
UC ANR Research & Extension Center System

2025-2030 Strategic Framework

December 2025



**UC Research &
Extension Centers**
University of California
Agriculture & Natural Resources

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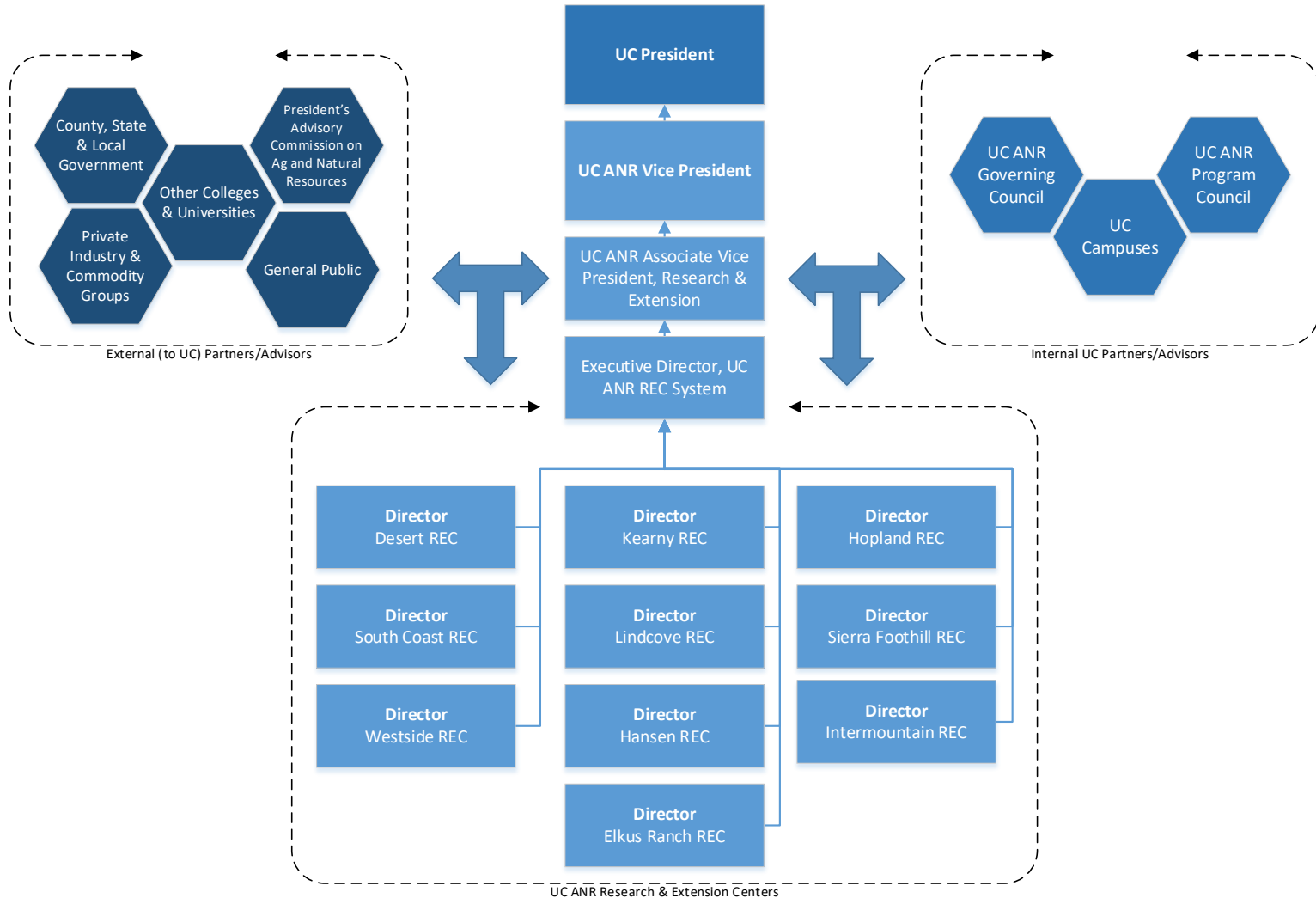
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UC ANR REC System Organizational Layout



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The REC System Organizational Chart



