

# Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center **STRATEGIC PLAN**

2015 - 2035



**University of California**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Research and Extension Center System





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# INTRODUCTION

The Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC) is one of nine Research and Extension Centers (RECs) within the University of California (UC) Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR). The REC system is a strong, vibrant organization of research and education academics supported by extraordinary research management capacity to conduct agriculture, natural resources, and human resources programs that enable the delivery of the highest quality science to foster healthy people and thriving communities. The Centers, located throughout California’s various climatic zones and representing nearly every type of agricultural and natural resources system in California, offer researchers places to conduct field experiments and outreach programs.

The HAREC facility was originally purchased in 1997 as an Agricultural Learning Center using proceeds from the Thelma Hansen Fund. Thelma Hansen was a Ventura county resident and farmer until her passing in 1993. Her Trust, bequeathed to the University of California, created the Thelma Hansen Fund (THF) “to support and maintain University research and extension activities for the sustainability and benefit of agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County.” In 2008, the Hansen Agricultural Learning Center was formally transitioned into the Research and Extension Center system to better fulfill the mission of the THF.

The 27-acre Center is located approximately 11 miles from the Pacific Coast in a valley that enjoys a temperate Mediterranean climate, and is surrounded by agricultural fields (flowers, strawberries, cane berries, and vegetables) and orchards (citrus and avocados). Because of its geographic isolation and size it has been relatively unaffected by major pests and pathogen infestations, providing fertile ground to conduct agricultural research. Current research activities range from landscape optimization to soil amendment nutrition and pest biocontrol studies. The facility is also home to an extensive plant cultivar bank that includes over 200 varieties of flowers, avocados, citrus, stone fruit, and other sub-tropical fruits. An extensive education and training program introduces youth to agricultural science and new growers to novel approaches and best practices in small-to-mid scale farming.

Historically, the commodities grown in Ventura County have changed dramatically in the past decades reflecting changing appetites of the consumer, as well as environmental, technological, and biological challenges for growers. To meet these growing challenges in the 21st Century, the HAREC will need to increase its research capacity and footprint on the landscape to host additional research and extension activities, increase education opportunities, and broaden its partnerships. This Strategic Plan provides a framework and key actions to enable the Center to remain a leader in providing science-based research in agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County.



# STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

## UC ANR Vision Statement

ANR envisions a thriving California in 2025 where healthy people and communities, healthy food systems, and healthy environments are strengthened by closer partnerships between University of California and its research and extension programs and the people of the state. The University remains connected and committed to the people of California, who enjoy a high quality of life, a healthy environment, and economic success in the global economy.

## Hansen Agricultural REC Mission Statement

To support and maintain University research and extension activities for the sustainability and benefit of agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

## REC System overarching goals

In 2012 UC ANR launched a coordinated, future-oriented strategic planning effort for all nine RECs. The strategic planning charge is to develop a long-term and big picture strategic plan centered on stakeholder input. The strategic plan is designed to serve as a “living document,” a flexible framework to set direction and focus effort over the next 20 years. The strategic planning effort is intended to be inclusive, future-oriented and with a focus on implementation and assessment of plan deliverables through time. The REC system’s overall strategic planning effort is structured to include the following guiding goals:

- Develop an effective and organized approach for research and outreach at the centers and among the centers
- Increase collaboration across the ANR network including collaborations with surrounding University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) programs
- Engage the local community in planning and implementation (local community is not necessarily place-based but also subject area-based).
- Engage partners not previously affiliated [e.g., non-ANR UC campuses, California State Universities (CSUs) and other colleges, agencies, organizations]
- Align REC strategic plan with the ANR Strategic Vision 2025
- Develop an effective communication and outreach program to increase visibility and

- programmatic impact of the REC
- Ensure REC resources are effectively and efficiently utilized, and explore new and diverse opportunities
- Reconstruct the REC system identity by enhancing programming and facility resources

## Planning process

In September 2014, a ten-member strategic planning committee was formed (see table next page) with members broadly representing major HAREC stakeholder groups. These core committee members served as assessment and feedback links with the diverse stakeholder group vested in the long-term future of HAREC. In November 2014 the HAREC Strategic Planning Committee kicked off its strategic planning process that included assessment, strategy formulation, and implementation accountability. The committee had four, one-day, in-person meetings. The first meeting provided an overview of the Division’s vision, the UC REC system’s long-term goals, and HAREC’s mission, history, and operations. The committee conducted a situational analysis that included obtaining input from other key stakeholders to identify current strengths of HAREC, as well as outline potential future opportunities and challenges that could influence how HAREC operates in the future. The second meeting focused on understanding and exploring the stakeholder input and synthesizing this input into broad strategic directions. The third meeting focused on refining the scope of the strategic directions through developing

