

ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment

Risk Categories

Information - Reliability, Validity and Requests

General Description: The risk associated with the quality of information given by UCCE staff and volunteers, requests for information by clientele, and knowledge of illegal activity by staff are all seen to be serious liabilities, which could have legal implications. (also see Risk: Information – Confidentiality).

Specific Examples:

- A. Misinformation provided by UCCE Volunteers and/or Staff
 - 1. Constant turnover in staff, therefore risk of misinformation and communication to involved public.
 - 2. Lack of legal knowledge - Advisors/volunteers providing "illegal" advice.
 - 3. Volunteers convey "scientific" content that is inaccurate.
 - 4. Volunteers and/or staff make recommendations that do not have scientific backing or validation; but are opinion instead.
 - 5. Liability for poor/incorrect information or advice from farm advisor.
 - 6. Risk of volunteers giving misinformation that results in some type of harm to individuals.
 - 7. Legal liability for advice given to growers – well-intended advice that didn't work well.

- B. Requests for Service or Information
 - 1. Reliance by third parties on ANR information, putting ANR at risk of litigation.
 - 2. Serving as an expert witness, exposing UCCE to legal liability.
 - 3. Risk of lawsuits due to lack of support from UCCE to an individual's request for support or information - UCCE can't do everything that the public would like us to.
 - 4. Legal challenges from environmental groups - asserting that UCCE only work for farmers.

- C. Knowledge of Illegal Activity
 - 1. The risk associated with farm advisors holding knowledge about illegal or improper farm practices; i.e., illegal workers, misuse, etc.
 - 2. Illegal activity of any kind, e.g., growing marijuana, producing methamphetamine, blatant National Park Service violations.