ANR and Cooperative Extension touch people’s lives

During my first months as president of the University of California, I traveled around the state, educating myself on the workings and wonders of the UC system. One of my goals was to learn how the university serves the people of California and what we can do to enhance that public service.

At every stop, I saw outstanding examples of the ways UC enriches the lives, and livelihoods, of Californians. I visited labs where they’re mapping the human brain, developing new battery technologies for electric and hybrid cars and studying ways to eradicate malaria. I was impressed with how UC’s research discoveries not only drive the state’s economy but also create opportunities for people who live far beyond California’s borders. I developed a motto to capture the essence of what UC does: “Teaching for California, researching for the world.”

UC’s Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) has its own mantra: “California roots, global reach.” They both promote the same principle — we are dedicated to serving California and that service has impacts throughout the world.

One of the most profound ways in which UC touches people’s lives is through the work of ANR and Cooperative Extension. Whether you are a backyard gardener or a major grower in the Central Valley, a devotee of the California food and wine revolution or someone who simply strives to put nutritious meals on the table, chances are you have benefited from ANR, its research stations and the thousands of Cooperative Extension staff operating throughout the state.

Moving forward

I am proud to be a part of this great enterprise of public service, especially during the centennial year of the founding of the national Cooperative Extension system. As our nation celebrates this milestone, it is an appropriate time to honor the history of UC’s agricultural roots and to move forward with new ways of serving California.

To that end, I am making a change that will accomplish both at once. Historically, the ANR vice president reported directly to the UC president, just as the campus chancellors do. In recent years, the division was put under the umbrella of the Office of the Provost. It is time to restore ANR to its traditional place in the administrative structure of the university. Accordingly, ANR will once again report directly to the president. I believe this change properly reflects the importance of the work ANR does for the UC system and the state of California. It will ensure that agricultural issues remain front and center to the work of the University of California and that we will allow me to stay in closer touch with the agricultural community.

Deep roots

As a land-grant university, UC has always had a mandate to educate people in the latest agricultural methods. From the earliest days of the university, that was part of our mission.

When the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created the national Cooperative Extension system, UC’s mission expanded. The name Cooperative Extension itself embodies what that mission was intended to be and what it has evolved into. “Extension” in this sense means reaching out and sharing the scientific knowledge of the university with the public. “Cooperative” is the key concept that makes these endeavors successful. With federal support, UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) thrives as a partnership of growers, ranchers, state and local government and a committed community of ANR scientists, educators and employees. Together, this partnership has built California agriculture into a $45 billion industry.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of Cooperative Extension, this issue of California Agriculture highlights some of the many UCCE contributions to California. In these pages, you can read how a Fresno County CE advisor helped allafa seed growers stave off infestations of Africanized bees and increase crop yields.

In another example of the value of partnerships, you can learn how an advisor, a grower, an agriculture commissioner and a retired army officer teamed up to create a popular tourist destination and apple-growing region in a Northern California community whose orchard livelihood once faced extinction.

These are just two examples of how UCCE has come through in a crisis. Every day, its researchers and advisors apply scientific innovations to the challenges of increasing yields, battling invasive pests and diseases, reducing energy use, conserving water, breeding new crop varieties and developing sustainable farming methods.

Over the years, the Cooperative Extension mission has evolved with the times, and it will keep evolving. For example, during World Wars I and II, UCCE helped Californians plant victory gardens to increase the wartime supply of fresh produce. Today, UCCE runs Master Gardener programs in 45 counties, teaching people to enrich their homes and communities with sustainable, edible and ornamental gardens.

California 4-H still provides young people with the opportunities to raise livestock and compete at county fairs. Now, its programs have expanded to include technical knowledge with robot-building competitions and computer training classes.

Particularly noteworthy is the role UCCE and ANR play in building healthier communities. Through nutrition programs in underserved rural and urban neighborhoods, UCCE is fighting obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and other chronic conditions related to diet. These efforts benefit all Californians by helping curb rising health care costs.

Critical responses

With every crisis California faces, UCCE comes through with practical, on-the-ground solutions. With our state now facing a drought, ANR is committed to using its expertise to help our agriculture industry survive. We all know California is no stranger to the cycles of dry years and water rationing. ANR advances in irrigation, plant breeding and conservation methods helped our state survive droughts of the past. And we can do it again.

Climate change is the latest challenge in the water shortage difficulties facing our state. The effects of a warming environment on California’s fields, forests and wildlife has risen to the top of the University’s research concerns. While UC scientists study the causes and effects of climate change, UCCE will be applying that knowledge to technological innovations that will supply California with the latest drought survival strategies.

Advocating

A few months ago, I met with the President’s Advisory Commission on Agriculture and Natural Resources for the first time, and I’m looking forward to meeting with that group again in April. I plan to work closely with its members to ensure that ANR has the tools to meet the needs of California.

