

UC Cooperative Extension



San Luis Obispo & Santa Barbara County News

Science-based solutions for healthy and resilient communities, food systems, and environments

November 2025

Message from the UCCE Director

UCCE relies on many sources of funding including state and federal government, local county support, grants, and donations. This cooperative and diverse funding model has helped us weather many storms while we pursue our mission, but changes at the federal level are not without impact. In July, H.R. 1 eliminated funding for our CalFresh Healthy Living nutrition education program. This ended a new program developing in Ventura County and will end our SLO and Santa Barbara programs next September. Our Agriculture Advisors are also feeling the impacts of USDA collaborators and agricultural research labs that are currently furloughed or closed – delaying breeding or disease resistance projects in some of our key crops here on the central and south coast.

For decades, UC and the federal government have worked hand-in-hand to advance basic and applied science, leading to transformative discoveries. Across UC ANR, [federal funding drives research](#) that supports more productive and prosperous farms and ranches, stronger local economies, and healthier communities. Now we are hoping that you will join us to [Speak Up for Science](#) and show that there is bipartisan public support for federal science funding.

Please enjoy this November newsletter with articles on avocado, cilantro, new pests, fire preparedness, and local events. We could not bring you this information or deliver on our local mission without the local, state, and federal support we receive.

Thanksgiving Closure

Our office will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday on Thursday, **November 28th** and Friday, **November 29th**. We will reopen and resume normal business hours on Monday, December 2nd, 2024.



UCCE Advisor Updates

Disaster Resilience

Food Access Updates for SLO and SB Counties

CalFresh benefits will be delayed for many in the month of November. For up to date information on federal activity and the state's response, visit CDSS's [website](#).

WIC benefits remain fully available. Families who are pregnant or have children under 5 years old can enroll relatively quickly and begin receiving benefits.

Applications can be submitted online at [County of SLO Public Health](#) or [County of Santa Barbara Public Health](#). Websites include contact information if you need assistance with determining eligibility or have application questions.

[California has fast-tracked \\$80m in state funds to food banks](#) to address delays in federal funding.

Residents can find more information about food bank distributions in their respective counties at:

[SLO Food Bank](#) or [Food Bank Santa Barbara County](#).

[Pay What You Can Farm Stand](#) at City Farm SLO, 1121 Calle Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, is open every Saturday, 10AM-1PM. **“To ensure accessibility for all, we offer up to \$30 off fruits and vegetables for any customer at every visit—no questions asked. Just shop and pay what you can.”**

Have a disaster resiliency story you'd like share? Contact Lilian at lilthaox@ucanr.edu or 805-441-4119 to be featured.

Subscribe to the blog by clicking [here](#).



Photo credit: City Farm SLO

Small Farms

CAFF Farmer Survey - Voice Your Concerns

CAFF's 2025 Farmer Survey closes on Saturday, November 15th. Farmers, ranchers, land stewards, and/or community food growers are invited to share their experiences. Responses help to shape CAFF's priorities for 2026. Make your voice heard. Survey only takes a few minutes and can be completed on mobile or a computer. Participants will also be entered to receive free Patagonia & CAFF gear.

Click [HERE](#) to view CAFF's 2025 Policy Priorities.

UCCE Advisor Ben Faber talks with Ag Alert About Avocado Orchards and Fire

By Rob McCarthy

Lessons learned from destructive wildfires in Ventura County have given avocado growers a fighting chance to save their orchards when the next big blaze hits. One of those lessons, shared by Ben Faber, University of California Cooperative Extension citrus and avocado adviser for Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, is that healthy avocado trees can survive a fast-moving wildfire. And, he said, the rescue operation starts before the flames and intense heat arrive.



[Read More Here...](#)

Photo Credit: Nathan Lurie, ranch manager of Brokaw Ranch Co. in Santa Paula, shows water valves to which fire hoses can be attached to water down hot spots from wildfires.

Photo/Rob McCarthy



UCCE Advisor Oleg Daugovich Talks With Ag Alert About Cilantro and Nutsedge Weed

By Rob McCarthy

The spread of an aggressive weed that thrives in coastal conditions has put a damper on an otherwise phenomenal period

for California cilantro growers.

Yellow nutsedge is found in the major cilantro-growing regions of the state, including Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Monterey counties, according to University of California Cooperative Extension vegetable farm adviser Oleg Daugovich in Ventura County. He calls it one of the worst weeds in the world.

