

Marin Agricultural Support Action Plan

Near, Medium, and Long-term initiatives
to support the viability of Marin's
farmers and ranchers

2011

Contributors and Partners

Farmers and Ranchers and County of Marin with:

Agricultural Institute of Marin

College of Marin

Marin Agricultural Land Trust

Marin Agricultural Weights and Measures

Marin Community Development Agency

Marin Community Foundation

Marin County Farm Bureau

Marin Economic Forum

Marin Organic

Marin Parks & Open Space

Marin Resource Conservation District

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Western United Dairymen

United Markets

University of California Cooperative Extension

Introduction

This plan conveys short (1-2 year), medium (2-3 years), and long-term (4 years or more) action items that will support the continued viability of Marin's agriculture and the contributions that its farm families make to Marin's sustainability. The specific action items come as a result of the Marin Agricultural Summit held in November 2010, at which more than 90 of Marin's farmers, ranchers, and partners identified opportunities for agriculture's continued success and the steps needed to realize those opportunities. The items also represent programs that partnering support organizations and agencies can develop and implement in response to the needs expressed at the Summit. At the request and convening of Supervisor Steve Kinsey, an Agricultural Advisory Group met three times from March to July 2011 to refine the Summit ideas and initiatives. This work included ten subcommittee meetings during that same timeframe. The action items represent and are organized in three broad categories:

Agricultural Production Needs – Initiatives focus on production, processing, and other farm business operation areas that will enhance production and availability of local agricultural products. **Page 2**

Public Support – With an overarching aim to cultivate a cultural commitment to agriculture, initiatives target ways to foster stronger customer relations between local producers and local consumers, and stronger working relationships and partnerships between producers and area organizations and agencies. **Page 8**

Regulatory Assistance – Initiatives offer steps to continue with progress already made for effective and efficient agricultural project review and approval. **Page 10**

Accordingly, this plan sets the course for the next leg on the path of success for Marin Agriculture that was started by the 1997 Marin Agricultural Summit and the 2001 Near-Term Agricultural Support Plan. The past and present achievements along this path are credited to Marin's farmers and ranchers, the County of Marin, and the numerous partnering support organizations that have contributed resources and staff to that effort. These same contributions and partnerships are called upon to successfully navigate the future path through implementation of this Action Plan.

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Med 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
Agricultural Production Needs				
Provide for agricultural product processing, packaging, and distribution needs through a centralized shared facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantify the current volume of producer need for this infrastructure taking into account market changes and opportunities for expansion Identify existing and developing opportunities for commercial kitchen rental Develop permanent farm-to-market infrastructure 				
	Food hub distribution project by CAFF	USDA Rural Dev. Supported food hub groups	Short	Cheese Guild, UCCE
	CAM Food Works		Medium	UCCE, Cheese Guild
	SF Ferry Plaza		Medium	AIM, County of Marin
Secure meat harvesting, cut and wrap, storage, distribution, and marketing infrastructure capacity to meet local needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep in close contact with Modular Food Systems, Inc. efforts in Ukiah, CA to learn about their progress including costs and payouts, and waste water handling Review documented demand from earlier surveys Quantify the current volume of producer need for this infrastructure taking into account market changes and opportunities for expansion Conduct consumer demand survey 				
	None currently	MFS in Washington, rentable poultry harvest in Placer County, CA	Short	MO, FB, UCCE
	Hardesty survey, Doran survey	USDA study, Placer survey	Short	UCCE, MO, FB
	Animal agriculture working group	USDA study, Placer survey	Short	UCCE, MO, FB
			Medium	MEF, UCCE