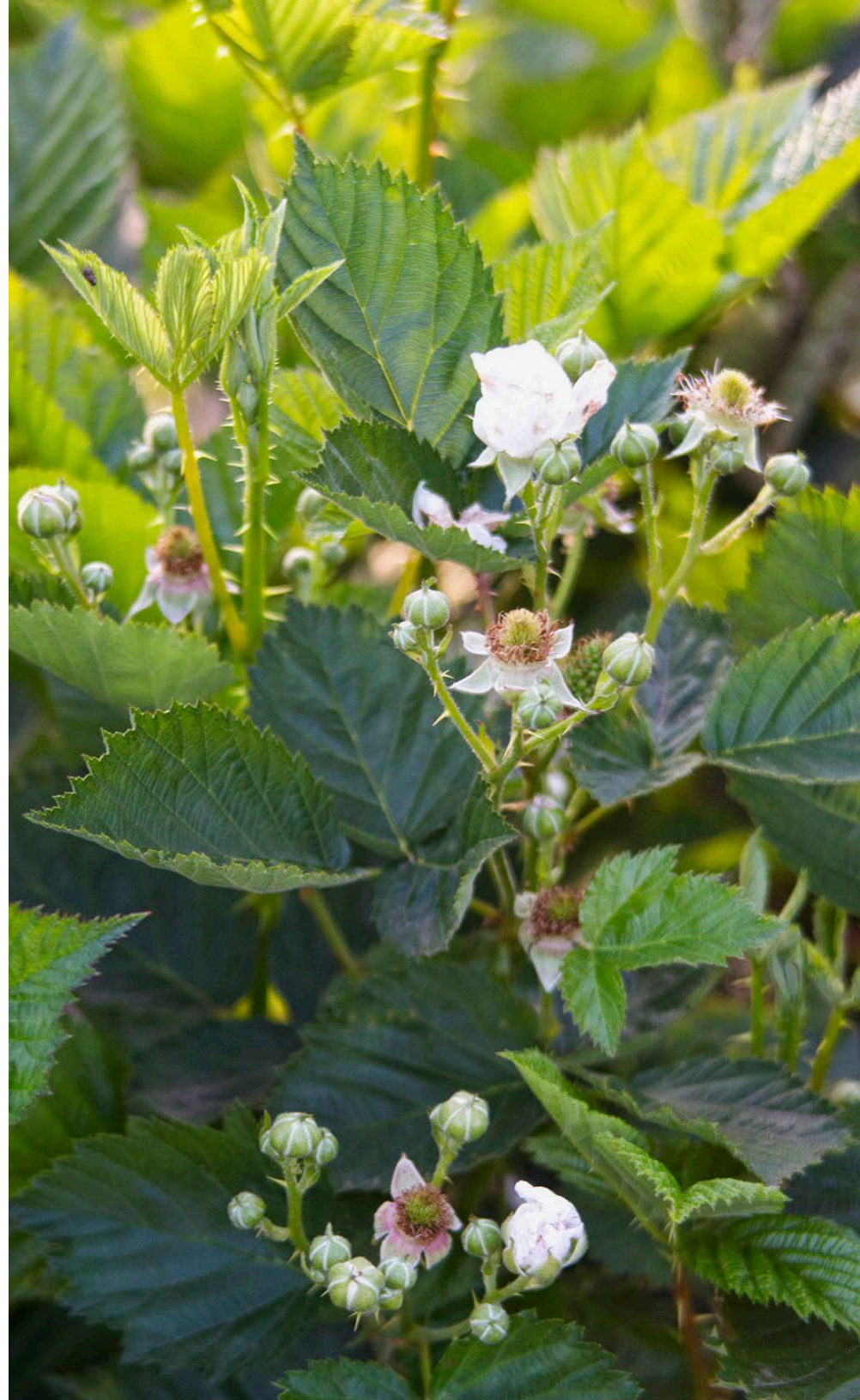
goals and key actions associated with each strategic direction. Committee members then went back to key stakeholder groups to get feedback on the committee’s proposed strategy, which was discussed during the fourth meeting and helped refine the content of the draft strategic plan. The HAREC Director, Associate Director of the REC system, and facilitators finalized the draft strategic plan including the implementation accountability elements, intended outcomes, implementation responsibility, and deliverables. This final draft plan was circulated one last time for committee member comment during summer 2015.

