

## UC MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

### Enhanced community economic development

The Amador County UC Master Gardener program collaborates with local partners to address California's SB 1383 mandate, aiming to reduce landfill organic waste. Offering free composting classes and a Jackson drop-off site, the initiative empowers residents to transform waste into compost, fostering environmental stewardship and community engagement in sustainable practices.



### Enhanced community economic development

UC Master Gardener volunteers contributed significantly to Amador County in 2023-24 with 3,887 volunteer hours. Their efforts promoted sustainable gardening, highlighted by an annual plant sale raising \$6,391.28. Participants adopted eco-friendly practices, such as composting and using mulch, resulting in reduced water and pesticide use, showcasing the program's impact.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH & NUTRITION

### Improved health for all

In 2024, CFHL UCCE educators in Amador County delivered nutrition education to 346 participants over 80 sessions, totaling 66 hours. They reached over 25,000 community members indirectly through newsletters, videos, and food tastings. Partnerships with early childhood facilities supported young learners and integrated physical activity into their curricula.

### Community health and nutrition needs assessment

Advisor Oppliger's assessment outlined a strategic path with initiatives for substantial impact in key areas: Youth Engagement and Career Development, "Food is Medicine" integration, culturally competent nutrition education, Food Hub expansion, and mixed-use pathways, all aimed at building healthier communities in Amador County.

### Improved food safety and security

The collaboration between CFHL UCCE, Arc of Amador, and UC Master Gardeners at Sutter Creek empowers participants with disabilities through nutrition education and gardening. By focusing on safe food handling, affordable recipes, and sustainability, this program fosters independence, healthier eating habits, and confidence as participants learn to cook with their homegrown produce.



Amador County

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Cooperative Extension

## FORESTRY & NATURAL RESOURCES

### Improved industry representation through applied research and policy support

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) integrates environmental sustainability with economic growth by uniting stakeholders in the biomass and forest products industries. Collaborating with leaders like Yosemite Clean Energy, UCCE champions locally sourced, value-added products, supporting local economies and sustainable resource management through research and strategic partnerships.

### Participants adopted recommended practices for forest management

The experiences of Forest Stewardship program participants reveal the transformative effects of education and guidance on sustainable land management. One Amador County participant was connected with a professional forester advice to refine goals on their 25-acre property. Course webinars and field trips expanded participants' understanding of forest health and resilience.

### Improved management and use of land

Fuel breaks are vital in wildfire management, interrupting dense vegetation to aid fire suppression. Positioned along ridges, roads, and near urban areas, they slow fire spread and protect homes. UCCE Advisors conducted research on the Mitchell Mine Fuel Break tested 33 regrowth treatments, finding some over 85% effective, guiding land management decisions economically.

### Landowners learned how to conduct prescribed fires on their own property

The El Dorado Amador Prescribed Burn Association, with UCCE Advisor Kocher, empowers landowners to use prescribed fires safely. In partnership with the Healthy Forest Alliance, they organized a Fire Fighter 2 training in May 2024 for 17 participants. This training included online courses and practical exercises, enhancing firefighting skills and promoting safer forest management.

## UC MASTER FOOD PRESERVER PROGRAM

### Participants adopted food safety practices at home

UC Master Food Preserver Volunteers enhance food safety and prevent illnesses through community education. In 2023-2024, they donated 1,778 hours in Amador and Calaveras Counties, reaching 922 people via 45 farmer's markets, 13 classes, and 9 events. Their efforts empower participants to advocate for food safety and hygiene.

### Participants learned techniques to increase food security and reduce food waste

Improving food security requires enhancing preservation techniques and reducing waste. UC Master Food Preserver classes teach valuable skills, such as freezing small portions in snack bags before placing them in larger freezer bags. This method maximizes space and minimizes freezer burn, ensuring appealing, safe food, and reducing waste.