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
<u>Secure meat harvesting, cut and wrap, storage, distribution, and marketing infrastructure capacity to meet local needs (continued)</u>				
• Facilitate a cross-county meeting with Supervisor Kinsey, Supervisor Rabbit, and producers from both counties potentially leading to meeting with other partners	Numerous JPAs and multi-county initiatives		Short	Supervisor Kinsey, Supervisor Rabbit, FB, UCCE
• Gather information about existing facilities to learn what will help them stay in business	Coming of Age – The Status of North Bay Artisan Cheesemaking		Short	MEF, UCCE, FB
• Gather information about pilot programs as options	Hardesty et al study		Short	UCCE, FB, MEF
• Reach out to other partners - Field to Family, Whole Foods, Rancho, SRJC, COM	Food hub distribution project by CAFF	USDA Rural Dev. Supported food hub groups	Medium	County of Marin, UCCE, MO, FB
• Identify and evaluate potential sites for new facilities	SMART station analysis, OES Command Center selection	USDA study of harvest facility locations	Medium	UCCE, MEF
<u>Maximize available water to meet agricultural water demand</u>				
• Identify opportunities for water and land availability	Map and GIS soil and water analysis	Mendocino County Report on Ag. Water Demand	Short	UCCE, MRCD, MMWD, NMWD
• Document agricultural water demand and sources to meet that demand	Mendocino County Water Agency Study	California agricultural water use survey	Short	UCCE, MRCD, MMWD, NMWD

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners	
Maximize available water to meet agricultural water demand (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide assistance with permitting and development of water resources Develop support including plan development for sustainable groundwater management 	Pine Gulch Project Sonoma GW Management Plan	Mattole River and Salmon Creek Water Projects State GW management plan requirements	Medium Medium to Long	MRCD, UCCE, NRCS County of Marin
Maximize the mutual benefits of agricultural production on public lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene working group of public land managers and agricultural producers to identify mutual benefits and the instruments to realize them Continue support of ranch and dairy families on public lands, including PRNS and GGNRA 	Agricultural working group Ranchers Association	Ag Vision 2030 Stewardship Begins with People (Diamant et al 2007)	Short Continuous	Marin Parks, PRNS, GGNRA, MMWD, State Parks, FB, UCCE Ranchers Association, PRNS, GGNRA, UCCE, MALT, County of Marin, NRCS
Address financial and capital resource needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a resource list of estate planners with agricultural experience and tips for what to look for in doing estate planning and working with a planner Initiate producer mentoring for business development and securing capital 	UCCE Publication 21515 Row crop farmer network	Agriculture.com Alabama Sustainable Ag. Network	Short Short	MEF, MALT, UCCE FB, West Marin Chamber, MEF

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
<p><u>Address financial and capital resource needs (continued)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a formal network and process for learning about funding sources and opportunities – loans, grants, easement payments • Develop a loan fund process through multiple options (bank consortium, micro finance, local foundation, long-term revenue contracts) • Develop long-term funding for conservation easements resulting in capital to farm families and expansion of land conservation • Research and facilitate retailer/restaurant advances and commitments • Document and demonstrate the potential revenue and income of example diversification projects – Case studies 	Informal Partner Network Whole Foods Loan Program Sonoma County Bond Measure Whole Foods programs	American Grants and Loans Catalog Montana Dept. of Ag. Beginning Farm/Ranch Loans Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Association Montana Farm to Restaurant Connection, Vermont Fresh Network	Short Medium Medium Medium Medium	MEF MEF, AIM, MALT, UCCE County of Marin, Marin Parks, MALT AIM, MEF MEF, UCCE

Realize the opportunity for incoming and outgoing agricultural rail freight

- Maintain connection with North Coast Railroad Authority on projected opening of rail for freight
- Connect agricultural producers and supporting businesses with freight distributors

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<u>Develop and support the next generation of farmers, ranchers, and agricultural sector employees</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an agricultural apprenticeship program Initiate "work experience" course for farm and ranch enterprises Network producers and internship organizations to increase opportunities for local farms to host interns and apprentices Create farmer-to-farmer mentor opportunities for business and farm operation coaching 	High tech industry and trades apprenticeships Nursing, Automotive, and other Work Experience at COM COM Marin and West Marin Chamber	High tech industry and trades apprenticeships Work experience at Community Colleges throughout State and Nation MESA, Farmlink FB Young Farmers and Ranchers	Short (initiated March, 2011) Short Short Medium	COM, IR AS, P. Martinelli, UCCE, County of Marin COM, UCCE, participating farms and ranches MO, UCCE, FB FB, MALT, MO, UCCE
<u>Restoring pasture production through removal of invasive plants</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial and technical assistance on removal and prevention of introduction and spread for species of concern Map location and spread of invasive plants 	Marin Ag. Commissioner, UCCE Sonoma Marin WMA	Cal-IPC	Short Medium	Marin Ag. Com., MALT, MRCD, NRCS, UCCE, PRNS, GGNRA MALT, Sonoma Marin WMA, MRCD, Marin Parks, NRCS, PRNS, GGNRA