## Implementation and assessing strategic plan outcomes

Early on in the REC system’s strategic planning process, it was recognized that the strategic planning process must be intimately linked to a streamlined and executable implementation and assessment plan. Toward this end, the HAREC Director identified deliverables associated with each key action as well as the persons/organizations with implementation authority. This broad matrix that links strategic directions, goals, and actions with implementation responsibility and deliverables will be used as the framework for identifying implementation priorities and assessing implementation progress through time. The HAREC Director in conjunction with REC system administrators will develop annual priorities for plan implementation. Deliverables associated with goals and key actions will be used by REC administrators and the HAREC Director to jointly set outcome targets and annually review progress toward priorities.

Committee Member	Committee Member Stakeholder Affiliation	Stakeholder Groups that Provided Input	
Christopher Smith, Chair	Center Director, UC ANR HAREC and UCCE County Director, Ventura County	<div><div>• Cattlemen’s Association</div><div>• CSU Channel Islands</div><div>• Hansen Advisory Board</div></div>	<div><div>• Sierra Club</div><div>• Ventura County Board of Supervisors</div></div>
Andre Biscaro	UCCE Irrigation and Nutrient Management Advisor, Ventura County	• UCCE Advisors and Specialists (referred to in the remainder of this document as UCCE Academics)	
Jose Fernandez De Soto	Small Farms and Sub-Tropical Crops Academic Coordinator, UC ANR HAREC	<div><div>• Agriculture Commissioner Office</div><div>• CSU Channel Islands</div></div>	<div><div>• UC Santa Barbara</div></div>
Sabrina Drill	UCCE Natural Resources Advisor, Los Angeles and Ventura Counties and Associate Director, California Naturalist Statewide Program	<div><div>• California Sea Grant</div><div>• Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency</div><div>• National Park Service – Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area</div></div>	<div><div>• Ojai Valley Land Conservancy</div><div>• Resource Conservation District of Santa Monica Mountains</div><div>• Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy</div></div>
Scott Klittich	Grower, Otto & Sons Nursery	<div><div>• Valley Crest Nursery</div><div>• La Verne Nursery</div><div>• Limoneira</div></div>	<div><div>• Pyramid Flowers</div><div>• San Miguel Produce</div><div>• Ventura County Farm Bureau</div></div>
Mary Maranville	Founder and Executive Director, Students for Eco-Education and Agriculture (SEEAG)	<div><div>• Conejo Valley Unified School District</div><div>• Oxnard School District</div></div>	<div><div>• Ventura County Office of Education</div><div>• Ventura Unified School District</div></div>
Phil McGrath	Grower and Owner, McGrath Family Farms	<div><div>• Los Angeles Food Policy</div></div>	<div><div>• Ventura Farm to School Program</div></div>
Dave Murray	Grower, Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce	• California Strawberry Commission	
Philippe Rolshausen	UCCE Specialist, Sub-Tropical Crops, Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, UC Riverside	<div><div>• California Avocado Commission</div><div>• Citrus Research Board</div><div>• College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, UC Riverside</div></div>	<div><div>• UCCE specialists at UC Riverside</div></div>
Lisa Fischer, Ex-Officio	Associate Director, UC ANR REC System		
Kit Alviz, Facilitator	Analyst, UC ANR Program Planning and Evaluation		
Katherine Webb-Martinez, Facilitator	Analyst, UC ANR Program Planning and Evaluation		
Lauren McNees, Staff	Program and Event Specialist, UC ANR Program Support Unit		





# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

## Increase research and extension capacity

Agricultural research in Ventura County has evolved over the past decade to begin to address changing economics, climatic conditions, and environmental conditions. Currently, HAREC's limited acreage and on-site state-of-the-art research facilities significantly limit the amount of and breadth of research conducted at the Center. Increasing the research capacity, including improving and developing physical infrastructure, expanding the current footprint of HAREC, creating strong and new collaborative partnerships, and engaging researchers on a broader spectrum, will enable the Center to address critical and emerging agriculture and natural resources issues in Ventura County.

### Goals

1. Address critical and emerging research issues
2. Enhance facilities and infrastructure needed to support expanded research and extension activities
3. Develop new collaborative partnerships to conduct expanded research
4. Expand research on interfaces between agriculture, natural resources, and urban communities
5. Increase staffing to support enhanced research programs

### Intended Outcomes

- HAREC serves as a regional hub for agriculture and natural resource research, extension, and education
- HAREC has adequate physical and human resources to conduct needed research, extension, and education activities
- HAREC serves as a catalyst for agriculture innovation