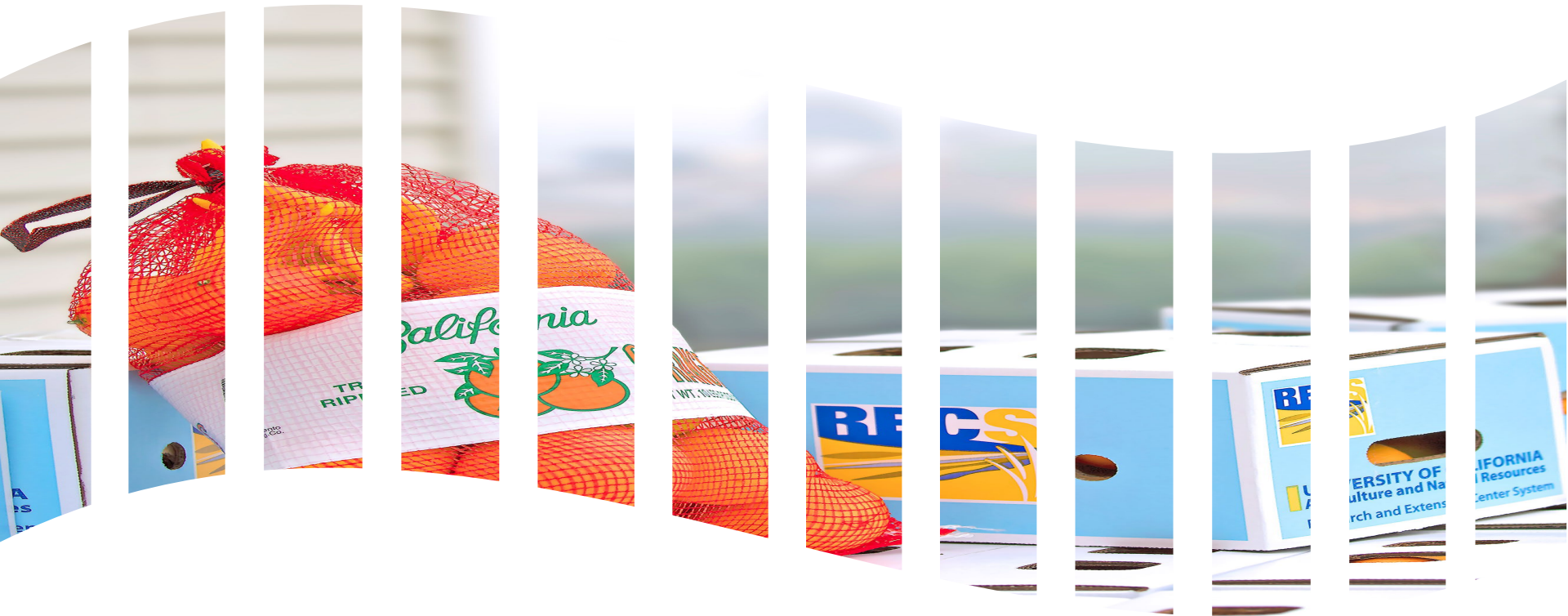
UC ANR REC System Mission and Vision



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UC ANR REC System Mission

In support of the UC ANR Mission, we provide a unique network of living laboratories generating innovative research, education and outreach to benefit diverse communities across California's agricultural, wildland, and urban environments.



The REC System Vision

Be the go-to source for the discovery and demonstration of practical solutions to meet the agricultural and natural resource needs of rural and urban communities in California and beyond

Stretching from Oregon to Mexico, from the Sierra Mountains across the Great Central Valley and Coastal Ranges and on to the Pacific Ocean, our ten unique REC locations will leverage California's diverse climates and ecosystems, its 400+ agricultural commodities and the strength of the University of California system to attract a global consortium of leading researchers and educators. Together we will advance science-based solutions for both large and small scale agricultural and environmental issues - improving access to nutritious and affordable food, while protecting natural resources. We will engage California's diverse rural and urban communities in hands-on learning to promote science literacy and 21st century life skills. Our work will elevate California's economic prosperity while protecting wildlife, enhancing habitat and making our forests, parks, and communities healthy.

We will create novel partnerships across California and the world to generate resources and opportunities that will enhance our ongoing sustainability. We will create hubs of innovation and invest in facilities and new technology to address changing needs and emerging problems. Our people will be proud to work in the UC ANR REC System, knowing that they contribute to helping the people of California adapt to the most pressing climate, environmental, and food system challenges.

Strategic Framework Decision Drivers



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Current Challenges Facing the RECs

This Strategic Framework was developed to address current market and organizational realities that have impacted the future viability of the REC System.

1. Due to an ongoing decline in funding, there are fewer UC faculty based at RECs than in the past, fewer campus-based faculty conducting field-based traditional agriculture research, and insufficient funding for infrastructure improvements and deferred maintenance.
2. Many researchers within the UC system and beyond are not aware of the REC assets available to them.
3. While some of the RECs benefit from strong collaboration with campus faculty, a high level of collaboration is not present at all RECs.
4. Skilled labor staffing levels and contract labor availability impedes the ability of individual RECs to provide timely and efficient project support or take on more capacity.
5. Long-term viability of the RECs relies on increased utilization by researchers who have funding to cover research expenditures.

2025 UC ANR REC System SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Skilled, committed people with institutional knowledge
- Diverse geographic locations across CA
- UC ANR values and mission
- Breadth (diversity) of programmatic areas
- Partnerships: County, UC, community, Statewide Programs
- Strong community engagement
- Sustained relationships
- Client trust including UC brand
- Globally known
- Technical coverage / diversity
- Science-based research expertise
- Stability: facilities, people, REC leadership
- Nimbleness – able to address emerging issues
- Research extension-farmer nexus
- Digital library and resources
- Systemness

Opportunities

- CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulations' move from IPM to SPM (sustainable pest management)
- Change in CA regulations: SGMA, nitrogen, food safety, heat
- State's interest in workforce development, economic development, innovation
- Impacts of climate change
- Political landscape provides opportunity to lead in engagement and humane responses
- MAHA (Make America Healthy Again) political platform focusing on health and prevention
- Ag Tech and AI
- Environmental education curriculum requirements
- Reduced federal funding increases need for local and regional partnership
- Lack of other community spaces for science engagement
- Depressed labor market and federal layoffs resulting in more applicants

