

# Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator

## Academic Coordinator II

### Local Farm and Food Innovation (LFFI)

#### Position Overview

##### Location Headquarters: Fresno County

The University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) offers a unique recruitment opportunity for a **Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator, Academic Coordinator II**. UC ANR operates a statewide network of researchers, educators and support staff dedicated to the development and application of knowledge to address local agricultural, environmental and community health issues. Research, outreach and education from locally based Cooperative Extension offices serves all 58 counties from 70+ locations throughout the state. Our mission is to bring the University of California directly to Californians through research, extension and education programs that support:

- Sustainable, safe, and nutritious food production and delivery
- Economic success in a global economy
- A sustainable, healthy, and productive environment
- Science literacy and youth development

By working and living among those we serve, UC ANR expands the University of California's reach to engage all people and communities in California, ensuring equal access to the UC system.

#### Purpose:

The Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator will coordinate the efforts of the Local Farm and Food Innovation (LFFI) Farm to Market team to support and expand small-scale food businesses in Fresno and nearby counties. The Coordinator will work with project staff and community partners to provide technical assistance with product development, food safety, permitting, business planning, and marketing for value-added products, Cottage Foods enterprises, and small-scale processing. This position is an integral part of the LFFI Initiative, part of the Fresno-Merced Future of Food Innovation (F3) Project, offering a unique opportunity to drive positive change in the Central Valley region's food systems. The Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator will leverage their expertise in food science, food technology, community and economic development, business and/or food systems by supporting technological innovation and small business support for small scale farms, food businesses, and food processing enterprises. This includes supervising Community Education Specialists providing business support, guidance, and resources to small-scale farms and food businesses and translators providing bilingual support in Hmong and Spanish. The Coordinator will coordinate applied research conducted by UC ANR researchers with expertise in food science, food safety, customers trends and more, and to support development of value-added products and small-scale processing technology. The role extends to staying at the forefront of food and food technology trends and will provide valuable insights into equipment selection and processing methods for technology-based startups and food/food processing

enterprises. Through understanding of regional resources, the LFFI Farm to Market team led by the Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator will be able to support startups through all stages of their growth journey, from early stage planning through financing to navigating complex industry trends and supporting startups through all stages of their growth journey, from securing financing to navigating complex regulatory requirements. The Coordinator will have a strong commitment to serving marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and will drive initiatives aimed at enhancing their economic viability and seamless integration into regional supply chains.

## Major Duties and Responsibilities:

The Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator will:

### Technical Assistance and Community Engagement

- Lead the effort to support the development and scaling of value-added food products and produce from small scale food and farming enterprises in the Central Valley region, and spearhead the coordination of technical assistance.
- Engage with community partners working in small business support, food entrepreneurship, value-added products, Cottage Foods enterprises, and small- to mid-scale food processing to identify priorities for research and extension activities and collaborate on related activities.
- Provide expertise in small business support, food science, and/or community and economic development to guide activities of the LFFI Farm to Market team and stay abreast with knowledge of regional resources available to small businesses.

### Research and Knowledge Transfer Activities

- Stay at the forefront of opportunities in regional food and food processing, food entrepreneurship trends, market dynamics, and emerging business models, utilizing UCANR's existing expertise, to identify gaps and opportunities considering environmental and social aspects of food production, distribution, and consumption
- Guide applied research activities of Project Scientists with expertise in food science, such as value-added product development, consumer preferences, sensory evaluation, and small-scale processing technology and ensure research is based on local needs assessments and contributes to the goals of the LFFI project.
- Identify research and extension priorities and collaborate on related activities to enhance the Central Valley food ecosystem.
- Coordinate and create a comprehensive library of resources for small food and farm enterprises such as fact sheets, videos, web resources, recipes, and processing guides.

### Technical Assistance and Community Engagement

- Supervise and coordinate activities of Community Education Specialists providing hands-on support to small food entrepreneurs and enterprises, navigating access to technical business training, local markets and applying for grants and loans as well as coordinate linkage to direct services with program consultants, service providers, and partner organizations.
- Work closely with community education specialists to recruit and select food enterprises to engage with LFFI and track and document participant progress, including conducting pre and post participant surveys and regular check-ins.
- Provide expert technical assistance to farm and food enterprises to enhance the support provided by the Community Education Specialists.

### Project Coordination

- Represent the LFFI Farm to Market team within the F3 ecosystem and project partners and collaborators, including regular participation in F3, LFFI, and partner-led meetings.
- Evaluate activities of the LFFI Farm to Market team and develop a plan for continuous improvement.

- Provide priority to disadvantaged and underrepresented communities and champion equity and inclusivity in all initiatives.

**Counties of Responsibility:** This position will be headquartered at the UCCE Fresno County Office, Fresno, CA, and will cover the following counties: Merced, Fresno, Madera, Tulare and Kings Counties.

**Reporting Relationship:** The Food Innovation and Small Business Coordinator is administratively responsible to the LFFI Regional Director.

## Qualifications and Skills Required

**Education:** A minimum of a Master's degree in an appropriate field such as Food Science, Food Technology, Community and Economic Development, Food Systems, Entrepreneurship, Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Business, or a related field is required at the time of appointment, in addition to a minimum of three years of professional experience.

