

# **ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment Best Practices**

## **Information – Reliability, Validity & Requests**

### **A. Misinformation provided by UCCE Volunteers and/or Staff**

1. Provide training to advisors, etc. in Information Practices (IP)
2. Supervise and train volunteers and staff; particularly train volunteers on UC/ANR policies, with written guidelines for reference.
3. Inform staff and volunteers about their responsibility and liability for giving accurate and reliable information to clientele; inform volunteers of their role/function and limits of authority
4. Ask volunteers to refer questions on which they have no expertise or need clarification to UC staff
5. Utilize trained and supervised volunteers, such as Master Gardeners, who understand policies on extending research-based information
6. Encourage advisors to obtain necessary licenses, and certifications
7. Encourage the production of new, up-to-date, comprehensive peer-reviewed educational materials
8. Provide academic orientation and “refresher” trainings to advisors/staff (include Information Practices, Expert Witness, ethics, and conflict of Interest training)
9. Limit and monitor volunteers conveying information to the public
10. Develop or strengthen policies and procedures in writing for all volunteers and staff (i.e., Master Food Preservers, office staff, academics)
11. Ensure that concern over potential lawsuits does not affect the proper function of the employee or the purpose of the activity
12. Avoid having conflicting standards within ANR. For example, mission to extend research-based information must apply to all activities; therefore, publications should not contain non-research-based information and grower testimonials
13. Expand biometrics workgroup for statistical support, advisor training, and biometrics support
14. Promote production of new up-to-date and accurate ANR Publications by rewarding advisors for creating new high-priority educational materials

### **B. Requests for Service or Information**

1. Maintain “independent” advisory role and avoiding conflict of interest situations with individuals/groups
2. Monitor and evaluate public information
3. Use disclaimers or qualifiers in dissemination of information
4. Strengthen and enforce policies regarding legal testimony and expert witness work
5. Conduct legal analysis regarding the type of advice given by advisors and then develop recommendations and guidelines

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6. Comply with current laws regarding pesticide recommendations, range management and forestry recommendations
7. Contact the Office of the Controller and Business Services regarding all requests for information under the California Public Records Act

### **C. Knowledge of Illegal Activity**

1. Train staff in the legality of holding/withholding information about illegal activities
2. Call the Office of Controller and Business Services, who will check with General Counsel on legal reporting requirements