

## **Drone Camps to help teens' interest in science take off**

*Free summer camps for youths, ages 13-18, in San Jose, Napa, Redding*

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This July and August, teens ages 13 to 18 are invited to attend a free Youth Drone Camp at locations across the Bay Area and Northern California. The camp is organized by California 4-H, a youth development program of the University of California and delivered through UC Cooperative Extension.

The camps will be held July 7-11 in San Jose, July 21-25 in Napa and Aug. 4-8 in Redding. [Registration is required](https://qrco.de/dronecamp). Details can be found at <https://qrco.de/dronecamp>.

During the camp, participants will safely fly drones, capture aerial images, process data, and use GIS mapping software. Through hands-on activities and teamwork, the young people will be developing stronger STEM skills that can prepare them for future careers in agriculture, technology and environmental science. They will explore topics like crop health, livestock monitoring and food justice.

"As the leading agricultural state, California offers incredible opportunities for youth to explore careers in agriculture," said Steven Worker, 4-H youth development advisor for Marin County and an organizer of the camp. "We aim to inspire young people to see agriculture as an innovative field – one that integrates cutting-edge technology and environmental science."

The camp is free for all participants, with space for up to 24 teens at each camp. Spots will be available on a first-come basis for the camps. Each camp will be held Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily.

The Drone Camps are part of AFA<sup>2</sup>, a three-year, \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The grant is aimed at sparking interest in food and agriculture among teenagers by using cutting-edge drone and mapping technologies.

By blending hands-on activities with real-world applications, AFA<sup>2</sup> empowers young people to explore the science behind agriculture in fun and meaningful ways. AFA<sup>2</sup> demonstrates that technology can make a real difference in communities and ensures that the next generation of agricultural scientists and leaders is diverse, skilled and ready to take on the challenges of the future.

California 4-H is the youth development program of the University of California and delivered through UC Cooperative Extension in every county in California. 4-H grows true leaders, youth who are empowered for life today and prepared for a career tomorrow. The hands-on approach in 4-H gives young people guidance, tools and encouragement, and then puts them in the driver's seat to make great things happen.

Independent research confirms the unparalleled impact of the 4-H experience, demonstrating that young people are four times more likely to contribute to their communities; two times more likely to make healthier choices; two times more likely to be civically active; and two times more likely to participate in STEM programs. Learn more at [4h.ucanr.edu](https://4h.ucanr.edu).

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