

Spotlight on Sonoma County

Located at the northernmost edge of the San Francisco Bay Area, Sonoma County is known for its rolling vineyard-covered hills, redwood and oak forests, fertile valleys, and coastal watersheds that shape both its environment and economy. Our local UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) brings research and expertise to these landscapes through demonstrations, education, and collaborative projects, delivering practical, science-based solutions that strengthen agriculture, natural resources, and community well-being. We work in partnership with natural resource managers, community organizations, and volunteers.

Our programs serve growers, livestock producers, watershed and fire-preparedness stewards, 4-H youth and families, and residents engaged in nutrition and home gardening—ensuring Sonoma County continues to thrive both agriculturally and across all communities.



Sonoma County Vineyard, Trenton Rd.

Our Clientele

- Agricultural Producers
- Ag processors and ag businesses
- Rural and Urban Residents

Our Team

- 13 Academic Advisors
- 10 Program Staff
- 6 Community Educators

Volunteer Programs

- 4-H Youth Development
- Master Gardeners
- Master Food Preservers

Research and Extension

- 4-H Youth Development
- Climate Smart Agriculture
- Community Health and Nutrition
- Dairy
- Food Systems
- Forestry
- Fire Science
- Human-Wildlife Interactions
- Integrated Pest Management
- Integrated Vineyard Systems
- Livestock & Natural Resources
- Soil & Water
- Specialty Crops

UC ANR Mission

UC ANR cultivates thriving communities, sustainable agriculture, resilient ecosystems, and economic prosperity in California through development and sharing of equitable and collaborative science-based solutions that have national and global impact.

By The Numbers

Volunteers are the heart of our work – building bridges across Sonoma County through service and education. From home gardening and food preservation to youth development and environmental stewardship, their dedications helps to build connections with local communities and multiple our impact.

636
volunteers

54,646
hours
donated

\$2.1 mil
volunteer
service hours

Promoting Specialty Crop Production

The UCCE Specialty Crops Program addresses high priority in-field production issues to help hundreds of orchard and diversified vegetable growers increase yield, efficiency, sustainability, and contributions to our food system. In 2024, our local program delivered 14 educational events, 18 presentations, 11 publications and videos, and 8 field trials to serve growers' needs. After participating, 89% of growers reported gaining knowledge and 97% planned to use knowledge gained to improve sustainable practices.



Left: "Seed Saving 2.0 Workshop" with Kristyn Leach, Second Generation Seeds Farm, Sebastopol, in collaboration with CAFF. Right: "Apple Tree Care" presentation at Farm Trails' 2024 Gravenstein Apple Fair.

"It gives me confidence to have you as a resource. You guys are connected all over the county and have been very helpful aligning me with subject matter experts. I feel that the UC system is a great partner to farmers that could use some advice, as was evident in any of the outings and seminars that I attended. I hope that we can continue to use the system to grow my knowledge base and offer guidance in times of uncertainty."

William Becker, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria



4-H Youth Development

4-H gives youth hands-on learning, leadership skills, and lifelong memories. Through Community Clubs, youth explore projects like Outdoor Adventures, Leather Crafting, Beekeeping, ATVs, and Livestock. Our soccer program builds teamwork, communication, and healthy habits, while our Summer Camp offers a week of classic camp fun and hands-on learning activities. After-School STEM programs invites youth to design bridges, houses, piñatas, and Lego robotics. Whatever their interests, 4-H helps youth learn by doing, lead with confidence, and build lasting friendships.

4-H youth are 4 times more likely to give back to their community

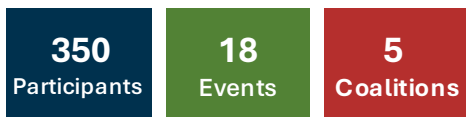


Community Health & Nutrition

UCCE's Community Nutrition and Health Program reached 4,500+ residents with science-based resources on food & heat safety, chronic disease prevention, and healthy aging. The program built strong partnerships with local agencies and promoted health while supporting the county's agricultural economy.

Local/Regional Food Systems

Our Food Systems team supports the development of a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient local food system. They collaborate with community-based organizations, agencies and academics, lead participatory research, and pilot innovative solutions. An example is the North Coast Emergency Food System Partnership, a \$1.5M project spanning 6 counties strengthening the resilience of our emergency food system.



UC Master Food Preservers

The UC Master Food Preserver program's partnership with the Redwood Empire Food Bank supports our extension mission by sharing research-based recipes and kitchen tools with clients. After a successful collaboration, we're expanding to a second site this year to broaden our impact.



Master Gardeners

The Heritage Corn Project unites UC Master Gardeners, LandPaths, and Bayer Farm to preserve Mexican heritage corn. Led by Jonathan Bravo, it connects immigrant gardeners to their cultural roots while expanding corn cultivation in Sonoma County. More than farming, it's a celebration of heritage, community, and the bond between people and the land.

Dairy

Ongoing research aims to highlight the risks and benefits of paired calf housing with different milk delivery for dairy calves. Greater insight into proper management procedures will increase successful implementation and increase calf welfare without negative health impacts.



Dairy calves in a paired housing research study.

Viticulture

Our local program continues to advance vineyard health, innovation and economic resilience.

- 44% increase in events offered
- 24 Individual Farm Visits
- 2 Novel Research Projects

Agricultural Ombuds

Supporting 75+ local producers through:

- Navigating permits
- Connecting producers to resources and agencies
- Exploring agritourism and farm diversification
- Williamson Act education

Climate Smart Agriculture

Three Sonoma County dairy operations applied for over \$2.2 million in funding to mitigate the climate impact on organic dairies through methane reductions by changing manure management practices on farm.

874
MTCO₂e
Sequestered
per year

~9,000
gallons
of diesel
reduction

\$2.2 mil+
In Projects to
Mitigate
Climate
Change

