts. The second half of the workshop covered the basics of water-bath canning so that once attendees have successfully made their jams, they can safely store them for future use. Almost 200 attendees joined via Zoom from as far as Texas and Colorado and as close as down the block from the presenter. Attendees sent in questions ahead of time, so we were able to address specific concerns including low sugar options and troubleshooting when jars do not seal.



Master Gardeners



MG's Build Second Compost Bioreactor

by Norine Cepernich (MG Volunteer)

UC Master Gardeners of San Mateo/San Francisco Counties are working on the **Johnson Su Bioreactor** at the Gardening Education Center (GEC) located in San Mateo. The compost will be used at the GEC. Description: Dr. David Johnson and his wife Hui-Chun Su have done



breakthrough work that addresses the efficacy of biologically correct, fungal-dominated compost for carbon sequestration and improved soil health and crop yields. The **Johnson-Su Bioreactor** method of creating compost is quite different from other composting methods. The most common commercial composting processes are designed and operated for speed and maximum product flow. This focus does not allow the compost to degrade sufficiently. Most home composting methods require

building a pile and turning it at regular intervals. The **Johnson-Su bioreactor** never needs turning, never has smells, and does not attract flies. The material is composted aerobically which encourages a complete biological breakdown of compost materials that results in a microbially diverse, fungal-dominant product that addresses soil health through soil biology. It replaces soil microbes in soil degraded through conventional agriculture methods. That, along with no-till practices, cover crops and other regenerative agriculture practices, enable the normal symbiosis between these microbes and plant roots to occur. Quite quickly, the soil starts to recover, and striking improvements in crop yields and carbon sequestration occurs.

Elkus Ranch



What's Happening at the Ranch



Elkus Ranch has returned to a bit of normalcy. We were thrilled to have the first of our school programs begin since the start of the pandemic in October. And, for the first time ever we hosted a (3) day Fall Camp in November. It filled to capacity and was a terrific experience for all. This camp will now be an annual offering before the Thanksgiving Holiday. We hosted our 2nd Annual Fall Craft Workshop. Attendees made wool dryer balls, using wool from our flock, Calendula Oil with petals harvested

from our flowers, and a succulent log center piece. Winter Camp is coming, December 20-22 and is already full! We are so thankful to have kids (humankind, not goat) back at the ranch. Speaking of kids, we should start seeing some newborns around the end of winter and will be planning a birthday party for them in March. Hope to see you at Elkus!

4-H



Archery is Back in San Mateo County 4-H

It's been over 10 years since we last had an archery project in our county. In the 2018-2019 program year, we were fortunate to have two



volunteers, Emma Johnson and Brad Cassetta, become certified archery leaders. With their leadership, our **Cañada/Redwood City 4-H Club** won the **CA 4-H Archery 2019 "Team Edge" Award** for the highest combined score. This piqued the interest for new potential members. Then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and we were unable to hold any in-person activities and subsequently, the indoor facility

used to hold our archery project meeting closed down permanently. In 2020, we started planning to hold archery project outdoors at the **Elkus Ranch Environmental Education Center** to ensure the safety of our 4-H families and community. This would not have been possible without a donation from the **Dean Memorial Legacy Funds**, which helped support the purchase of the archery equipment and supplies and the support of our **4-H volunteers**. With our 4-H volunteers as lead, we were able to hold the first archery demonstration at our **4-H Open House** on September 19, 2021 at Elkus Ranch. This has become a popular countywide project with 30 youth members participating and a waitlist. We plan to certify more volunteers to help expand the project going forward. The 4-H youth members learn how to safely operate and maintain the archery equipment, practice target shooting, and will have an opportunity to enter the 4-H statewide competition.

Every Day Is A Good Day To Plant A Tree

The **4-H Million Trees Project (4HMT)** is a countywide service-learning project that gives San Mateo County youth the opportunity to do their part in the climate crisis by planting trees. We are proud that one of our 4-H'ers from the Pacifica 4-H Club conceived 4HMT when she was thirteen. Laura and her dad, Tom, had just seen the film "An Inconvenient Truth" about global climate change. At the end of the film, they suggest to "plant a tree." Laura thought that was a good idea but that planting 1 million trees would be better! With the help of many people over the next seven years, they managed to plant the 1 millionth tree at Huddart County Park in 2014. Since then 4HMT has expanded internationally with a focus on East Africa, and to date over 250,000 participants have planted over 30 million trees to help slow global climate change. 4HMT gives youth leadership opportunities by planning tree planting events, public speaking opportunities such as at California 4-H State Field Day, ABC News, Nickelodeon (Laura was on Nickelodeon!), and more. One major goal of 4HMT is to encourage all 4-H youth to start service-learning projects in their passion areas. Tom Webber is still our active 4-H volunteer for 4HMT and a mentor for youth who would like to start a service learning project. What are you passionate about? Can you think up a project around that theme that would help others in your community, California, the U.S., or the entire world? Please feel free to contact Tom, 4hmilliontrees@gmail.com, if you want to discuss your ideas. **Please join us on January 29, 2022 and/or March 12, 2022 for our upcoming tree planting events** (locations and times to be announced). Contact Tom if you would like to participate.



EVENTS ETC...

- **Elkus Ranch Winter Camp | Dec. 20-Dec. 22 (full)**
- **UCCE Holiday Office Closure | Dec. 23 through Jan. 2**
- **MG Citrus Tree Care | Jan. 20 | 4-5:30**
- **MG School Garden Leaders Workshop | Jan. 22 | 10-11:30**
- **4-H Million Trees Planting | Jan. 29 (tbd)**

- 4-H Million Trees Planting | Mar 12 (tbd)
- Elkus Conference Center Rentals Available for 2022
- Elkus Small Group Tours & Adventure Days Booking



~ HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US ~

UC Cooperative Extension San Mateo / San Francisco Counties

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Located at Elkus Ranch
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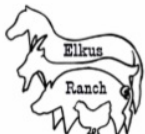
Website: <http://cesanmateo.ucanr.edu>

Master Gardener Helpline:

The Master Gardener Helpline will continue to operate remotely per their regular (Mon, Wed, Thurs) volunteer schedule.

Please submit all inquiries via email:

mgsmsf@ucanr.edu / 650-276-7430



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