Weaknesses

- Lack of visibility
- Historical perception of RECs as UC field stations
- Lack of sales / marketing mentality
- Lack of internal communication tool(s)
- Inconsistent personnel across RECs for community engagement, IT, HR, admin support
- Staffing levels make it hard to take on new initiatives, no extra capacity
- Staff recruitment, finding skilled staff, slow hiring
- Lack of training and development for new and ongoing staff
- Limited funding
- Uneven revenue generation opportunities across the RECs; unclear guidance
- Under-supported by ANR—not always aligned with ANR priorities
- Paperwork: complex policies, lengthy processes, contracting out regulations
- Remote locations
- Limited transportation to RECs
- Insufficient physical security at locations (fencing, card key, etc.)
- Outdated facilities and tech
- Weak Wi-Fi strength that doesn't cover entire site at some RECs

Threats

- Loss of federal funding, state budget limitations, tariffs, inflation
- Climate change, fire, water scarcity
- Mono-cropping
- New pests / invasive species
- Loss of public trust in science
- Misinformation / social media disinformation
- Fewer people going into science, especially in Ag
- Computer models replacing field research
- AI
- Lack of empathy / political landscape
- Changing work cultures and expectations post-COVID
- Lack of labor availability

UC ANR REC System 2025-2030 Strategic Objectives and Goals



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UC ANR Strategic Objectives

The following five strategic objectives are broad-based, long-term aims that will move UC ANR towards actualizing its vision. These objectives are largely shared by the UC Office of the President. All UC ANR and REC System goals support one or more of these objectives.

Executing the Mission:

Research and Extension

Cultivate thriving communities, sustainable agriculture, resilient ecosystems, and economic prosperity in California through development and sharing of equitable and collaborative science-based solutions that have national and global impact

In Support of the Mission:

People

Attract, develop, and retain diverse, highly productive, talented, and motivated people who exemplify our core values and thrive in a culture of equity and inclusion, service, innovation, and change

Financial Stability

Ensure financial strength of the University through sustainable and innovative financial models with efficient and effective financial management practices

Operational Excellence

Optimize delivery of programs and services through systemwide implementation of best practices that promote efficiency, effectiveness, health, safety, confidence, and quality

Awareness & Visibility

Advance UC's mission by marshalling the institution's expertise and external partners to effectively advance public policy issues and communicate the value of UC to our stakeholders, California, and the world

UC ANR REC System Goal Snapshot

All of the goals in the REC System Framework aim to accomplish the same high-level objectives:

- Support the Mission of UC ANR
- Increase Utilization of the RECs
- Enhance Financial Stability

Through systemness we aim to more effectively accomplish these objectives.

Goal #	Lead	Goal Topic	Strategic Objective				
			Research & Extension	Operational Excellence	Financial Stability	People	Policy & Advocacy
1	Lacan / Schilder	Increase Visibility and Utilization of the REC System	■	■	■		■
2	Diaz / El-Kereamy	Support Novel Technology in Agriculture	■		■		
3	Bailey / Swelam	Develop REC Business Plans		■	■		
4	Pedroncelli / Diaz	Improve and Enhance Facilities and Infrastructure	■		■		
5	Flavel / Wilson	Optimize REC Procedures		■	■	■	

REC System Goal 1: Increase Visibility and Utilization of the REC System

Leads: Annemiek Schilder / Igor Lacan

Goal: Increase visibility of the REC System to increase utilization and impact and promote financial stability, by December 2030

Problem:

Knowledge and understanding of RECs is generally low within and outside of the University of California and limited to academics with active research projects at a specific REC. The RECs may also be confused with the UC Natural Reserve System or campus-affiliated centers. Even if people have knowledge of RECs, they may not be aware of all that the RECs have to offer. This may be one reason why the RECs are not utilized to their full potential by researchers and educators, reducing potential impact of research and extension projects as well as recharge income to cover operating costs.

It is unclear what markets of users we are not reaching, and how our value is perceived by our current and potential future users. Also, it is unclear what the key barriers stand in the way of relevant parties using the RECs (e.g., infrastructure, rate charges, accommodations, processes and paperwork, slow implementation timelines?) and even where potential users go for information about research sites.

There is no central, easy-to-use list or database of REC facilities which could provide details of what exactly is available in terms of research and education facilities, e.g., lab capacity, lodging, climatic/ecological zone, natural features, research plots, and greenhouses). Thus, a new academic has no way of quickly scanning the REC system to find a potential research site or collaborator(s). In addition, we lack a cohesive, thought-out communications strategy that would present RECs as a system and would simplify and align messaging across different RECs.

Proposed Solution:

We will start by researching the key causes of low visibility and low utilization of the RECs. A workgroup, formed for this purpose and led by a dedicated staff person hired for their communications and public relations expertise, would address the key issues identified above (markets for information about RECs, unique value of RECs, etc.) and would survey key current and potential users, to determine whether our view of the issues aligns with what the potential users tell us.