## Central Sierra Multi-County Partnership

### UCCE Amador Office

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*Closed for lunch 12-1 daily. Hours subject to change.*

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### County Advisors

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#### Now Recruiting, Indigenous Disaster Resilience

### 4-H Youth Development Staff

Vera M. Bullard, Region 6 Program Coordinator

Alissa Hardie, Community Education Specialist II

### Academic Staff

Brian J. Allen, Assistant Specialist

Kim Ingram, Forest Stewardship Coordinator

Katie Reidy, Post-Fire Coordinator

### CalFresh Healthy Living-UC Staff

Kathleen Carter, Nutrition Educator

Noah Cooke, Program Supervisor

Mariana Garcia, Program Coordinator

Cailin McLaughlin, Garden Coordinator

Carmela Padilla, Region 5 Community Education Mgr.

### UC Master Food Preservers/Gardeners Staff

Carly Amatisto-Smith, Community Education Specialist II

### Administrative Staff

Bonnie Fraser, Administrative Assistant II

Lindsey Harwood, Fiscal Assistant III

*Visit us online for a complete staff directory with contact information.*

## AGRICULTURE

### Reduced-risk pest management by improving pesticide efficiency and safety

UCCE projects transform pest management for Lu-Mien and Hmong farmers in Amador County. By reducing reliance on pesticides through an integrated pest management program, it aims to enhance productivity and safety. The initiative offers tailored training, guides, and language support to empower farmers effectively.

### Clients experienced increase in knowledge to adopt recommended practices

Small-scale farmers in the Central Sierra struggle with access to reliable agricultural information. The UCCE Local Food Systems advisor has addressed this need through 29 personalized consultations. This guidance has led to improved practices in pest management and irrigation, with several farmers adopting new methods, enhancing both productivity and sustainability.



## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

### Increased effective public leaders and civic engagement

In 2024, the Amador County 4-H Youth Development Program made a significant impact with diverse activities. Highlights included officer training, Achievement Night revival, and the Ignite Conference trip to Washington D.C. Collaborations provided practical learning, while new scholarships and volunteer training programs were introduced. The Horse Judging Team's success underscored the program's excellence in specialized fields.

### Improved community health and wellness

The annual Amador County Farm Day, hosted by UCCE 4-H, successfully gathered over 300 third graders from the Amador County Unified School District and homeschooled students. This event featured eight interactive stations, teaching students about agriculture's role in daily life. Activities included tasting fruits, learning livestock management, and exploring animal species.



# Central Sierra

## Annual Snapshot | 2024

### Amador County

The "Golden Counties" of California have terrains as diverse as their populations. The Central Sierra region stretches from the foothills of El Dorado County above the Sacramento Valley, to the mountains of South Lake Tahoe, through the wine country of Amador and Calaveras counties, and the high country of Tuolumne County. The pioneering spirit that drew gold-seekers West still thrives in the mother lode where these counties remain rich in opportunity and prosperous through their people.

The University of California Cooperative Extension of the Central Sierra territory provides science-based information and educational programs to solve local issues in areas of agriculture, natural resources, nutrition, and youth development that improve social, economic, and environmental quality for all residents of Amador County.

We are grateful for the community participation, partnerships, and support of our programs and activities that made 2024 a success. On behalf of our entire team, we are pleased to share these program highlights with you.



## UCCE Funding

**\$669,769**

University

**\$170,600**

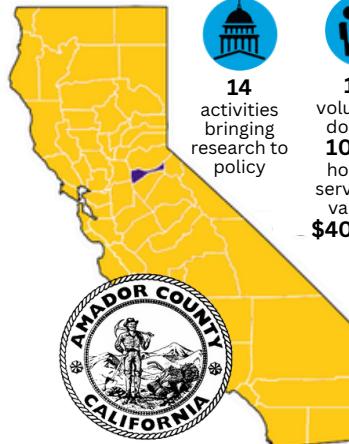
County

**\$339,531**

Advisor-Generated  
Gifts and Grants

**\$25,492**

Raised by Volunteers to  
Support Local Programs



14 activities bringing to policy



181 volunteers donated 10,407 hours of service -- a value of \$401,809



4,690 total educational interactions with the public



24 peer-reviewed/audience-requested publications



47 academic-led workshops, field days, and classes with 577 participants



9 news media programs/mentions



2,113 residents reached by UC Master Gardener volunteers



2 new certified Environmental Stewards



633 youth in 4-H Youth Development Program



190 people reached by CFHL, UC direct education