[Read More Here...](#)

Photo Credit: University of California Cooperative Extension farm adviser Oleg Daugovich checks on cilantro plantings in a trial looking at the effectiveness of the herbicide Dual Magnum against yellow nutsedge weed. The product is currently not registered for use in California on cilantro.

Photo/Rob McCarthy

UCCE Community Education Programs

UC Master Food Preserver & UC Master Gardeners Offered a Joint Class in October

Class topics included the maintenance of apple trees and how to safely preserve apples using a variety of methods, such as steam canning, dehydrating, and freezing. This class was a collaborative effort between UC Master Gardener and UC Master Food Preservers and is just one of the ways the programs promote sustainable food systems and resilient communities.



Photo Credit: UCCE Staff



2026 UC Master Food Preserver Volunteer Application Due November 23rd

Help spread the word! UC Master Food Preserver Volunteer Applications are due November 23, 2025. Are you or a friend ready to apply? [2026 Master Food Preserver Training Class Info](#) can be

found here.

photo credit: open source

[Apply Here](#)

UC Master Food Preserver Program



While the logo is new, it still represents the same mission for the UC Master Food Preserver Program to teach research-based practices of safe home food preservation to the residents of California.

UCCE Calendar of Classes & Events

From Orchard to Table: Apple Pie Filling & Freezing Apples

November 19, 2025: 6:30pm- 7:30pm

Online Garden Talk: Building a Strawberry Tower:

December 1, 2025: 7:00pm-8:00pm:
Santa Barbara: Zoom

Make & Preserve Holiday Food Gifts: Chutney, Marmalade & More

December 2, 2025: 7:00pm- 8:00pm:
Zoom

Winter Pruning Workshop:

December 6, 2025: 10:00am-12:00pm:
Santa Barbara: Mesa Harmony Garden

Soil Preparation Workshop

January 10, 2026: 10:00am-12:00pm:
Santa Barbara: Mesa Harmony Garden

*No San Luis Obispo County workshops are typically hosted in November or December.

Stay tuned for new events and workshops resuming in January!

4-H Youth Development

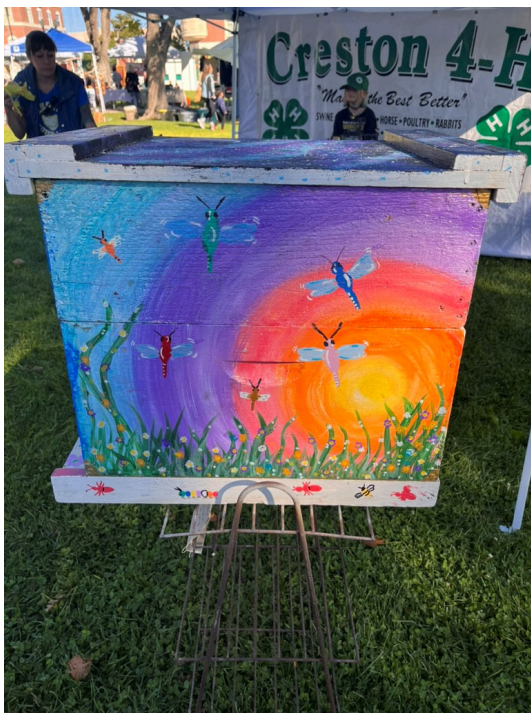
Buzzing with Creativity: 4-H Bee Project Inspires Youth Across San Luis Obispo County



San Luis Obispo County 4-H youth showcased their creativity at the Paso Robles Oak Honey and Pumpkin Festival through a vibrant Beehive Painting Contest. Thanks to a generous donation of bee boxes from Apple, Inc. and Give to Get, four local clubs expanded their Bee Projects, blending art, science, and environmental education. With support from community partners and volunteers, this hands-on project highlighted the power of experiential learning and the growing buzz around 4-H in our region.

Photo Credit: Ana Torres 4H: 1st Place – Josephine Baker, 2nd Place – Patience Porter, 3rd Place – Zeb Omega, 4th Place – Elliot Breitung





Upcoming Events

SAVE-THE-DATE: Giving Tuesday

December 2, 2025 - Midnight to Midnight

**GIVING
TUESDAY**

UCCE in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties improves the lives of local residents by working with growers, families, volunteers, and partners to advance science-based solutions in agriculture, natural ecosystems, community health, and youth development.

Your support helps in many ways.

Thank you.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

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