When I was appointed UC’s 20th president, I pledged to be the best advocate possible for the University of California. I am eager to be a partner with — and advocate for — ANR and all its valuable programs. In essence, that means I will be an advocate for California agriculture.

I’ll be looking for opportunities to talk about all the ways the ANR family makes life better for California families. Don’t be surprised if I call on you to help spread the word.

I am proud to be a part of this great enterprise of public service, especially during the centennial year of the founding of the national Cooperative Extension system.

Janet Napolitano
President, University of California
In 2014 our nation commemorates the 100th anniversary of the founding of Cooperative Extension. For the University of California’s Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), this is both a year for celebration and for renewal. As California’s land-grant research university, UC, in 1914, was given the task of building the Extension system that the Smith-Lever Act envisioned would propel U.S. agriculture into the modern era. UC ANR embraced that vision with a prophetic belief that scientific knowledge could, indeed, transform California into the world’s most successful agricultural producer.

For 100 years, UC Cooperative Extension has served as ANR’s “community ambassador.” Today, we operate nine administrative centers, 60 county offices and three administrative centers, 60 county offices and 475 campus-based academics devoted to sustaining and improving California’s agricultural and natural resources. Through this vast statewide network, ANR delivers practical, science-based information to California growers, ranchers, decision makers and, perhaps most importantly, the people of California. Through our partnerships with the agricultural community, state, local and federal agencies, and the California State University, we address some of the most pressing problems of our day, including:

• researching how to make safe, affordable food available to the world’s 7 billion people;
• protecting scarce natural resources;
• building healthy, prosperous communities; and
• educating our future leaders to meet these and tomorrow’s challenges. In many ways ANR functions as UC’s 11th campus. We don’t grant degrees, but we educate more than 150,000 young people every year in the California 4-H Youth Development Program. One of the original Cooperative Extension programs, 4-H teaches science, engineering, nutrition, ecology and good citizenship. By participating in 4-H, young people increase their likelihood of graduating from college lifetime.

ANR doesn’t operate medical centers, but we work every day to fight childhood obesity and poor nutrition. Our Extension nutrition programs reach more than 222,000 adults and children in 33 counties. Through UC Cooperative Extension’s efforts, over the past three decades California’s milk production has increased 44%; its processing tomato yields have increased 69% and almond yields have risen by 122%.

Using ANR-developed technology, California growers save 100,000 acres of water a year. When invasive pests like the Asian citrus psyllid attack crops, ANR fights back with scientific advances in pest management and ongoing research to eradicating the threat.

Even in times of severe budget cutbacks, ANR consistently fulfills its public service responsibilities. The California 4-H Youth Development Program, among the original Cooperative Extension programs, has sustained its operations, serving 4,000 4-H clubs and 116,000 youth in 62 counties. In 2014, ANR serves an estimated 3 million youth in all 58 counties of California. Today, we operate nine administrative centers, 60 county offices and three administrative centers, 60 county offices and 475 campus-based academics devoted to sustaining and improving California’s agricultural and natural resources.

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A century of science and service

Rose Hayden-Smith, UC Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth, Family and Community Development Advisor, Ventura County
Rachel Sale, UC Cooperative Extension Sustainable Food Systems Advisor, Los Angeles County

On a warm Friday, May 8, 1914, in Washington, D.C., two pieces of new legislation awaited President Woodrow Wilson’s signature: a proclamation establishing the second Sunday each May as Mother’s Day, and the Smith-Lever Act. The homesteading of mothers dominated the news that day, but Wilson recognized the importance of the Smith-Lever Act, calling it “one of the most significant and far-reaching measures for the education of adults ever adopted by government.”

Sponsored by Sen. Hoke K. Smith and Rep. Asbury F. Lever, the bill was the result of national efforts to create a new educational model for U.S. agriculture. At that time, land-grant universities ran farmers in-field demonstrations in the South and farm management in the North. Yet there was no consistent or efficient way to deliver important knowledge from the university campuses to the communities that needed it. Passage of Smith-Lever launched a century of innovation in U.S. education that continues to this day. In California, the educational model born out of the legislation is UC Cooperative Extension. For 100 years this statewide network of UC researchers and educators has developed and provided science-based information to solve locally relevant challenges in the areas of economics, agriculture, natural resources, youth development and nutrition.