The staff person and the workgroup then outline a plan for multimedia marketing for each REC and the REC System as a whole, to include a central repository for REC information (the REC info portal), videos for each REC, presentations to campus and other partners, and templates for REC-outreach events like “open house” days (including best practices on engaging with different media, esp. local media).

Finally, we would examine how implementing the Hub concept has contributed to increasing visibility of SCREC, and what lessons learned can be transferred to other RECs.

Benefits:

1. Increases partnerships (campuses, agencies, etc.) that expand academic collaborations and thus increase the number of stakeholders who advocate for the RECs.
2. Increases utilization of the RECs, including by new and more diverse users, bringing new research and education projects and activities at the RECs increasing impact.
3. Increased recognition of the value of the REC System.
4. Additional and/or more diverse funding streams from increased utilization and partnerships leading to increased financial stability of the RECs.

REC System Goal 1: Increase Visibility and Utilization of the REC System Continued

Leads: Annemiek Schilder / Igor Lacan

#	Key Strategies & Timeline	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
1a	Create a workgroup and do background research to understand causes of low visibility and utilization, including user satisfaction, of the RECs by April 2027					
1b	Hire and/or assign employee(s) to design and lead the survey, then implement the publicity and marketing plan; 2.5 FTE by July 2027					
1c	Develop a marketing plan for the REC System that then informs and provides guidelines for each REC to complete a marketing plan (template provided by Goal 3), that will be incorporated into the comprehensive business plans by July 2028					
1d	Develop outreach materials, such as brochures, a short video (4-8 minutes) for each REC, including a drone fly over; GIS maps of RECs and description of facilities and features of RECs. Publicize via social media. This is led by the assigned staff (1b), working alongside REC Directors, StratComm, and ANR Publications by July 2030					
1e	Create and maintain a central repository of REC information: a REC Info portal, including both a database, maps, and a set of videos (one for each RECs). Led by the assigned staff (1b), working alongside REC Directors, ANRIT, and REC Central by July 2029					
1f	Develop and implement formal "open house" plans for each REC that focuses on increasing visibility. Advertise widely within UC and to government agency partners. Templates created by the assigned staff (1b), modified by REC Directors by July 2030					
1g	Develop a rotating schedule to make presentations about the REC System at various UC and other campuses by July 2030					
1h	Use Hub concept as a visibility/marketing tool for the RECs. Then evaluate the increase in visibility that resulted from the implementation of the Hub. Analyzed by Staff (1b) and Rec Central by July 2030					

Assumptions:

1. Lack of visibility is primarily a communication issue (e.g., marketing, advertising, awareness-raising, brand-distinguishing)
2. Funding is available for the hiring of qualified individuals to produce promotional brochures, videos, outreach materials, websites, etc.; the individual(s) hired understand RECs and REC needs and actively engage with individual RECs.
3. Improved profile/visibility will increase engagement, outreach, scientific productivity, and impact
4. Increased publicity will lead to increased support from stakeholders, communities, and policy-makers, and increased funding of the RECs

Metrics and Targets:

1. Number of new marketing materials created (brochures, videos, database, advertisements for events/REC Days, etc.); target = 22 materials by 2030
2. Online engagement analytics: pageviews of web content and video views; target = 10% annual increase over baseline (note: these metrics and targets are modeled after Strat Comms)
3. Number of presentations and events (designed to increase visibility and number of participants reached at those events); target = 3/REC/Yr.*
4. **REC System KPI:** Number of REC users, within and outside of the UC; target = 10% over 2025 baseline by 2030*
5. **REC System KPI:** Number of research projects; target = 10% over 2025 baseline by 2030*
6. **REC System KPI:** Number of extension events & total # of participants; target = 10% over 2025 baseline by 2030*
7. **REC System KPI:** REC user satisfaction (survey score) by REC and aggregated, by year; target = increase over 2025 baseline by 2030*

* Each REC can adjust these goals upwards, if by midpoint they have already exceeded the initial targets. Flexibility will be needed, as the individual RECs have vastly different existing user bases and capacity for expansion.

REC System Goal 2: Support Novel Technology in Agriculture

Leads: Diaz / El-Kereamy

Goal: Accelerate the transition of innovations from research to field application through REC-led testing, validation, and collaboration, ensuring growers have timely access to sustainable, practical solutions by December 2030

Problem:

Research and Extension Centers (RECs) have a unique position at the intersection of research, growers, and industry. However, many promising technologies remain underutilized because developers lack access to field-scale trials, trusted evaluation, or structured channels for outreach to growers and stakeholders. This gap limits developers’ ability to validate innovations and delays adoption. Consequently, growers face significant risks when adopting new technologies without unbiased evaluation and local testing.

Proposed Solution:

With rapid advancements in ag-tech, automation, AI, biotechnology, and sustainable production tools, there is a growing need for testing, validation, and pathways to commercialization. The RECs are well positioned with resources and a broad agricultural network to collaborate with UC ANR Innovate, the UC ANR IP Office, UC and startups in establishing agreements and developing technology hubs for joint testing and commercialization of essential technologies. These efforts aim to boost, modernize, and increase the efficiency of agriculture across the state. Additionally, a communication platform will be developed in the RECs Portal to enhance the visibility and accessibility of project results and activities. A major focus will be placed on training students and professionals in agricultural technology and robotics.