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
Public Support				
<u>Make local Marin agricultural goods and services accessible through a "united campaign"</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check with producers about the idea of a name and logo for campaign via online survey and in-person. Create a logo or mark by committee if majority of producers agree, incl. AIM, MALT, MO, UCCE, FB & County Approach the Marin BOS about their political and financial support for a yearlong United Grown In Marin PR Campaign that would be co-marketed and run w/ existing organizations Form an ad hoc committee organized to figure out how to use/sell/manage the use of the mark/seal 	CAGrown, CAFF's Buy Fresh, Buy Local, and Sonoma Made Local Sonoma Select	Fenstra et al. Report Placer Grown	Short w/evaluation for long-term Short w/evaluation for long-term Short w/evaluation for long-term Short w/evaluation for long-term	AIM, MO, MALT, UCCE, FB & County of Marin AIM, MO, MALT, UCCE, FB & County of Marin AIM, MO, MALT, UCCE, FB & County of Marin AIM, MO, MALT, UCCE, FB & County of Marin
<u>Sustain and strengthen relationships and partnerships between agriculture and the community that forges a cultural commitment to agriculture</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish shared directory of agricultural and community organizations Provide presentations to respective organization Boards and meetings Provide contributions for respective organization newsletters and member email communications 			Short Short, continuous Short, continuous	Farm Bureau, UCCE, MRCD Farm Bureau, UCCE, MRCD, MALT Farm Bureau, UCCE, MRCD

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
<u>Education to cultivate cultural understanding and commitment to agriculture</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate on-farm access for consumers and general public to interact with agricultural producers, learn about agricultural production, and purchase local products • Establish infrastructure and continue programs that provide off-farm learning opportunities about Marin agriculture and access to products 	<p>MALT and other farm sponsored tours and events, on-farm retail sales</p> <p>Farmers markets, COM Farm, STRAW teacher training, Class-room curriculum</p>	<p>Outstanding In The Field tours</p>	<p>Short, continuous</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>County of Marin, MALT, MO, FB, UCCE</p> <p>County of Marin, AIM, COM, UCCE, MO, MALT Board of Education, municipal partners</p>

Innovation & Steps	Local Examples	Examples Beyond the Region	Timeframe (Short 1-2 years, Mid 2-3 years, Long 4+years)	Key Partners
Regulatory Assistance				
<u>Develop and continue support of permitting and regulatory assistance initiatives</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a working group to identify solutions for design and review of retail sales projects around environmental health needs Develop permit guide flow chart for County use permit Maintain support and value of MRCD permit streamline program Maintain and enhance Marin Organically Certified Agriculture program Maintain and enhance agricultural ombudsman program and agriculture orientated county staff within key departments - Farm Advisor, AWM, CDA, DPW, Assessor Complete Agricultural Worker Housing Project and launch pilot project for rehabilitating, developing, and maintaining new affordable agricultural worker housing in West Marin Build consistency in agricultural project review and approval across area counties 				
	Cheese makers social	Sonoma Marin Animal Resource Committee	Short	CDA, UCCE, FB
	Fact sheet on cheese making permitting		Short	CDA, UCCE
	Existing program	Pilot program in Mendocino County	Short, continuous	MRCD, County of Marin
	Existing program	CCOF	Short, continuous	AWM, MO, UCCE
	Existing program	Efforts to replicate in other counties and with CDFA at State level	Short, continuous	County of Marin, CDA, DPW, UCCE
			Medium	CDA, Marin Housing Authority, MRCD, MCF, FB
	Accessory structure use in Marin and Sonoma	ABAG for other uses	Medium	CDA, FB, area partners, UCCE

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<u>Foster and enhance Agriculture and County working partnership</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to host and facilitate opportunities for producers, Supervisors, and staff to meet and build relationships 	Cheese maker social, Agricultural working group, Ag. Roundtable	Ag. Vision 2030	Short, continuous	FB, County Supervisors, UCCE, AWM, MRCD, MALT, MO, AIM

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^E = Expert

^F = Facilitator

^M = Moderator

^P = Presenter

^R = Recorder

TH = Table Host



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