Progressive roots

Agriculture has always been vital to America. In 1860, at the outset of the Civil War, farmers made up 58% of the U.S. labor force. It was that demographic that created the impetus behind the 1862 Morrill Act, which gave each state a grant of land to establish a college that would teach practical subjects such as agriculture and engineering (see California Agriculture, April–June 2012, pg. 42). A key role of those UC agricultural clubs formed in Fresno and Fortuna, these early clubs evolved into today’s 4-H program

1912

Andrew Hansen—California’s first Extension farm advisor, placed in Humboldt County

First UC Extension specialist, a poultryman, hired with goal to double egg production from 80-eggs per hen per year average

1919

B.H. Crocker recruited to direct state’s Agricultural Extension Service, where he does for rest 35 years

1920

Crocker establishes week-long traveling conferences where carrots of farm advisors and Farm Bureau representatives travel for hundreds of miles viewing selected farms.

Farm Bureau centers established in more than 500 rural communities

1922

Growers begin acquiring tractors. UC Extension holds one-week schools in 12 counties teaching growers how to adjust and repair their new machinery

1924

Extension workers help bring an outbreak of foot and mouth disease under control

1925

The president roots of Cooperative Extension

Over the course of more than half a century, Presidents Abra- ham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson signed landmark legislation that created the land-grant institutions and Cooperative Extension. Despite very different backgrounds and political ideologies, they reached very similar conclusions about the vital nature of agricultural education to U.S. prosperity.

President Lincoln, a Republican, who signed into law the Mor- rill Act, creating the nation’s system of public higher education and land-grant institutions, and President Wilson, who signed the Smith-Lever Act, which created the Cooperative Extension service, were both shaped by the American Civil War. Lincoln experienced the war firsthand, serving as president of the United States when the South seceded from the Union, and brought the nation intact, although battered, through 4 grueling years of war. Lincoln was born and raised on a farm, and his lack of formal education influenced his ideas about educational access for Americans.

Life on the farm also influenced his ideas about the importance of creating a federal-level agency (the USDA, what Lincoln termed “the people’s department”) to manage agriculture, of opening up land to settlers by means of the Homestead Act, and of creating a transna- tional railroad system to promote commerce.

A Democrat, Wilson was born in Virginia. At the end of the Civil War, when he was only 8 years old, he watched the former Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, brought through his community, in chains. As a youth he saw how local farmers struggled after the war. He attended elite educational institutions, including the University of Virginia and the College of New Jersey (later renamed Princeton University), and received a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University. Wilson was the first president to ride to his inauguration in an automobile. He never forgot his firsthand observations of the economic challenges Southern farmers faced in the post-Civil War era, these experiences strongly influenced his ideas about scientific agriculture and the importance of Extension education.

A century of science and service

Rose Hayden-Smith, UC Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth, Family and Community Development Advisor, Ventura County
Rachel Sale, UC Cooperative Extension Sustainable Food Systems Advisor, Los Angeles County

1862

President Lincoln signs Morrill Act, authorizing development of agricultural “land-grant” colleges in each state

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1925

Extension provides emergency assistance when St. Francis Dam break inundates portions of Ventura and Los Angeles counties

1927

Extension academies begin specializing in poultry, dairy, citrus, walnuts, agriculture, engineering, etc.

1928

“4-H” appears for the first time in California reports on youth work

1933

Extension completes first decade with 40 farm advisors, 33 assistant farm advisors and 21 home demonstration agents in county offices

1940

First Agricultural Extension circulars published

1944

President Woodrow Wilson

1927

Extension provides emergency assistance when St. Francis Dam break inundates portions of Ventura and Los Angeles counties

1929

Extension Director Crocker embarks on fact-finding tour in Asia to investigate potential markets for California specialty crops; his outlook is not optimistic

1957

Emergency war appropriations provide growth for UC Agricultural Extension as “food for victory” becomes national priority

1960

Congress passes the Smith-Lever Act, making federal funds available for extension work

1914

Smith-Lever Act of 1914: An Act to provide for cooperative agricultural extension work between the agricultural colleges of the States and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Continued on page 10
colleges was to develop knowledge that would help farmers produce enough food and fiber to meet the needs of a growing nation. In 1887, the Hatch Act was passed to further this mission; it provided land-grant colleges with funds to develop agricultural experiment stations, where research was conducted. Passage of the Adams Act in 1906 doubled funding to the research stations, while requiring a new funding commitment from state sources. The infusion of federal and state capital facilitated agricultural research, education and innovation, and generated increasing interest in U.S. agriculture among policymakers concerned about food security and increasing economic opportunities.

Five years of debate had preceded the Smith-Lever legislation. The McLaughlin Bill, proposed in 1909, left no clear role in Extension work for the USDA. Opponents of that bill were familiar with the work of early Extension educator Seaman A. Knapp and argued for his model, which emphasized demonstration work on farms. The final Smith-Lever legislation was a compromise, facilitated by USDA Secretary David Houston, who proposed a single Extension service from the USDA’s agricultural Extension system and land-grant education, and created a federal, state and county funding formula for it that persists to this day.

