

Internship Opportunity at UCCE Ventura County

About UCCE Ventura County: The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) is the public service of the University of California to local communities. At UCCE Ventura, we conduct research and outreach activities in agriculture and natural resources and strive to create healthy communities, food systems, and environments. To learn more visit <https://ceventura.ucanr.edu/>

Project Description

Agricultural drainage ditches frequently maintain vegetation year-round that can provide resources and refuge to arthropods. This could help preserve diversity and abundance of beneficial species, as well as pests that use weedy plant species common in these areas. The role of ditch vegetation as refugia to arthropod pests, and their predators and parasitoids has never been studied in Ventura County. The research goals of this project are: 1) explore the relationship between ditch vegetation and the presence of three common insect pests, 2) assess the extent to which ditches serve as refugia for them and 3) their predator-parasitoid complex, and 4) determine if ditches can be a reservoir for Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus (INSV). This project is central to understanding how drainage ditch management practices in Ventura County might contribute to more sustainable control of troublesome pests, and help enhance the beneficial services of predators and parasitoids.

Learning Objectives and Tasks

- Obtain hands-on research experience in the field and the lab
- Participate in vegetation monitoring and plant identification
- Acquire skills in entomological research including sample collection, identification, and preservation
- Gain experience in arthropod taxonomy/ identification
- Advance your knowledge of agroecology, biocontrol, and ecosystem services to agriculture
- Learn to use field and lab test kits to detect plant diseases (INSV)

Expectations

- Able to commit at least 8 hours per week for a 5-month period
- Interest in agricultural sciences, entomology, or agroecology is desired as demonstrated by previous courses or volunteer work
- Ability and willingness to work both independently and in group settings
- Driver's license (preferred)

Compensation: Stipend of \$2640 for the full internship period.

Number of Positions: 2

Start Date: August 15, 2023

End Date: December 15, 2023

May be renewed for another 5 months (January 15-June 15, 2024)

To apply, please send a one-page CV and a brief statement of interest to

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Deadline to submit applications: July 10th, 2023