

Urban Agriculture: Assessing Needs and Developing a Cohesive Role for UC ANR

What is Urban Ag?

Our working definition is adapted from the American Planning Association:

"Urban agriculture includes production (beyond that which is strictly for home consumption or educational purposes), distribution and marketing of food and other products within the cores of metropolitan areas and at their edges. Examples include community, school, backyard, and rooftop gardens with a purpose extending beyond home consumption and education, urban market gardens, innovative food-production methods that maximize production in a small area, community supported agriculture based in urban areas, and family farms located in metropolitan greenbelts."

The California Legislature is currently considering a bill related to urban agriculture.

"I see the urban ag movement as a strong link that brings a closer connection between people and the food we eat. I believe it is important for the state to find ways to foster this very positive activity at the neighborhood level." California Assemblyman Phil Ting, author of AB551, the Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Act

Our Project

- Funded by the 2012 ANR Competitive Grants Program for two years in response to the growing interest in urban agriculture in California.
- First phase: A needs assessment to learn about ANR and community engagement with urban agriculture. A literature review to highlight economic and social impacts of urban ag.
- Second phase: Developing and adapting educational materials based on needs.
- Our advisory committee includes ANR colleagues, experts in urban planning, environmental design, municipal policy and environmental health.

Anticipated Results

An ANR information portal will share existing and new resources.

Educational materials on topics from the needs assessment will be adapted or developed, on topics that could include soil testing, food safety, IPM for urban agriculture, and a variety of other topics.

A literature review will share current research on how urban agriculture impacts communities, including health and economic benefits.

A research and extension agenda for urban agriculture will be help ANR plan activities for the future.

Rachel Surls
Sustainable Food Systems Advisor

Aziz Baameur
Small Farm Advisor

Gail Feenstra
UC SAREP

Shermain Hardesty
UC Small Farm Program

Cheryl Wilen
UC IPM Advisor



A backyard in the Los Angeles area where residents are growing herbs and vegetables for sale at two certified farmers' markets each week.

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources