

Proposal Name	7246 32 Agricultural Economics-Small Farms and Rural Economic Development Specialist
Project Summary	This position will address challenges to and opportunities for economic viability and longevity for small farms in California. This will include examining how market and supply chain development, alternative markets, business and operations decision support, climate resilience, policy challenges and opportunities, inclusive innovation, and appropriate technology all impact the ability of small farms to support thriving, resilient, and equitable rural economies. The position will require a Ph.D. in Economics or Agricultural Economics and experience in community development, agricultural production systems, and/or values-based supply chains. The Specialist will be administratively responsible to the ANR Vice President with input from the UCSC Economics Chair and Faculty Director of the Center for Agroecology. UC ANR will oversee the merit and promotion process. The Specialist will lead and contribute to research proposals and projects, engage with AES faculty and others from all academic Divisions at UCSC, and will interact with students, deliver occasional lectures, and participate in committees as appropriate. The Specialist will engage with many UCSC units and off-campus collaborators across the State.

About the Position Proposal Development

What is your title / representation to submit this proposal?	Campus Leadership
Please indicate the groups that co-developed the proposal. Group type(s): for Advisor proposals - Regional Team number (1-5), REC System, Program Team(s); for Specialist proposals - which Program Team(s) the initial idea came from.	Diversified Farming and Food Systems

About the Proposed Position

What is the proposed headquarters? For Advisor proposals, enter UCCE county office. For Specialist proposals, enter campus acronym and name of department or center.	UCSC Department of Economics; Center for Agroecology
For Advisor proposals only: Enter the names of the county(ies) that the proposed position covers. For Specialist proposals, enter "Statewide".	Statewide

## Contacts

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Name	Position	Affiliation
Brent Hales	Principal Investigator	Vice President-ANR

## 2023 UC ANR Cooperative Extension Position Template (Specialist)

**Developed and proposed by:** Diversified Farming & Food Systems Program Team (Ruth Dahlquist-Willard, Alda Pires), UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (Ruth Dahlquist-Willard), UC ANR Small Farms Network (Ruth Dahlquist-Willard), UCSC Economics Department (Alan Spearot, Galina Hale), UCSC Center for Agroecology (Darryl Wong), UCSC Environmental Studies Department (Stacy Philpott).

**Position Title:** UCCE Specialist in Agricultural Economics with Focus on Small Farms and Rural Economic Development

**Position:** This position will address challenges to and opportunities for economic viability and longevity for small farms in California. This will include examining how market and supply chain development, alternative markets, business and operations decision support, climate resilience, policy challenges and opportunities, inclusive innovation, and appropriate technology all impact the ability of small farms to support thriving, resilient, and equitable rural economies. The position will require a Ph.D. in Economics or Agricultural Economics and experience in community development, agricultural production systems, and/or values-based supply chains. The Specialist will be administratively responsible to the ANR Vice President with input from the UCSC Economics Chair and Faculty Director of the Center for Agroecology. UC ANR will oversee the merit and promotion process. The Specialist will lead and contribute to research proposals and projects, engage with AES faculty and others from all academic Divisions at UCSC, and will interact with students, deliver occasional lectures, and participate in committees as appropriate. The Specialist will engage with many UCSC units and off-campus collaborators across the State.

**Justification: Needs:** There is a UC-wide gap in agricultural economics expertise focused on small, diversified rural and urban farms that supply local markets and implement agroecological and/or sustainable practices. While most UC agricultural economics departments focus on major commodities, global agricultural trade, and economies of scale, this position will instead bridge AES campus expertise with small farms advisors, food systems and community and economic development advisors, urban agriculture advisors, members of the Small Farms Network, and UC SAREP. This position will research marketing and business decision-making, impacts of inventive policy levers (i.e., land trust partnerships, novel distribution channels, support programs), cost/benefit analysis of practices and crops, and impacts of inclusive innovation and appropriate technologies for small/diversified farms in California. This position will identify important pathways to resilience in the context of climate change, increased regulatory processes, consolidation of farmland, new and invasive pests and diseases, and increased competition from global and national markets. With the UC ANR Small Farms Network, the Specialist will support underserved farmers who currently lack broader connections with AES.