The intent of the Smith-Lever Act, like earlier agricultural legislation, was broadly democratizing. Initially, Extension focused on improving and reforming rural life, partly in response to the findings of the Country Life Commission, created by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908. The Smith-Lever Act was rooted in the Progressive philosophy of helping people help themselves, a philosophy that continues to inform Cooperative Extension’s work today, and it demonstrated Progressive Era beliefs in the value of public-private partnerships and shared funding models. In the case of Cooperative Extension, the model included federal, state (land-grant universities) and local support (county funding, and the organization of a local Farm Bureau to sponsor the work). This relationship with the Farm Bureau was a vital component in Cooperative Extension’s formation and identity; their growth and partnership has been a philosophy that continues to inform Cooperative Extension’s work today, and it demonstrated Progressive Era beliefs in the value of public-private partnerships and shared funding models.

A profile in excellence

In the late 1910s and early 1940s, a young UC-trained agronomist named Milton D. Miller worked as an assistant farm advisor in the UC Cooperative Extension office in Ventura County. When the United States entered World War II, Miller enlisted in the U.S. Army as a captain and was deployed to the Pacific theatre. He worked for the U.S. Subsistence Procurement Branch in Australia, where he helped farmers transition from hand-hoeing vegetable fields to using mechanical weeder, as part of the effort to boost Allied wartime food production. An engaging writer, Miller corresponded regularly with the Cooperative Extension staff in Ventura, exchanging news and thanking them for gift packages that included fruitcake, handkerchiefs and tobacco.

After the war ended, Miller returned to service with UC Cooperative Extension, working as an Extension specialist from what eventually became the UC Davis campus. His notable career spanned more than 50 years, and his work in rice, cereal and olive crops, and food procurement had local, state, national and international impacts. Producers here and all over the world benefited from his research on rapidly developing technologies to improve practices and increase production.

UC Cooperative Extension history

In 1865, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Smith-Lever Farm Labor Act, which established the Cooperative Extension service. In 1887, the Hatch Act was passed to provide federal funds for agricultural research, education and extension. In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt established the Country Life Commission, which identified the need for rural development and recommended the creation of a system to provide education and technical assistance to farmers. In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act, providing federal funds for agricultural extension work.

The UC Cooperative Extension system was established in 1915, and by 1930, Extension agents were working in all 58 counties in California. The system expanded rapidly, with the addition of new programs and services, including war bond campaigns, home demonstration programs, and programs to help farmers stabilize their incomes.

In the 1930s, Extension faced new challenges as the Great Depression hit the country. Agents worked to provide assistance to farmers and to promote economic recovery. In the 1940s, Extension played a critical role in supporting the war effort, with agents working on war bond campaigns and other projects to support the national defense.

Throughout the 20th century, Extension continued to evolve, adapting to new technologies and changing needs. In the 1960s, Extension began to focus on community development and outreach, and in the 1970s, it expanded its focus to include international programs.

Today, the UC Cooperative Extension system is a vital component of the UC System, working with local, state, and federal partners to provide education and technical assistance to farmers and rural communities across California.
May 8, 2014: Day of citizen science

The real strengths of UC Cooperative Extension is its ability to facilitate and build networks of knowledge that include scientists, producers, community members and practitioners. We learn together. This engaging process by everyone, not just the professional experts, has been an important part of our national history. Before the formalization of higher education and the specialization of scientific disciplines, much of our scientific knowledge was gathered by citizens through trial and error and then passed along to others. President George Washington and Thomas Jefferson shared their knowledge of agricultural science in their correspondence and at agricultural fairs and meetings. Benjamin Franklin published scientific discoveries that provided a foundation for future technological innovation.

Citizen science is gaining traction in contemporary communities. As citizens, we rely on a national agricultural system to provide food and water for our daily sustenance. In the face of climate change, new threats to agriculture, and the need for sustainable production, citizen science provides a means for making science more accessible and making it a part of our daily lives. As we continue to learn from and with one another, we can work to ensure the future of our food system.

For more information about participating, visit http://Bioskientific.ucanr.edu.

—Marissa Palin Stein
Cooperative Extension played a critical role on California’s home front during World War I, helping farmers to grow enough wheat and other crops to meet expanded wartime needs. Extension’s value was quickly established as farmers came to rely on having an expert close at hand who was familiar with local conditions and crops. In addition to addressing the needs of farmers, Cooperative Extension soon expanded to provide educational opportunities for their families. Female extension agents—home advisors—were hired; they taught food preservation and nutrition and ran other programs for rural women and activities for local youth. This new generation of college-educated female home economists increased the contact and interchange between urban and rural communities, especially on social and domestic issues. Cooperative Extension also reached thousands of young people who would learn about food production, animal husbandry, cooking, science and more through participation in 4-H clubs.