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

## Goal 1: Address critical and emerging research issues

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Conduct a needs assessments to identify emerging agricultural issues in Ventura County	HAREC Director working with UCCE Ventura County Advisory Committee, and Farm Bureau Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Critical issues are determined based on combined assessments goal</li><li>Number of assessments involving HAREC and/or HAREC resources</li></ul>
B. Work with UCCE Ventura County Advisory Committee to refresh the needs assessment on a regular schedule (every 5-8 years)	HAREC Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refresh needs assessment every 5-8 years</li></ul>
C. Prioritize critical and emerging agricultural issues and develop a timeline for rapid response for key issues in Ventura County	HAREC Director working with Research Advisory Committee (RAC), Hansen Advisory Board (HAB), and Subject Matter Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>RAC-recommended prioritized projects address critical issues</li><li>Rapid response timeline developed for key emerging issues</li></ul>
D. Leverage research opportunities with other entities in concert with HAREC to address critical and emerging issues	HAREC Director working with UCCE Academics, REC System Directors, and other UC and non-UC entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of collaborations involving HAREC and/or HAREC resources</li></ul>

## Goal 2: Enhance facilities and infrastructure needed to support expanded research and extension activities

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Create a committee comprised of key stakeholders to develop criteria for an expanded REC in Ventura County	HAREC Director, Associate Director of REC System, and Criteria Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recommended criteria for UC Office of the President (UCOP) Real Estate Services</li></ul>
B. Increase physical land capacity for expanded research and extension activities	REC System Director working with Associate Director of REC System, HAREC Director, and UCOP Real Estate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Options for increased acreage in Ventura County meeting criteria</li></ul>
C. Develop facilities plan to support identified needs for expanding research and extension activities	HAREC Director working with Associate Director of REC System, UC ANR Facilities and Planning, UC ANR Resource Planning and Management, and UC ANR Development Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Facilities and plans to expand research and extension capacity</li><li>Capital campaign for facilities development/expansion</li></ul>

Goal 3: Develop new collaborative partnerships to conduct expanded research

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Expand HAREC’s annual grants program to provide seed funding to engage additional collaborations/ partnerships	HAREC Director working with RAC and HAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of projects for which HAREC provides seed funding</li><li>External dollars leveraged tracked</li></ul>
B. Create and host targeted events to foster new collaborative partnerships to expand research	HAREC Director working with UC ANR Development Services, UC ANR Strategic Communications Director, and UCCE Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of new events targeted to increase new partnerships</li></ul>
C. Establish a New Crop Development program to identify new crop varieties suitable for cultivation in a Mediterranean climate	UCCE Academics and HAREC Director working with RAC and HAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identification of new crop varieties</li><li>Number of new variety research trials</li></ul>
D. Build partnerships with innovators and entrepreneurs in related agriculture and natural resources to integrate new technologies with the needs of the regional agricultural community	UCCE Academics and HAREC Director working with UC ANR Development Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New partnerships with innovators/entrepreneurs</li></ul>

Goal 4: Expand research on interfaces between agriculture, natural resources, and urban communities

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Engage researchers to develop projects (physical, biological, policy, etc.) that examine issues related to the interfaces between agriculture, open space, urban environments, etc.	HAREC Director and UCCE Academics working with RAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of projects that address issues at these interfaces</li><li>Number of recommended actions, based on research results, to address conflicts at these interfaces</li><li>Number of new researchers</li></ul>
B. Identify researchers and stakeholders focused on projects that address issues at the interface between conventional and organic farming	HAREC Director and UCCE Academics working with RAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of projects that address issues at these interfaces</li><li>Number of collaborations</li></ul>

Goal 5: Increase staffing to support enhanced research programs

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Develop a staffing plan that includes an increase in skilled research and support staff	HAREC Director, HAB, Associate Director of REC System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of permanent researchers hired</li><li>Number of staff hired</li><li>New model for funding positions</li></ul>
B. Develop office spaces and “hotel workstations” for visiting researchers, postdoc’s, and others coming to work at the Center temporarily	HAREC Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of visiting researchers working at the facility</li><li>Number of researchers working with local growers on a facility research project</li></ul>





# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

## Enhance science literacy

Science literacy is key to addressing the full breadth of agricultural, environmental, health, and food safety issues our society faces, and is critical to creating effective, community supported policy. Stakeholder groups recognize the impact of HAREC's efforts with education and outreach with youth, however HAREC lacks practical, hands-on, continuing educational opportunities for agricultural professionals and the broader public. The goals and action items described in this strategic direction include expanding educational and training opportunities for youth and adult populations, especially professional growers, field workers, managers, higher education students, community leaders, and resource stewards. These new activities and resulting partnerships will enable HAREC to work towards improving science literacy and skills in agriculture in Ventura County.