Benefits:

1. For Growers: Access to tested, cost-effective, practical technologies.
2. For Innovators: Clear pathway from lab → field → market with UC ANR credibility.
3. For RECs/UC ANR: To be recognized as a leader in CA agricultural technology by expanding partnerships, fostering systemwide collaboration, and securing increased external funding.
4. For CA Agriculture: Faster adoption of sustainable, resilient practices.
5. For Students/Workforce: Hands-on training with cutting-edge technologies.

#	Key Strategies & Timeline	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
2a	The REC System directors will collaborate with UC ANR Innovate, the Contracts and Grants office, and the Policy, Compliance, and Programmatic Agreements office to develop standardized agreements, an overall process, and pipeline for pilot testing and data sharing by September 2026. Aligns with UC ANR Strategic Plan Goal 5b.					
2b	Partner with UC ANR Innovate, startups, schools, colleges, and ag organizations to identify RECs for technology validation hubs and assess infrastructure, equipment, and staffing needs. Based on findings, prioritize infrastructure upgrades, acquire equipment, and hire personnel to support hubs by June 2027.					
2c	Launch technology validation hubs to begin implementing projects and host demonstrations events by June 2027 (ongoing).					
2d	Develop a digital platform within the RECs Portal and proposal system to share project results and extension activities by December 2027, aligning with Goal 1 to enhance visibility and UC ANR Strategic Plan Goal 15b. This effort will be led by the assigned staff (Goal 1b) in collaboration with REC Directors.					
2e	Collaborate with UC ANR Development Services to secure donors for workforce development and provide hands-on training opportunities and internships for students and early-career professionals in agricultural technology and robotics projects by June 2027 (ongoing).					

REC System Goal 2: Support Novel Technology in Agriculture Continued

Goal: Accelerate the transition of innovations from research to field application through REC-led testing, validation, and collaboration, ensuring growers have timely access to sustainable, practical solutions by December 2030

Assumptions:

1. UC ANR Innovate assists with access to partners, opportunities, and resources for testing technology.
2. UC ANR and RECs codevelop clear policies and procedures related to 1) innovation partnerships outside UC ANR Innovate; 2) technology and equipment use and testing at RECs as it relates to funding, safety, and ownership/use agreements; and 3) workforce development, mandatory training and working with minors.
3. Agreements are executed and signed in a timely manner by the Contracts and Grants and the Policy, Compliance, and Programmatic Agreements offices.
4. RECs consistently engage researchers, students, startups, and industry partners to co-develop and validate emerging technologies across the system
5. Funding will be available to address infrastructure gaps, acquire equipment, and hire additional positions as needed. While existing REC infrastructure can accommodate testing trials, some centers require additional personnel—such as academic coordinators, advisors, specialists, or community education specialists—to support technology validation. An agricultural technology specialist/advisor position in each region, similar to those currently hosted at KAREC and SCREC, may be funded by UC ANR and/or private companies.

Metrics and Targets:

1. Number of agricultural technology and robotics projects on the RECs; target = 3-5 in years 1 and 2, 6-10 in year 3 and beyond
2. Number of extension activities (workshops and demonstrations) on agricultural technology and robotics (in-person and virtual); target 2-4 in years 1 and 2, 6-8 in year 3 and beyond
3. Number of individuals (including students, staff, and professionals) trained in agricultural technology and robotics; annual target = 3-6 across the REC system
4. Number of new positions (academic coordinators, advisors, specialists, or community education specialists) hired; target 1-3 across the REC system by year 3 and 2-3 additional positions in year 4 and beyond
5. Number of ag tech partnerships with schools, colleges, and industry; target = 5-10 across the REC systems in year 3 and beyond

REC System Goal 3: Develop REC Business Plans

Leads: Bailey / Swelam

Goal: Develop and implement comprehensive business plans for REC growth and sustainability by December 2030

Problem:

Currently the REC system and individual RECs do not have documented, specific, sharable plans for future growth and sustainability. Without comprehensive plans, it is difficult to make strategic decisions, communicate plans with stakeholders and funders, and develop future financial and organizational stability.

Proposed Solution:

Create comprehensive mission-driven and impact-oriented business plans for each REC and for the REC system overall to enable efficient and coordinated progress towards a thriving REC system which fulfills UC ANR public values and mission. These standardized plans would have multiple facets (financial projections; future staff and academic positions; facilities maintenance, upgrades and construction projects; competitive analysis, research and extension program development activities; income generation opportunities; strategic partnerships; stakeholder engagement) all informed by financial planning tools which can project multiple future scenarios and be updated with results and new information. These plans would include:

- Facilities and equipment development, maintenance and modernization plans that support cutting-edge research and robust extension programs
- Financial plans which identify sources and uses of money, communicate funding needs, and develop a sustainable funding model.
- Staffing plans for academic, administrative, and staff positions which align with HR policies and UC ANR strategic goals.
- Strategic partnership development plans at various levels, locally, nationally and internationally. Coordinated with Goal 2.
- Outreach and communication plans from Goal 1 to build strong trust and visibility and demonstrate the REC added value to stakeholders, and the public.

