

Cooperative Extension Subtropical Crops Area Advisor in San Diego and Riverside Counties, California

Position Overview

The University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) invites applications for a **UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Subtropical Crops Advisor** at the Assistant rank. The successful candidate will conduct an integrated program of applied research and extension to support economically viable and sustainable production of avocados, citrus, and subtropical crops among a diverse clientele group including underserved and limited resource farmers growing unique crops for niche markets in farms of various sizes in San Diego and Riverside Counties.

UCCE Advisors are responsible for applied research and extension of knowledge. Research activities are applied, needs-based, mission-oriented, and focused on addressing our communities' challenges. Extension activities are the educational practices Advisors use to share research results directly with clientele and communities to increase their knowledge and understanding of science-based research results to support and promote the adoption of practices and technologies to solve problems. Extension methods may include individual consultations, presentations, organization of educational workshops and short courses, field demonstrations, farm calls, and site visits. Information may also be disseminated via radio outreach, webinars, fact sheets, policy briefs, news blogs, and social media. Publications are expected in various formats, such as newsletters, articles for the popular press, curriculums, conference proceedings, and peer-reviewed publications. Successful research and extension programs result in new information that improves knowledge or understanding and adoption of new skills, practices, changed attitudes, policies, and improved environmental, health, agricultural, economic, and/or social conditions. UCCE Advisors are evaluated through an academic advancement system based on four criteria: extending knowledge, applied research and creative activity, professional competence and activity, and University and public service.

Location Headquarters: University of California Cooperative Extension Office in San Diego County, San Diego, California

Position Details

The Subtropical Crops Advisor will address critical research and extension needs of the subtropical fruit growers and stakeholders in San Diego and Riverside Counties, with special emphasis on avocado and citrus producers as the primary clientele. This position also includes a large number of producers who grow minor subtropical crops. Primary target crops are avocado and citrus, but also include other deciduous fruits and nut crops such as cherimoya, olives, apples, grapes, guavas, pomegranates, persimmons and others. The main purpose of the position is to provide research-based solutions for issues impacting the productivity and efficiency of commercial tree crop operations, maximizing their return on invested capital and enhancing their economic viability, while also supporting the local food systems by providing the local community with high quality, safe and reasonably priced fruits. The Advisor will address emerging production and management issues in subtropical crops with disciplinary focus on general horticulture, plant pathology, entomology, integrated pest management, plant nutrition or related fields. The advisor will work with other local UCCE Advisors to address local needs, and collaboratively with other UCCE Advisors and specialists, campus faculty, and private industry representatives. The applied research program will be based upon a needs assessment and may include partnerships with a variety of campus and county-based colleagues as well as partner

organizations. Field research activities may be conducted on private farms and at University of California Research facilities including the South Coast Research and Extension Center, and University of California Riverside. The Advisor will network and interact with external stakeholders, including Agricultural Commissioners in both counties, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), San Diego and Riverside County Farm Bureaus, California Avocado Commission, California Avocado Society, Citrus Research Board, California Rare Fruit Growers,(CRFG), local Tribes and Indian Reservations, other regulatory agencies, UC Master Gardeners, pest control advisors (PCAs), crop consultants, packing houses and others involved with subtropical crop production and marketing. The Advisor will be responsible for developing an outreach program to disseminate knowledge and information to subtropical crop growers and stakeholders using existing resources such as clientele lists, established newsletters, websites and social media. The Advisor will also collaborate and interact with local growers, industry reps and organizations to plan and deliver information at field days workshops and other events.

Counties of Responsibility: This position has programmatic responsibilities in San Diego and Riverside Counties. It is not a remote position; the candidate must be available to work onsite at the headquarters location and travel to and be present in other counties with programmatic responsibilities. Specific expectations for maintaining office hours and fieldwork in the geographic area covered by this position will be outlined upon hire by the respective directors and supervisors.

Reporting Relationship: The Subtropical Crops Advisor serves under the administrative and academic guidance of the local Country Director.

Qualifications and Skills Required

Education: A minimum of a master's degree in plant science, crop science, agronomy, plant pathology, entomology, soil science, horticulture, weed science, plant physiology, agroecology, or a related discipline in the agricultural sciences, is required at the time of appointment.

Key Qualifications

- Technical competency and demonstrated ability in applied agricultural research and extension techniques applicable to the clientele, crops, and production systems for the position.
- Ability to plan, implement, and evaluate educational programs and publish applied research.
- Ability to build partnerships and work with multidisciplinary teams to address crop production challenges as well as social, economic, and environmental challenges for small-scale farms.
- Ability to adapt research and extension efforts in response to key needs and challenges of grower clientele.
- Ability and means to travel on a flexible schedule as needed; proof of liability and property damage insurance on vehicle used is required. Must possess a valid California Driver's License to drive a County or University vehicle.
- The CE Advisor must possess or obtain (within one year) a Qualified Pesticide Applicator Certificate (QAC) or License (QAL).

Additional Skills Required

- Interest in and a desire to pursue a career in UC Cooperative Extension.
- Technical Competence and Impact: The candidate should have a solid understanding of key concepts related to subtropical crop production, including irrigation and nutrient management, pest management, and economic constraints, and be able to design and implement a program that leads to positive changes and impact within the community and beyond.