UC Cooperative Extension today

UC Cooperative Extension, part of UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR), is comprised today of 320 locally based Cooperative Extension advisors, 630 campus-based Cooperative Extension specialists, 60 county offices throughout the state, and nine research and extension centers. It has rural roots, but as the nation has grown and communities have changed, Cooperative Extension has evolved, adapting programs and developing new ones to meet the needs of rural and nonrural audiences. Since the 1960s, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) has provided free nutrition education classes in urban communities. Thousands of urban and suburban residents have benefited from the Master Gardener program, which offers workshops and advice to home, community and school gardeners; currently, more than 5,400 master gardener volunteers serve California communities. The Master Food Preserver program teaches Californians to safely preserve the healthy foods we produce; A new Natural Master Gardener program is training volunteers to help communities respond to complex issues in sustainable natural ecosystems; observations by volunteers in the community are recorded using mobile technologies so the data can be studied by scientists, who then respond to and help solve community problems.

All of Cooperative Extension’s activities are grounded in understanding and developing partnerships with local communities. After a century of service, UC Cooperative Extension continues to deliver practical, trusted, science-based solutions to Californians.

Suggested reading


UC Cooperative Extension history

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Board in 1914, and in the following years 41 of the 58 California counties organized into a Farm Bureau to help guide the Cooperative Extension partnership to allocate funding to help support Extension work in that community. Additionally, it was required that a group of farmers in participating counties organize into a Farm Bureau to help guide the Cooperative Extension farm advisor on the issues of local agriculture. (These grassroots groups later evolved into the California Farm Bureau.)

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### Developing Northern California’s first ranch marketing program

California’s El Dorado County was once part of a thriving commercial pear-growing region. In 1958, its growers produced more than 32,000 tons of pears on 3,400 acres. The local Placerville Fruit Growers Association, established in 1915, was a busy pear-packing cooperative. But in the late 1950s, pear decline disease invaded California and nearly destroyed nearly all of El Dorado’s premium Bartlett pear orchards. By 1964, the county’s production had dropped to 8,835 tons. Farmers were devastated, and their families at risk.

The late Dick Bethell was UC Cooperative Extension pomology advisor in El Dorado, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz and Sonoma counties but he lived in Placerville. He couldn’t stand watching his community suffer, and he got to work restructuring El Dorado’s entire growing industry. Bethell encouraged local growers to diversify into stone fruits, wine grapes, berries and, most of all, apples.

In the 1960s, after a visit to Oak Glen, a successful apple-growing region in Southern California’s San Bernardino Mountains, Bethell and his partners envisioned a similar agritourism industry in El Dorado County, based on apple production. Bethell, grower Gene Bolster, agricultural commissioner Ed Delfino, and retired army officer Bob Tuck formed the Apple Hill Growers Association, based on the Oak Glen model and its agritourism by-laws. The following summer, in 1964, they held their first Apple Hill picnic for the news media, and not long afterwards they recruited visitors at the California State Fair.

Today, the Apple Hill Growers Association has grown from 16 farmer members to over 55, and Apple Hill has the largest concentration of apple growers in all of California. Their efforts have paid off: Apple Hill has become a very popular tourist destination in Northern California. More than 75,000 visitors tour the Apple Hill area each year to buy fresh apples and apple products.

Apples aren’t the only crop El Dorado visitors now enjoy, and UCCE’s Bethell had a hand in that as well. Once a thriving wine country, with early settlers supplying Gold Rush communities with spirits and fruit, El Dorado’s wine grape industry suffered during Prohibition and from grape phylloxera.

In 1965, Bethell oversaw the planting of several wine grape test plots at various foothill locations in the county. The wines produced from these plots were evaluated by the UC Davis Department of Enology, which confirmed the suitability of the region for quality wine grapes. The re-emerging industry grew from 6 acres to more than 2,000 acres of vines and 50 wineries during Bethell’s tenure. The county was officially designated as an American Viticultural Area in 1983, and today, thanks to the early encouragement by Dick Bethell, El Dorado produces some of California’s top wines and most beloved apples.

— Marissa Palm Stein

### UCCE’s connection to the community continues

Beginning growers and ranchers

“Farming as a way of life is waning in Sonoma County, as agricultural land is converted to housing and the average age of growers nears 60 years. ‘We need to bring new farmers into the business,’ says Stephanie Larson, director of UCCE Sonoma County.

To do just that, she launched a Beginning Farmer and Rancher program with a 3-year grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) beginning in 2011. The program includes hands-on experience in production and business planning (including marketing, organic certification, permits and regulations, and lending) as well as mentoring by local master growers and ranchers. "Farming is challenging," Larson says. “People can have a great idea but often fail due to the business end.”

Just as importantly, participants get access to land. They can lease vacant county land, and can use a website that matches new growers and ranchers with private landowners who want to lease acreage. In addition, a training farm — known as an incubator farm — is in the works, which will help participants get started by, for example, providing shared equipment, mentoring, and a lower initial lease rate.