Outcomes/Impact: The Specialist will contribute primarily to the UC ANR public values of **promoting economic prosperity in California** and **developing an inclusive and equitable society**, with the following expected condition changes: Improved individual and household financial stability; Enhanced community economic development; Improved animal management, productivity and efficiency; Increased agriculture and forestry efficiency and profitability; Increased emerging food economies and markets; Increased diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural competency in California's workplaces; Increased collaboration of small farms with innovation partners to support appropriate and inclusive development of next-generation farm technologies. This position will support increased profitability, financial stability, inclusion in innovation and community development, and access to public resources and opportunities to shape public policy for small-scale and diversified farms and households, with a focus on underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers. This position will connect the UCSC Economics Department with UC ANR to better address the needs and challenges of small farms across the state, thereby building capacity and exposure in this crucial research area. The Specialist will publish in leading journals (e.g., *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Food Policy*), and in extension and outreach publications such as *California Agriculture*.

**Extension:** The Specialist will work with UC SAREP and the UC ANR Small Farms Network to develop extension programming to assist small-scale and diversified farms with business planning, decision-making, accessing new markets, and policy compliance. The Specialist will collaborate with Small Farms and other UC ANR Advisors to conduct research to support development of meaningful educational resources and programming for business planning, risk management, and economic development to be disseminated by advisors and promoted by UC SAREP. The Specialist will collaborate on trainings on financing, business planning, regulatory compliance, risk management, community development, and/or market and supply chain development to build capacity for nonprofit partners and technical assistance providers helping to bring statewide cohesion and clarity across regionally and culturally focused groups.

**Research:** The research program will address the economic challenges of and opportunities for small-scale and diversified farms in California, including farms operated by underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers. Research topics may include: (1) Cost studies for small-acreage or culturally-relevant specialty crops. The Specialist will collaborate with the UC ANR Agricultural Issues Center/Agricultural Policy Center to develop cost studies that estimate costs of production, plan business decisions, and make recommendations to improve profitability; (2) Cost-benefit analyses of alternative production practices and processing methods including organic-compatible and agroecological methods of pest and nutrient management, inclusive innovation in technology, equipment, and tools, water-saving technologies, development of value-added products, and processing methods; (3) Analysis of markets and supply chains to determine profitability and risk, and to generate market development recommendations; (4) Quantification of compliance costs for regional, state, and federal regulatory programs to generate policy recommendations for reducing the economic burden of compliance; (5) Analysis of policies including regulatory programs, incentives programs, technical assistance, loans, risk

management, and emergency relief to identify recommendations for minimizing barriers to participation and enhancing opportunities; and (6) Analysis of local, regional, state, and national markets to determine the contribution of small-scale and diversified farms to local and regional economies, food security, and environmental co-benefits.

**UC ANR Network:** The Specialist will help build the UCSC AES, and develop collaborations with Specialists and Advisors across the state. The Specialist will develop ties to ANR Program Teams and participate in UC ANR leadership through committees, task forces, and other formal and informal structures. The specialist will provide crucial expertise in economics relevant to small-scale and diversified farms that is currently lacking in the UC ANR Small Farms Network, UC SAREP, and the Agricultural Policy Center. The Specialist will support economic development efforts with the F3 program in Fresno and Merced, providing expertise to evaluate costs, benefits, and economic impacts of new technologies, and will bolster UC SAREP efforts to evaluate costs and benefits of alternative production practices and new marketing opportunities. This policy work is essential for policymakers to understand the economic impacts of regulatory programs on small-scale and diversified farms. The Specialist will interact with UCSC units including their home department (Economics) as well as the Environmental Studies Department and the Center for Agroecology.

**Network External to UC ANR:** The Specialist will interact with government agencies (e.g., USDA ARS, CDFA), non-profit technical service providers and community groups (e.g. Resource Conservation Districts, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, California Farmlink, Kitchen Table Advisors, Asian Business Institute and Resource Center, Feed the Hunger Fund, Hmong Business Incubator, Olamina Fund, Pan Valley Institute, Fresno BIPOC Produce, Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, Rancho Cielo etc.), and institutions of higher education including other UC campuses, Hartnell College, Cabrillo Community College, California State University Monterey Bay, Monterey Peninsula College and California State University Fresno.

**Support:** The Specialist will be provided an office in the Economics Department or the Center for Agroecology at UCSC and will have access to the UCSC Farm and MBEST for research and collaboration.

**Other support:** The Specialist will be expected to secure federal and state funding (e.g., NSF, USDA, EPA, CDFA, CDPR, WSARE) and support from foundation opportunities related to small and underserved farmers (e.g., James Irvine, 11th Hour). The Specialist will compete for grants in state, federal, and private programs, with on- and off-campus colleagues as appropriate. The Specialist will also be expected to compete for research funds available from UC ANR.

**Headquarters and Coverage Area:** The UC Santa Cruz Economics Department and the Center for Agroecology will serve as the headquarters and units for the position. The position will be

expected to be a state-wide position, serving farmers, growers, and ranchers in moving towards sustainable agroecological practices.