Benefits:

1. Organizational stability and growth of the REC system overall.
2. Modernized infrastructure and research facilities and equipment plans attract funding and utilization. (Goal 4)
3. Improved financial stability through long-term multiple scenarios, strategic decision making, and contingency planning.
4. Staffing plans enable more strategic decision making for academic position proposal calls, staff position development, equity, and effectiveness.
5. Stronger strategic partnerships and collaboration lead to more co-funded programs and shared expertise which boosts efficiency. (coordinate with Goal 1)
6. Strong outreach and communication programs will strengthen trust, visibility, and engagement with RECs and help attract funder attention. (Goal 1)

#	Key Strategies & Timeline	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
3a	Identify the overall business plan template/format that meshes best practices from industry and academia by June 2026					
3b	Coordinate with relevant Goal teams (1, 2, 4) and formulate workgroup teams for financial planning, staffing, and partnership development that will address various components of the plan by June 2027					
3c	Work with Resource Planning and Management to develop a REC-specific financial planning template and methodology by June 2027					
3d	REC Directors engage with Business Officers, and Superintendents, and other relevant RECs, to develop individual REC plans with support from Goal teams and training on how the template and financial tool are developed and used by June 2028					
3e	Incorporate elements from other REC Strategic Framework Goals, seek feedback, finalize, and then synthesize a high-level REC System plan which incorporates key elements from individual REC by June 2028					
3f	REC Directors socialize plans with stakeholders, implement work plan, establish continuous feedback and modification plan by June 2030					

REC System Goal 3: Develop REC Business Plans Continued

Goal: Develop and implement comprehensive REC business plans for REC growth and sustainability by December 2030

Assumptions:

1. Resource Planning and Management dedicates resources to assist with developing practical financial analysis and projection tools that align efficiently with Aggie Enterprise software outputs and reports, and train REC administration on how to implement and use it.
2. Facility Planning and Management and Goal 4 team assistance with and collaboration on developing facilities repair, maintenance and construction projects with accurate cost estimates and effective mechanisms for project changes, implementation, and projection of cost escalations to account for delays between project conception and completion.
3. Human Resources assistance in ensuring that future staffing plans align with union bargaining agreement and viable position descriptions. As well as providing sufficient competitive compensation and career development opportunities to retain skilled staff and academics.
4. UC ANR Leadership support for development and approval of plans.
5. The University of California and the State will maintain at least current baseline funding levels (no cuts) to cover core operations.
6. No major policy changes that significantly impact research programs and the demand on RECs.
7. Adequate staffing to enable normal REC operations, expansion of programs, and implementation of the business plan. (BOs, EHS, RPM, Admin)

Metrics and Targets:

1. **REC System KPI:** Net growth in diversified (mission-relevant and unrelated) revenue; target = 20% increase over 5 years and establishment of emergency reserve equal to at least 6 months of operating costs by 2030
2. **REC System KPI:** REC System ANR@ Work Survey overall Net Promoter Score (employee satisfaction/engagement) by year; target = maintain at least 75% score and reach 90% by 2030 (Aligns with UC ANR Strategic Plan Goal 6)
3. Number of new strategic partnerships across the REC System; target = 10% increase over 2025 baseline by 2030.
4. Metrics related to REC utilization growth listed in Goal 1.

REC System Goal 4: Improve and Enhance Facilities and Infrastructure

Leads: Pedroncelli / Diaz / Haver

Goal: Enhance REC programming through facility and infrastructure improvements by 2030

Problem:

UC ANR has successfully secured millions of dollars in funding to build and acquire new infrastructure and address deferred maintenance but has sometimes been challenged completing projects in a timely manner. In addition to major construction projects at most of the RECs, the REC System has a new center and a new location for an existing center. To fulfill its goal of becoming a world class set of research centers and to continue to expand their programmatic capacity, the REC System must address deferred maintenance of facilities while modernizing and adopting advanced technologies in their facilities and infrastructure. UC ANR must demonstrate proper, timely, and efficient use of existing funds while also improving its ability to efficiently execute multiple construction and maintenance projects at the same time so that they can continue to attract investment in facilities development.

Proposed Solution:

The REC System will work with Facilities Planning and Management (FPM), Resource Planning and Management (RPM), and Real Estate and Facility Development to improve communication and set realistic goals and timelines to implement existing funds, address deferred maintenance, and strengthen and revitalize the RECs. The REC system will spearhead a subcommittee to ensure the results of administrative surveys and the Procurement to Pay Project are carried out and to examine the use of various technologies including AI, project management software, robust training programs, and communication and accountability platforms – to streamline operations and improve efficiency. Finally, REC System, FPM, and RPM units will partner with Contracts & Grants and Development Services to approach private enterprises and nonprofits to increase resources for facilities and infrastructure enhancements, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

Benefits:

1. New and enhanced facilities and equipment will help UC ANR expand its footprint and programmatic capacity, demonstrate our commitment to cutting-edge research, and reflect the excellence of the University of California system while satisfying and attracting existing and new users.
2. Communities will have access to state-of-the-art facilities to engage with UC ANR programs, researchers, and staff.
3. REC Directors, Superintendents, and Business Officers will be able to more effectively manage and develop their centers, focusing on outreach and program development rather than getting bogged down in facilities maintenance and construction.