“We have folks who already have land and are hoping to reinvent and save their family farms, or who are switching careers to grow local food,” says Linda Peterson, UCCE Beginning Farmer and Rancher program coordinator. About half of the 43 participants to date are minorities, women or low-income, and most are now working in the agricultural field. “They’ve increased production, started farms or are working on farms,” she says. Their operations include local hard cider, dry-farmed tomatoes, sheep and goat cheese, and agricultural tourism.

Now, Larson and Peterson are integrating their Beginning Farmer and Rancher program into the sustainable agriculture program at Santa Rosa Junior College, which will ensure that the program continues long after the USDA grant is finished.

### SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Educating the public about sustainable agriculture, beginning with the basics of a healthy lifestyle — eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, exercise regularly, and so on — but knowing what to do and...
actually doing it are far from the same thing. To help Californians make healthy choices that stick, UC ANR administrators and UCCE delivers the federally funded Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) statewide. As part of the program, UCCE nutrition educators teach adult classes with the Eating Smart: Bring Active curriculum, which was developed by EFNEP and UCCE staff at UC Davis and Colorado State University. Used by Cooperative Extension nationwide, the curriculum consists of eight 1-hour classes that help people make healthy lifestyle choices. Sessions include “Get Moving,” “Vary Your Veggies, Focus on Fruit,” and “Make Half Your Grains Whole.”

In 2013, this program reached more than 9,000 low-income families in California. “Half of participants now eat three or more servings of vegetables and two or more servings of fruit per day,” says Connie Schneider, director of UC ANR’s Youth, Families and Communities statewide program, which includes EFNEP. “This is a remarkable improvement.”

Juana Gonzalez of Colusa is a standout EFNEP graduate. She went from eating hardly any produce to enjoying two cups each of vegetables and fruit a day, and now seasons her food with herbs and spices instead of salt, and drinks water instead of soda. She also bumped up her daily exercise from less than half an hour to more than an hour. Her reward? Gonzalez has lost weight and no longer needs high blood pressure medication. “I feel better and, best of all, my teenage daughter is making healthy lifestyle changes with me,” she says. Besides embracing her new lifestyle, Gonzalez inspires others to do the same. “Now Juana comes to the first class of my other sessions to say, ‘Look what this did for me,’” says Sonia Rodriguez, EFNEP nutrition educator at the Altami Learning Center in Colusa. “She’s a great advocate.”

SUSTAINABLE NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Training conservation volunteers

Just an hour’s drive north of Los Angeles, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy was overwhelmed with requests to visit the 240,000 acres of oak woodland, desert, foothill and chaparral that it manages. This range of habitats makes the ranch a hotspot of biological diversity, with big draws such as condors, pronghorn, mountain lions and stunning wildflower displays. This is a huge piece of land that is really unique in California because there has been no intensive recreation — ranching can be more compatible with endangered species than a lot of people think around,” says Sabrina Drill, UCCE natural resources advisor in Los Angeles County. “Because this is still working land, all public access needs to be guided, and they couldn’t keep up with the demand.”

Drill is also co-director of UC ANR’s new California Naturalist Program, which partners with local organizations statewide to engage the public in the study and stewardship of California’s natural resources. This makes the program a perfect fit with the Tejon Ranch Conservancy. “They need help with monitoring and restoration projects, and with allowing the larger community to come and enjoy the land,” says Drill. “They thought they were going to have to develop their own curriculum so they were excited to have a UC-vetted, science-based stewardship education program available already.”

The curriculum includes 40 hours of class time and field training, as well as individual capstone service projects. The first Tejon Ranch class was held in the fall of 2013, and many of the projects — which included acorn monitoring, pronghorn surveys, a weather station and a camera network to monitor wildlife — are ongoing. Training will continue yearly, and graduates will also guide wildflower and natural history tours, and, ultimately, staff the ranch’s nature center.

“We have 20 graduates who are already providing valuable citizen science work,” says Scott Pipkin, public access coordinator of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy. “This program provides an excellent foundation for our volunteers.”

WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND SECURITY STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Balancing grazing and watersheds

Tejon Ranch Conservancy volunteer Deonsa Taylor measures residual dry matter on rangeland, which will help manage grazing on this working cattle ranch.

Today’s harmony between grazing and public lands in the Bay Area stems from UCCE work that began in the 1990s. Back then, it looked like the region’s grazing would soon be a thing of the past. But when we won the case that cattle were a vector for pathogens in drinking water,” says Sheila Barry, UCCE livestock and natural resources advisor for the San Francisco Bay Area. “The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUCC) wanted to get rid of grazing on 40,000 acres in the East Bay.”

