

Why We Do What We Do

We work in partnership with farmers and ranchers to build and strengthen the local food systems in Placer and Nevada Counties.

We are dedicated to supporting the local agricultural community and to helping it grow and thrive through a variety of educational and community-building programs.

Our goal is to improve long-term sustainability and economic viability of small-scale farms and ranches in the foothills. We provide innovative, practical training in four areas: production, marketing, risk, and business management.

Our training programs are funded by competitive grants.

Our 2011-12 training is supported by a \$75,953 grant from the USDA Risk Management Agency.



For more information on farming in the foothills and UCCE's programs, visit the Foothill Farming website:
<http://ucanr.org/foothillfarming>

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University of California Cooperative Extension Placer & Nevada Counties Agricultural Programs



**UC
CE** Helping people to
help themselves.

The Agricultural Situation in Placer & Nevada Counties

- Most commercial farms and ranches are small-scale: 78% are ≤ 50 acres.
- Land in farms is declining, but small farms grew 6.9% from 2002 to 2007.
- Crop production includes tree fruit and nuts, winegrapes, vegetables, ornamental and nursery crops.
- Livestock include cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, swine, llamas and alpacas.



Challenges for Small-scale Ag

Economics & Small Farm Viability

- It costs small farms and ranches more to produce a product than large-scale operations, so quality is the selling point.
- Small scale makes direct marketing essential for economic viability.



- Wholesale is only economically viable for high volume operations.
- Current supply of many products cannot meet the demand for local ag products.
- Development pressure takes land out of agriculture, creates high land prices and makes it hard to start or expand a farm.

Producer Generation Gap

- Our average producer age is 57 years. We have few young producers and many beginning farmers and ranchers.
- We need more farmers and ranchers and existing producers who can scale up.

Few ag professionals and ag services

- Lack of local processing facilities
- Lack of a reliable, skilled labor pool
- Lack of professional ag services
- Few ag training opportunities

In response to these issues, UC Cooperative Extension provides programming that

- Builds skills and knowledge
- Fosters networking and provides mentoring

UCCE trains farmers and ranchers

- We have trained over 2,700 farmers and ranchers since 2005; about 340 producers per year.
- In 2011-12, we provided over 220 hours of training to producers.
- We assisted over 2,000 producers with information and individual advice on farming and ranching in 2011-12.

UCCE Farmer & Rancher Programs

- Specialty Crop Production
- Livestock Husbandry
- Grazing and Rangeland Management
- Integrated Pest Management
- Beginning Farming Academy
- Farm Business Planning
- Direct Marketing Academy
- Mentoring
- Monthly Farmer-to-Farmer Networking Breakfast