### Minimum and Required Qualifications

- Experience in education, research, or industry for one or more of the following: food science, community development, food systems, or business planning.
- Knowledge of business principles and business planning applicable to small food entrepreneurs and fostering economic growth within the food industry.
- Ability to engage with small food producers, farms and community partners, understand their needs, and work collaboratively to achieve common goals is vital for success in this role.
- Program coordination, evaluation experience and supervisory skills.
- Demonstrated leadership skills and the ability to work independently and as part of a team in a complex and fast-paced environment.
- Skilled at complex problem solving and competent with online tools for data tracking and collaboration.
- This is not a remote position. The candidate must be available to be onsite.
- Ability and means to travel on a flexible schedule as needed, proof of liability and property damage insurance on vehicles used is required. Must possess a valid California Driver's License to drive a County or University vehicle.

### Preferred Qualifications

- Experience in development of value-added products, small-scale processing technology, agri-food, food entrepreneurship or food-related projects preferred.
- Previous experience working with initiatives aimed at promoting equity and inclusivity, especially within the food industry.
- Knowledge of food-related regulations, especially at the local and regional levels.
- Proficiency in one or more relevant languages in addition to English, such as Hmong and Spanish.
- Administration experience within a university, agency, or similar institutional environment

### Technical Competence and Impact

#### Communication

- Demonstrated excellent written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to communicate and coordinate effectively with diverse stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to share complex information in a manner tailored to the audience.

## Collaboration, Teamwork and Flexibility

- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as a team member with university staff, partner organizations, industry, and other stakeholders.
- Able to adapt as circumstances warrant.
- Aware and willing to actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Ability to shift program focus as times, organizational, and stakeholder needs change.

## Lifelong Learning

- Demonstrated commitment to ongoing self-improvement.
- Participate in professional organizations, agencies, non-governmental organizations and others by providing information and leadership
- Maintain a program of continuous self-improvement by participating in in-service training, seminars, workshops, work group & program team meetings, short courses, professional society meetings and other relevant opportunities.

**Learn more about Skills and Areas of Programmatic Review** (including Professional Competence, University and Public Service and Affirmative Action and DEI) at:  
[https://ucanr.edu/sites/Professional\\_Development/files/355229.pdf](https://ucanr.edu/sites/Professional_Development/files/355229.pdf)

## About UC ANR

The University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) consists of a network of scientists and educators working in partnership across the state of California. We are committed to developing and supporting healthy food systems, healthy environments, healthy communities, and healthy Californians. UC ANR administers Statewide Programs and Initiatives (SWP/I's) that focus research and extension on solving priority problems that engage ANR academics and UC faculty in integrated teams to work on complex issues requiring trans-disciplinary approaches; as well as UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE), which is responsible for program development and delivery in counties throughout the state.

### Learn more about

- UC ANR at <https://UCANR.edu>
- UC ANR in counties: [https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucanr/County\\_Offices/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucanr/County_Offices/)
- F3 Local Farm and Food Innovation initiative overview:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HORZJnheJiSn8a9CXPSUUiE5D5RN4lf/view?usp=sharing>
- Our Strategic Initiatives <http://ucanr.edu/sites/StrategicInitiatives/>
- Our Public Value statements at  
[https://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Divisionwide\\_Planning/UC\\_ANR\\_Public\\_Values/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Divisionwide_Planning/UC_ANR_Public_Values/)
- DEI: Further to the above, academics are expected to share and exhibit UC ANR's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [https://ucanr.edu/sites/Professional\\_Development/Office -  
\\_Team\\_Management/Diversity\\_Equity\\_Inclusion\\_Belonging/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/Professional_Development/Office_-_Team_Management/Diversity_Equity_Inclusion_Belonging/)
- Affirmative Action: Further to the above, academics are expected to share and exhibit UC ANR's commitment to affirmative action. Learn more of UC ANR Affirmative Action policy:  
[http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative\\_Action/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/)
- The University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse workforce and will honor your experiences, perspectives and unique identity. We encourage applications from members of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, women, individuals with disabilities, veterans, LGBTQ+ community members, and others who demonstrate the ability to

help us create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable and welcoming.

## Salary & Benefits

**Salary:** The salary will be in the Academic Coordinator II series from Step 1 - \$78,342 up to Step 4 - \$90,096 annually of the Academic Coordinator II, Fiscal Year Salary Table. The step placement in this series is based on experience and professional qualifications. For information regarding the Academic Coordinator series salary scales, please refer to: <https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/2023-24/july-2023-acad-salary-scales/t36-ii.pdf>

This appointment is a limited term appointment. The merit cycle is every two years. The performance in the position will be evaluated annually. The position will be extended based on the continued need for the position, performance and availability of funding.

**Benefits:** The University of California offers comprehensive benefits including health insurance, retirement plans, two days per month paid vacation, one day per month paid sick leave, and holidays. For more information, refer to the UC Benefits website at: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/compensation-and-benefits/index.html>

## How to Apply

If interested in this position, please visit: <https://recruit.ucanr.edu/> and choose “applicants” (refer to position #23-24)

**Closing Date:** To assure full consideration, application packets must be received by **February 24, 2024**.

## Questions?

Contact Tatiana Avoce; email: [tavoce@ucanr.edu](mailto:tavoce@ucanr.edu)

“Please note that successful applicants are responsible for ensuring work authorization without need of employer sponsorship for the duration of the appointment period.”

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*University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources*

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As a University employee, you will be required to comply with all applicable University policies and/or collective bargaining agreements, as may be amended from time to time. Federal, state, or local government directives may impose additional requirements.

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status or other protected categories covered by the UC nondiscrimination policy.

As of January 1, 2014, ANR is a smoke- and tobacco-free environment in which smoking, the use of smokeless tobacco products, and the use of unregulated nicotine products (e-cigarettes), is strictly prohibited.