

2018 UC ANR CE Position Request

Position Title: Integrated Vineyard Systems Area Advisor, Mendocino, Sonoma and Lake Counties.

Brief Description: This position will develop and extend knowledge on designing and managing vineyards adapted to changing climate and market conditions with a focus on the premium wine industry of the region. A master's degree or higher in plant sciences with a concentration in viticulture or a closely related field is required. The Integrated Vineyard Systems Advisor reports directly to the Mendocino and Lake County Director for planning, development and implementation of the program, but also informs the Sonoma County CD of activities at least annually. This advisor works closely with the local Area IPM Advisor, Area Soils and Water Advisor, CE Viticulture Specialists at UC Oakville and UCKAC, UC Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology faculty and the UCCE Integrated Viticulture Workgroup.

Justification: The vineyard and wine industry are the leading economic agricultural activity of this region providing considerable income, employment, taxes and tax base. This position will assist the vineyard industry (with over 90,000 planted acres and a farm gate value of almost \$1 billion) to adapt to challenges including changing climate and market conditions; mechanization and technological innovations. Environmental regulations to farm require continuing education and assistance to growers due to increasing complexity and expense. Many growers also certify their production systems (including Sustainable, Organic and Biodynamic) and require support to implement innovative practices. There are 15 vineyard and winery organizations including 2 wine grape commissions in the region representing over 2500 growers. There are also 3 active County Farm Bureaus. Most want assistance in grower education specific for their county and sub region.

Extension: Potential topics extended to wine grape growers and wineries may include adapted wine grape plant materials; current best practices in vineyard design for plant health, productivity and longevity; production costs; precision farming; winegrowing farming certification systems; educate and assist growers to meet regulatory compliance with regulations specifically focused on vineyard farming practices. Besides sponsoring UCCE meetings for growers, there are numerous opportunities to present at meetings organized by resource agencies and other stakeholders throughout the year.

Research: This is a prestigious wine production area with many willing cooperating clients to conduct on farm research. Broad research topics include adaptations to climate change, continued economic sustainability and productivity, plant material evaluation, vineyard design and trellising equipment, and best practices to produce the highest quality fruit and wine while minimizing any negative impacts to public trust resources. The advisor can publish research results in the Journal of Enology and Viticulture, California Agriculture, and numerous trade journals.

ANR Network: This advisor provides leadership as a team member with other North Coast CE Advisors working on wine grape production in IPM, Soil Health, Water Quality and Conservation. The Advisor has the potential to collaborate with CE Extension Viticulture Specialists from the UC Oakville Field Station, UC Kearney Ag Center and faculty from UC Davis Viticulture and Enology. Additional cooperative research and collaboration is being conducted in the region by faculty members from the UC Davis Departments of Plant Pathology; Entomology, Foundation Plant Services; UC Berkeley Department of Environmental Policy and Management; and UC Riverside Department of Entomology.

There is also the possibility of conducting research at the nearby UC Hopland Research and Extension Center.

Network External to ANR: There are also researchers presently collaborating in the region from USDA ARS labs in plant pathology and virology. The Advisor can potentially collaborate with organizations in the 3 county area including County Agricultural Commissioners, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Services Agency; County Resource Conservation Districts and the 15 different vineyard and winery organizations found in the region on topics of concern and interest. The California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance, the Wine Institute and the California Alliance of Wine Growers also have partnered with UCCE in the region in the past.

Support: Present support includes office space and administrative support in Mendocino County, a small lab and part of the time of an agricultural technician to assist in research and extension efforts. There is also some travel support which may need augmentation due to the large geographical area of this position. Lake and Sonoma Counties also have office and lab space, and ag tech support.

Other support: The Lake County Wine Grape Commission and the Mendocino Winegrowers, Inc. have support collaborative applied research and extension activities ranging from \$1,000 to \$30,000. The American Vineyard Foundation, CDFA Specialty Crops Block Grant Program, USDA Western SARE and other funding organizations have been sources of viticulture research and extension funding in the past.

Location: Mendocino County is a central location for the position in terms of travel time and available facilities. The majority of the vineyards can be reached within a 1 hour drive. The most distant sites are 1.5 hours or more to reach.

Developed and proposed by: County Directors of Lake, Mendocino and Sonoma Counties; CE Viticulture Specialists