Ranchers, some of whom had worked this land for three generations, asked Barry for help. “We had just 60 days,” Barry says. Coincidentally, UCCE had just finished a statewide survey on cattle and Cryptosporidium, a focal pathogen. “This was the key,” she says. “We had the data to help answer the SFPUCC’s questions about grazing and drinking water safety.”

The survey showed that Cryptosporidium shedding was most common in calves younger than 4 months, helping Barry and her collaborators develop a grazing plan for the SFPUCC land. For example, calving has to be done by the beginning of November. “This way the young cattle are old enough not to shed by the time it rains enough for runoff to load water with pathogens,” she says.

Another facet of the grazing plan is keeping cattle away from waterways. “We sat with the ranchers and went over their riparian areas and streams, and fine-tuned cattle’s access to these waters,” Barry says. Ongoing monitoring ensures that ranchers maintain the fences that keep herd where they should be.

Buy-in was also critical to the plan’s success. “We included all stakeholders from the beginning, taking them on rangeland tours and explaining the management,” Barry says. Based on the UCCE plan, in 1999 the SFPUCC adopted best management practices (BMPs) for grazing watersheds. Besides preserving the livelihoods of the ranchers who came to Barry for help, the BMPs set the stage for continued grazing on public lands throughout the Bay Area.

ENDEMIC AND INVASIVE PESTS AND DISEASES STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Preparing for Africanized bees

A nother UCCE project in the 1990s had lasting benefits for the alfalfa seed industry. California is among the nation’s top producers of alfalfa seed, with 38,000 acres in the Central and Imperial valleys that yield 11,000 tons of seed per year.

At the time, alfalfa seed growers were worried that the extremely defensive Africanized honey bee would soon reach the San Joaquin Valley. So they asked Shannon Mueller, UCCE farm advisor in Fresno County, to help them start using the alfalfa leafcutting bee. Unlike the European honey bee, the alfalfa leafcutting bee does not breed with Africanized bees and so cannot inherit their aggression.

While leafcutting bees were already widely used in Canada and the Pacific Northwest, no one knew how they would survive the hot temperatures and low humidity of California’s interior valleys. Moreover, an alfalfa seed company had already tried to introduce them to California without success. “It was called a million dollar mistake,” Mueller says.

But this time it worked. Why? “The growers and seed companies all sat down at the same table with UCCE as the conduit, sharing research-based information on what did and didn’t work,” Mueller says. “We learned how to manage the leafcutting bee for our conditions.” This was essential because while honey bees are managed by beekeepers, leafcutting bees are managed by growers and seed companies.

Today, the combination of leafcutting bees and European honey bee is a standard in California’s alfalfa seed industry. Besides giving growers an added insurance against the leafcutting bee, increased yields by about 300 pounds an acre. This is partly because the bees pollinate alfalfa more efficiently and partly because they complement honey bee forage. For example, irrigation discourages honey bees but not the leafcutting bees.

Growers have said that without the alfalfa leafcutting bee, they wouldn’t be in the alfalfa seed business anymore,” Mueller says. “This was a phenomenal project — it’s a standout in all my years in Cooperative Extension.”

— Robin Mandon
Historical research

California Agriculture journal publishes peer-reviewed research and news for the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In the journal’s January–June 2014 issue, the following three historical sidebars accompanied three contemporary research articles. The “Early grain storage research” sidebar was paired with the article “Survey of rice storage facilities identifies research and education needs.” The “Nutriture of People” accompanied “Senior, and their food handlers and caregivers, need food safety and nutrition education.” And “Early conclusions on Pierce’s disease” sat alongside “Pierce’s disease costs California $104 million per year.”

As part of our recognition of UC Cooperative Extension’s Centennial year, California Agriculture will continue to pair short historical sidebars with current research articles throughout 2014. The connections between article and sidebar will vary. Some historical sidebars may draw from the same broad research area, while others may discuss earlier studies of a problem still being investigated by contemporary scientists. Problems affecting the state’s resources, commodities and people continue to evolve, and research that was genuinely new and enlightening at one time may now be taken for granted or even discounted. The variety of these connections of old and new help to place the university’s scientific endeavors into a larger context. And they remind us how today’s science builds on previous knowledge and experience, as researchers continue to work to improve the lives of Californians and the environment in which we all live.

Dryness Protects Farm Stored Grain From Insect Attack

Early grain storage research

1947

“Many insects that infest grain in farm storage are small. Some are smaller than a grain of wheat. In fact, with some species, a single kernel of grain furnishes sufficient food for the development of from one to several individuals.

“Among the more important pests are the grain weevil, rice weevil, lesser grain borer, Angoumois grain moth, confused flour beetle and the saw-toothed grain beetle. The first four mentioned are capable of damaging sound grain. In capacious silos and granaries, these pests generally feed upon broken grains, particularly the finer particles.