#	Key Strategies & Timeline	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
4a	Review results of Procurement-to-Pay project and other surveys in a focused in-person all-hands meeting, then form a subcommittee (representatives from RECs, FPM, and RPM) to outline the future state process, identify and implement a software platform and other advanced technological needs, clarify roles and responsibilities, address training needs, and get approval from UC ANR leadership by December 2026.					
4b	Aligning with UC ANR Goal 13e, the REC System will work with FPM to fully utilize the new project management software, while also developing stronger communication and collaboration strategies to improve overall project management processes by December 2027.					
4c	Increase donations for capital investments and expand resources available to the REC system by working closely and meeting quarterly with Development Services and Contracts & Grants to develop comprehensive campaign plans, identify prospects and grant opportunities, cultivate relationships, and market program impacts. Develop a meeting schedule and determine a budget and action plan by December 2026 and raise funds by December 2030 (and ongoing).					
4d	Aligning with UC ANR Goals 13a and 13c, REC Directors will work with FPM and RPM to update priority lists for facility and infrastructure needs (ICAMP and Capital Plan), set schedules for deferred and ongoing maintenance, and ensure these needs are properly estimated and visible on the FPM software platform by December 2026 (ongoing).					
4e	REC Directors will strategically work with FPM and RPM to secure funding for, set guidelines for, and increase frequency of FPM Project Manager on-site visits to RECs and interactions with local contractors by June 2026. (ongoing).					

REC System Goal 4: Improve and Enhance Facilities and Infrastructure Continued

Goal: Enhance REC programming through facility and infrastructure improvements by 2030

Assumptions:

1. Each unit (FPM, RPM, Real Estate and Facility Development, Contracts & Grants, Development Services) will commit and is able to accommodate the REC System's needs, help develop plans, and implement process changes.
2. REC Directors, Superintendents, and Business Officers will commit to learning and using new project management software and processes.
3. Funding is available for FPM project management software and it is in use, with relevant employees trained to use it by December 2026.
4. Funds that are already secured will be available and used.
5. State, donor, and federal funds are available for new facilities and infrastructure opportunities and will account for inflation and rising construction costs.
6. UC ANR secures funding for FPM Project Manager (PM) travel and PMs are willing to travel.

Metrics and Targets:

1. **REC System KPI:** Percent of outstanding infrastructure/facilities projects on 2025 priority list completed by 2030; target = 100%
 - Percent of infrastructure/facilities projects (outside "new" capital projects) on 2025 priority list completed by 2029; target = 100%
 - Percent of new engagement centers at South Coast REC, Desert REC, and Lindcove REC completed by 2030; target = 100%
 - Percent of Hansen REC engagement center and support facilities design completed by December 2027; target =100%
2. Percent of available REC facilities funding expended by 2030; target =100% of funding available as of 2025
3. Total funds raised through REC Systemwide comprehensive campaign by 2030; target = \$TBD following work with Development Services
4. Total state funds for REC system deferred maintenance and facilities improvements by 2030; target = at minimum, maintain same amount of funds from 2025 baseline; ideally, increase by 10% each year.

REC System Goal 5: Optimize REC Procedures

Leads: Wilson / Flavell

Goal: By December 2030 clarify REC policies and procedures, standardize operations across the 10 RECs, and simplify REC-specific operations to improve timelines and efficiency for internal staff and REC users

Problem:

The REC rate and recharge system and Aggie Enterprise accounting system lack integration, similarity, and clear procedures to allow internal staff to track and budget expenses preventing mid-year adjustment of operations and accurate budget forecasting for the future. The REC labor tracking system currently is not linked with billing processes, lacks standardization and accuracy controls, and is time consuming for reviewers and approvers. The REC system needs standardized and published guidelines for developing, maintaining, and terminating MOUs, license agreements, private research contracts, and other contracts related to facility use and crop sales. The REC system uses a mixture of collaborative software platforms which creates complexity and reduces efficiency.

Proposed Solution:

Develop collaborative, specialized teams of REC and UC ANR stakeholders, including all REC business officers, tied to REC rate and recharge, REC accounting, REC labor tracking, and REC contracts and agreements to identify internal needs, develop clear policies that meet those needs, and work together to develop streamlined procedures with the goal of improving efficiency, shortening process timelines, and lessening the workload on REC and UC ANR staff. Increase REC specific centralized FTE if additional staff is needed to develop policies, procedures, and lessen workload of REC staff.

