

A group of about ten people, including men and women of various ages, are gathered in a lush garden. They appear to be engaged in a discussion or a hands-on activity. The garden is filled with various plants, including tall green stalks and small pink flowers. In the background, there are trees and a structure that looks like a greenhouse or a covered walkway. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. Large, vibrant green leaves are in the foreground, framing the central scene.

Horticulture and Small Farms

In 2018–19, UCCE Placer/Nevada Horticulture & Small Farms Programs:

- Delivered 137 hours of training to 443 producers through short courses, hands-on workshops, and classes.
- Directly assisted 78 farmers improve farm sustainability by adopting new pruning, mulching, and/or integrated pest management practices that reduce water use, conserve soil, and manage pests without pesticides.
- Provided tools and assisted 39 new and beginning farmers to plan their new farm business, increasing the probability of success.
- Reached 83,189 people with research-based information through our Foothill Farming website, blog, and Facebook.

Placer and Nevada County farmers produce a wide range of horticultural crops; including fruits, vegetables, nuts, and nursery crops. These crops are produced on small family farms, which feed a growing demand for high quality local produce.

The small scale of most Placer/Nevada farms creates challenges to economic viability and the overall stability of local agriculture. The romantic vision of a one- or two-acre farm growing food rarely provides a living wage to the farmer. Specific issues include: training a new generation of farmers and helping working farmers build to scale; building business management and economic analysis skills; planning for operational continuity; and implementing sustainable production practices to manage soil, water, and pests effectively with the least environmental impact.

UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) helps growers meet those challenges through education and technical assistance. We conduct applied research with local growers to develop appropriate practices for the foothills. UCCE develops and delivers training to area farmers on crop production, pest management, farm business, small farm economics, and beginning farming. We provide individual assistance to commercial producers through farm calls, phone, and e-mail consultations. We also provide on-demand information through our Foothill Farming website, Facebook page and blog. We also foster communication among local farmers and ranchers by hosting networking events.



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