### Goals

1. Enhance opportunities to provide education and training of future generations of agriculture professionals
2. Increase the public's understanding of environmental, agricultural, and food issues
3. Increase education and training for growers and agriculture professionals

### Intended Outcomes

- Increased adult and youth science literacy related to agriculture, natural resources, and food
- New generation of farmers who can compete in the global market
- New volunteers and professionals for natural resource stewardship
- Established network of different educational entities



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

## Goal 1: Enhance opportunities to provide education and training of future generations of agriculture professionals

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Provide internship and scholarship opportunities for research and study at HAREC facilities, in partnership with other formal and informal education venues	HAREC Director working with RAC, HAB, Associate Director of REC System, and other non-UC partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of internships and scholarships available</li></ul>
B. Engage with local colleges to support formal, academic agricultural and environmental programs	HAREC Director working with local colleges and UCCE Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New agriculture-related programs for college students</li><li>Number of college-level students engaged with HAREC</li></ul>
C. Serve as a living classroom for youth, adults and educators in natural resources and agriculture issues in Ventura County	HAREC Director working with Project Learning Tree (PLT) Coordinator, UC ANR Statewide Youth, Families, and Communities (YFC) Director, UC ANR Statewide California Naturalist (CalNat) Program Director, and local, informal education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of educational programs delivered</li><li>Participant outcomes evaluated and communicated</li></ul>
D. Participate in agriculture and natural resource focused career development	HAREC Community Education Specialist (CES) working with UC ANR Statewide CalNat Program Director, and UCCE Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of UC educational programs delivered in green job training (i.e., conservation corps) programs</li><li>Number of career fairs hosted or participated in</li><li>Number of career fairs engaging underserved communities</li></ul>

## Goal 2: Increase the public’s understanding of environmental, agricultural, and food issues

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Provide symposia, seminars, field days, forums, and targeted education events	HAREC Director and HAREC CES working with 4-H CES, UCCE Academics, and PLT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of events/symposia/seminars convened</li><li>Number of community education events</li><li>Participant outcomes documented and communicated</li></ul>
B. Determine staffing and program delivery needs to address education, outreach, and training	HAREC Director, HAB, HAREC Staff, and Associate Director of REC System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Staffing plan developed</li></ul>

## Goal 3: Increase education and training for growers and agriculture professionals in Ventura County

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Facilitate access to information on farming efficiency and sustainability	HAREC Director and UCCE Academics working with UC ANR Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), UC ANR Communication Services and Information Technology (CS&IT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>More relevant content on website</li><li>Increased forums for providing information on farming</li><li>Number of professional training events and participants</li></ul>
B. Host farmworker and field manager education and field training programs (more technical content than A)	UCCE Academics working with HAREC stakeholders, UC ANR Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program, and UC ANR EH&S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of professional training events and participants</li><li>Number of onsite education programs</li><li>Participant outcomes documented and communicated</li></ul>





# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

## Enhance visibility of HAREC

HAREC is well known within the local community for educational outreach and its historical red barn and Victorian house. Annual research symposia are conducted to share the benefits and impacts of the research projects for Ventura County, however its research presence is not well known outside of Santa Paula. Furthermore, the center is underutilized; its unique geographic location puts HAREC in a position to address more agricultural, natural resource, and urban issues relevant to the local community, industries, and academia. To expand utilization of the center for addressing these issues, HAREC needs to increase its visibility to more stakeholders. This strategic direction focuses on a concerted and organized effort to highlight the benefits of current HAREC activities and to effectively market new opportunities for research (e.g., perennial and annual cropping systems), education (e.g., teacher training, HS/CC practical training/internship programs), and the promotion of agriculture in our regional communities.

### Goals

1. Develop a marketing, outreach, and communications strategy

### Intended Outcomes

- The benefit of HAREC is more widely understood and utilized by the community and academia
- Scope of marketing includes new media outlets and hosting more events
- Expanded utilization of HAREC infrastructure for community outreach activities



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

## Goal 1: Develop a marketing, outreach and communications strategy

KEY ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
A. Identify and utilize effective media such as e-newsletters, social media, etc.	HAREC Staff working with UC ANR CS&IT, UCCE Academics, and HAREC Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased number and variety of media outlets</li><li>Effectiveness of media is documented (e.g., Google analytics)</li></ul>
B. Develop a communications plan and cultivate local media to reach new and diverse audiences	HAREC Director working with UCCE Academics, UC ANR CS&IT, and UC ANR Development Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communications plan developed</li><li>Documented interactions with potential and new researchers</li><li>Demographics of outreach tracked</li></ul>





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Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Linda Marie Manton, Affirmative Action Contact, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1318.