“Where the environment is favorable, these insects cause serious damage and under extreme conditions the grain may be completely destroyed. Most of the important grain pests are widespread throughout California and if stored is not properly protected it is subject to heavy infestation.

“The development of stored grain pests is largely regulated by temperature and the moisture content of the food on which they feed. The most favorable temperature range is from 80 to 85 Deg. F.; while the most ideal moisture content of the food ranges from 13 to 17 per cent.”

Dryness Protects Farm Stored Grain From Insect Attack

At the time of this writing, author Abraham E. Mittelbach was assistant professor of entomology and assistant entomologist at the Agricultural Experiment Station at UC Berkeley. He went on to become a full professor and leader in UC Berkeley’s Department of Entomology, as well as a pioneer in the fields of ecological pest control and the specifically targeted use of pesticides. After retirement in 1962, he was named professor emeritus and continued his research and Extension work for nearly 30 years more. Mittelbach died in 1991, aged 92.

The Nutriture of People

From The Yearbook of Agriculture (USDA 1959), “The Nutriture of People”

1959

...Although more Americans over 60 own their own homes than do younger people, institutions for older persons also are increasing more rapidly than for any other age group.

“Institutional food service generally is planned to provide approximately the amounts of nutrients recommended for the largest group in the institution. Several studies between 1948 and 1956 of older groups in institutions have indicated however, that the daily meals, as served, may provide recommended amounts of nutrients, but the actual nutrient intake levels of the older individuals often are below the recommended amounts.

“This situation is not unlike comparisons of intake levels of families as a whole and of the individual members of families. Among the groups in large institutions, however, there is less consideration of individual food habits and food preferences in planning menus than there would be for family groups.

“Studies by the California, Florida, and Rhode Island Agricultural Experiment Stations between 1950 and 1956 indicated that the nutrient intake levels of older groups in institutions generally are substantially lower than the nutrient intake levels of older persons in individual homes. Most of the residents in public institutions consumed considerably less than recommended amounts of all nutrients...”

“When their intakes of iron and of protein were adequate, some relationship was evident between the intake of iron and protein and the hemoglobin. When intakes of iron and protein are generally high, hemoglobin levels may be rather inconsistent — an indication that hemoglobin beyond certain intake levels does not generally increase with higher intakes.”

UC Professor Agnes Fay Morgan.

After retirement in 1962, he was named professor emeritus and continued his research and Extension work for nearly 30 years more. Mittelbach died in 1991, aged 92.

BACTERIA

discovered to be cause of
PIERCE’S DISEASE OF GRAPEVINES

Early conclusions on Pierce’s disease

1974

“The newly discovered Pierce’s disease bacterium could destroy large numbers of grapevines and render parts of California unfit for the culture of common grape varieties.

“Since 1884, this disease has been periodically investigated with the belief that it was caused by a virus... This study reports for the first time the isolation of a rod-shaped, gram-positive bacterium from the disease-spreadling leafhopper Draeculacephalus morsei.

“A group of noninfective leafhoppers were fed on healthy grapevines, licks vinifera cv. Mission, then they were transferred to plants with Pierce’s disease. Excreta (spitot) of 10 leafhoppers collected after they were fed first at healthy plants, and then additional excreta samples were taken from the same vectors after they had fed on diseased plants. Each sample of excreta was streaked on an enriched bacteriological agar medium.

“Bacteria grew as small white colonies on the media streaked with the excreta of the leafhoppers which had fed on a diseased grapevine. No such colonies appeared on media streaked with excreta from leafhoppers which had fed previously only on a healthy grapevine.

“These experiments have demonstrated that a gram-positive bacterium is the etiological agent of Pierce’s disease in grapevines, and not a virus, as previously believed. The organism has been successfully cultured on artificial media. By using the leafhopper vector injected with the cultured and purified bacteria, the disease symptoms can be consistently reproduced in healthy grapevines and the same organism resided from clean leafhoppers fed on these plants and on naturally infected plants from the field.”

All three authors contributed to the understanding and prevention of plant diseases throughout their university careers. Jaine M. Ruge studied plant pathology at UC Davis in the 1970s and went on to a professorship at the Departamento de Sanidad Vegetal, Universidad de Chile, Santiago. Thomas A. Shalla served as professor in the UC Davis Department of Plant Pathology. Besides his classroom work, he pioneered new electron microscopy techniques for the identification and study of viruses and infected plant cells, and led a task force to research and virtually eliminate pear decline, a serious disease in the pear’s pear industry in the 1960’s. Clayton D. Kado is professor emeritus at the UC Davis Department of Plant Pathology. He was a university bacteriologist, both in the classroom and in the laboratory, and author of many scientific articles and a major college textbook on bacteriology.