- **Communication:** The candidate should demonstrate excellence in written, oral, interpersonal, and information technology communication skills. Public speaking to stakeholders is a routine part of this position.
- The candidate should demonstrate the ability to share complex information in a manner tailored to different audiences. The ability to work with small farm clientele across a wide range of demographic groups, technical backgrounds, literacy levels, and socio-economic classes is essential.
- **Collaboration, Teamwork, and Flexibility:** The candidate should demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively as a team member with key external stakeholders and county-based staff, as well as with other colleagues within UC ANR.
- **Lifelong Learning:** There is an expectation that Advisors evolve and grow across their career and respond to changes in the industry, clientele, and organizational change.
- The candidate should be aware of and willing to actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Desired Experience

- Proficiency in another language, such as Spanish, would benefit the program but is not required.
- Experience in conducting field research in agriculture and planning and implementation of research and/or extension activities,
- Experience conducting education, research, technical assistance, fieldwork, or other activities with growers,
- Experience in people management, such as supervising staff, students, or volunteers,
- Experience in managing grant-funded projects and/or securing extramural funding,
- An understanding of how public policy impacts agricultural management and producer decision-making.

Salary & Benefits

Salary: The salary range for this Cooperative Extension Advisor position is Assistant Rank, Step I (\$82,900) to Step VI (\$105,200). Step placement in the Advisor series is based on applicable experience and professional qualifications.

This position is eligible for indefinite status, subject to terms noted in [UC ANR Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 315](#).

Benefits: The University of California offers comprehensive benefits, including health insurance, retirement plans, two days per month of paid vacation, one day per month of paid sick leave, and paid holidays. This position is eligible for sabbatical leave privileges as per the terms of the University policy. For more information, refer to the [UC Benefits website](#).

About UC ANR

UC ANR is a division of the University of California (UC) system that bridges the gap between local issues and the expertise of the UC system by providing research-based information, educational programs, and technical expertise to the public in areas such as agriculture, natural resources, nutrition, and youth development. UC ANR is part of a nationwide Cooperative Extension network, which began in the early 20th century to connect research from land-grant universities with the everyday needs of people in communities across the United States. Today, we collaborate with farmers, ranchers, diverse communities, youth and adult educators, and policymakers to address local and statewide issues related to food systems, water, climate change, and sustainable agriculture through a statewide network of campus-based researchers, county-based Advisors, and community educators. Our mission is to cultivate thriving communities, sustainable agriculture, resilient

ecosystems, and economic prosperity in California and globally through equitable generation and sharing of collaborative, science-based solutions. Over 180 UCCE Advisors conduct applied research and extension education from county-based UCCE offices serving all 58 counties from 70+ locations. 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 resources UC has to offer. Our vision is that UC ANR will be valued in every California community for meaningful engagement and making a positive difference in people's lives.

About San Diego and Riverside Counties

San Diego and Riverside Counties have a vibrant and diverse agricultural industry valued at \$1.78 and \$1.49 billion annually, and ranking 13th and 14th in total value among California Counties. Together the two counties encompass 576,408 acres in agricultural production (361,970 in Riverside and 214,438 in San Diego). Avocados and citrus, the main crops targeted by this position, are two of the top crops in these counties. The combined value of citrus crops in the two counties is \$402 million and includes 27,794 acres planted (\$132.06 million and 19,390 acres for Riverside County, and \$138.16 and 8,804 acres planted in San Diego County). Avocados on the other hand, have a combined value of \$122.9 million and include 15,808 acres planted (\$77 million and 3,211 acres in Riverside County and \$122.83 million and 12,597 acres in San Diego County).

The agricultural production industry differs significantly between San Diego and Riverside Counties. Farms are larger in Riverside County where the average farm size is 149 acres compared to an average farm size of only 4 acres in San Diego County (68% of the farms are 9 acres or less). As a result, the number of farms is larger in San Diego (6,000 farms) than in Riverside County (2,424 farms). In addition, both counties have diverse agricultural industries including many subtropical fruit and nut crops. The number of crops is higher in San Diego (200 + crops) than in Riverside County (59 crops) according to the County Department of Agriculture. Water cost and pressure from urbanization is higher in San Diego than Riverside County.

Learn more about

- [UC ANR](#) and [UC ANR Mission Statement](#).
- UC ANR administers [Statewide Programs and Institutes](#) that focus research and extension on solving priority problems that engage ANR academics and UC faculty in integrated teams
- UC ANR [Strategic Initiatives](#) help unify, communicate, and advocate for the work we do.
- UC ANR uses seven [Public Value statements](#) to communicate how our work makes a difference to the public.
- UC ANR academics are expected to share and exhibit UC ANR's commitment to UC ANR's [Affirmative Action policy](#)
- UC ANR academics are expected to share and exhibit UC ANR's commitment to [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)
- 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.

How to Apply

If interested in this position, please visit: <https://recruit.ucanr.edu/> and choose "applicants" (refer to position #24-17)

Closing Date: To assure full consideration, application packets, including a candidate DEI and research statement, must be received by **October 28, 2024 – open until filled.**

Questions?

Contact Mikyla Perez – email : mikperez@ucanr.edu

Applicants may wish to explore the UC Davis Services for International Students and Scholars web page at <https://siss.ucdavis.edu> and the [UC ANR Green Card Sponsorship Guidelines & FAQ's](#) for reference.

University of California Cooperative Extension

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.