Benefits:

1. Improved ability of RECs to track and forecast expenses and costs, develop future budgets, and allocate systemwide funding
2. An improved labor tracking and billing system will improve efficiency, simplicity, and accountability to meet the complex needs of staff, REC business operations, and end users.
3. Clearly defined streamlined procedures related to contracts and agreements will allow RECs to develop new users, fundraise, and recover costs

#	Key Strategies & Timeline	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
5a	Develop and implement a workgroup team process to address integrating REC rate and recharge and Aggie Enterprise accounting and implement recommendations to improve the REC systems ability to track expenses, make mid-year adjustments, and forecast budgets by the start of fiscal year 2028					
5b	Develop a workgroup team process to define and implement a REC labor tracking system to improve the system's ease of use, accuracy for reporting, and integration with billing by the start of fiscal year 2027. REC administration will develop a user satisfaction survey and policies and procedures for software platform use by the start of fiscal year 2028					
5c	The REC system Director and a team of REC directors will work with UC ANR central services to develop and implement clear policies and procedures related to establishment, maintenance, and termination of contract and agreements making the entire process more streamlined, speedy, and aligned with user needs by the start of fiscal year 2028					
5d	By Dec 2026, REC administration will develop and administer a user survey to determine baseline data regarding the above three systems/processes be administered again in 2027 and 2028 following process and system changes.					
5e	REC administration will develop and publish written policies and procedures posted online for the above three systems/processes by start of fiscal year 2028					

REC System Goal 5: Optimize REC Procedures Continued

Goal: By December 2030, clarify REC policies and procedures, standardize operations across the 10 RECs, and simplify REC-specific operations to improve timelines and efficiency for internal staff and REC users

Assumptions:

1. Workgroup teams have data, flexibility, and time allowance to adequately address their assigned REC policy and procedure
2. REC approvers prioritize REC staff and REC user needs especially as they relate to expected timelines and simplicity
3. The REC system has adequate funding and time to develop comprehensive recommendations.
4. UC ANR policies and procedures have continuity over time, so newly developed procedures remain correct and relevant over a 5 to 10-year timeframe.
5. REC and UCANR staff and administration can agree to abide by standardized software, procedures, and document templates.
6. RPM will provide their expertise in synchronizing rate and recharge procedures with Aggie Enterprise reports and structures.

Metrics and Targets:

1. Systemwide survey scores of rate and recharge system users re: confidence in accuracy, by year; target = minimum 50% increase for all RECs from 25/26 baseline by 2028. Baseline 25/26 survey to be conducted in spring 2026.
2. Systemwide survey scores of REC labor tracking and billing system users (employees, Business Officers, leadership) re: confidence in accuracy, ease of use, quality of data, and needs met, by year; target = minimum 20% improvement on all scores from 25/26 baseline by 2028
3. Rate and recharge budgeted vs. actuals variance, by year; target = no variance due to accounting errors by 2029
4. Average time for completion of UC ANR's administrative review of contracts and agreements outside the normal PI grant tracking process, by year; target = less than three weeks by 2028

UC ANR REC System Strategic Framework Monitoring & Communication



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Framework Monitoring Plan

Progress on the goals within the UC ANR REC Strategic Framework will be monitored as follows:

Monthly

- Action plans will be developed and updated in a tracking tool by the Goal Lead or other assigned team member/s
- Update on a highlighted goal be provided by Goal Lead at standing REC Directors' meetings as appropriate

Quarterly

- Key accomplishments / challenges will be reported by Goal Lead and reviewed by REC Directors at in-person meetings

Annually

- Goal metrics will be reported on goal scorecard by Goal Leads
- REC Directors will meet to review progress and update the framework
- Progress updates will be provided to senior leadership and UC ANR advisory groups
 - Vice President's (VP) Council
 - Program Council
 - Governing Council
 - President's Advisory Commission on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Framework Communication / Engagement Plan

External

Disseminate Framework to external stakeholders (e.g., Governing Council, Presidents Advisory Commission on Agriculture and Natural Resources); provide updates and solicit input and participation on strategies annually

Internal

- *UC ANR Employee News* – add REC Framework update section (3/26 and ongoing)
- Virtual Town Hall Meetings – Incorporate into communication around ANR Plan (3/26 and ongoing)
- REC Directors share/review the plan with their colleagues and direct reports (by 3/26)
- REC Directors set individual staff performance goals linked, as appropriate, to the goals and key strategies (by 5/26)
- Annual retreat - Incorporate accomplishments and solicit input with Superintendents & Business Officers
- Strategic Framework Accomplishments – announced via ANR Employee News and posted to the website (quarterly)
- Strategic Plan/REC Framework updates and solicit input at the following regular meetings:
 - VP Council
 - County Directors
 - Deans Council
 - Program Council
 - REC User Committee
 - Assistant Deans Meeting

Appendix



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2025 REC System Strategic Framework Team

The 2025 REC strategic framework team was composed of the following 10 individuals:

Name	Title
John Bailey	Director, Hopland REC
Jairo Diaz-Ramirez	Director, Desert REC
Ashraf El-Kereamy	Director, Lindcove REC
Dustin Flavell	Director, Sierra Foothill REC
Darren Haver	Executive Director, UC ANR REC System
Igor Lacan	Director, Elkus Ranch REC
Lindsey Pedroncelli	Director, South Coast REC
Annemiek Schilder	Director, Hansen REC
Atef Swelam	Director, Kearney & Westside RECs
Rob Wilson	Director, Intermountain REC

Facilitators: Kathy Eftekhari, Interim AVP, Administrative Services and Chief of Staff to the Vice President, UC ANR
Katherine Webb-Martinez, Director, UC ANR Program Planning and Evaluation
Aimee Chang, Deputy Chief of Staff, UC ANR