UC ANR

Annual Report 2025

Connecting Communities and Science for a Stronger California

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Where We Are Now

From Glenda Humiston, Vice President of University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

In 2025, the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) demonstrated its steadfast commitment to ensuring the health and vitality of California's people, agriculture, and natural ecosystems. Even while navigating an unpredictable funding and policy climate, UC ANR expanded, adapted, and innovated. Our resilience is central to who we are.

This year has been hard for many. It began with catastrophic wildfires in Los Angeles. In response, people across UC ANR shared critical resources on the factors that fueled the fires and how communities can prepare for wildfire and prevent similar disasters in the future.

The federal defunding of SNAP-Ed directly impacted CalFresh Healthy Living, UC, and the Nutrition Policy Institute (NPI), affecting 162 community educators, academics, and staff statewide. In response, NPI, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and other UC ANR academics are cultivating new partnerships and funding sources to sustain and adapt this critical work to support nutrition education, access to healthy foods, and improve overall well-being and community health.

It has also been a year of growth across UC ANR. A historic agreement between the Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California and UC ANR created the first UC Cooperative Extension Tribal Extension Office, to resource research and extension projects informed by indigenous ways of knowing and doing. UC ANR also established the UC ANR Policy Institute, a one-stop shop for policymakers to easily access scientists and cutting-edge research on issues critical to California. UC ANR academics also released a major report on the economies of California's working lands.

UC ANR continues to be a leader in innovation, particularly in agriculture. TIME magazine's top 100 inventions of 2025 included Scout, an AI-powered vineyard management software developed by an Agricultural Experimental Station faculty member. Our new statewide program, UC ANR Innovate, was awarded $15.1 million from the Governor's Office and California Jobs First to launch the California AgTech Alliance and drive economic development in rural areas that have historically been left out of technology investment and job growth.

UC ANR academics, staff, and volunteers are embedded in California's communities, collaborating directly with those who have the greatest stake in how UC research can improve the well-being of the people, their prosperity, and our planet. We are proud to share the impact of this collective work and invite you to be part of it.

UC ANR Financial Outlook

In FY 2024–25, our organization navigated a period of economic uncertainty. The State budget outlooks fluctuated during the year, making long-term planning more challenging. A federal funding freeze further constrained our ability to secure new contracts and grants and affected existing grant funding. These pressures were intensified by ongoing mandated cost increases which continued to grow regardless of funding volatility.

In response, UC ANR implemented proactive measures to safeguard our long-term stability. We instituted a hiring freeze, deferred selected investments tied to our strategic plan, and prioritized resources to sustain mission-critical goals. These actions were designed to generate savings, preserve funding flexibility, and ensure that we did not take on new commitments that could not be supported if revenues declined. These decisions were not taken lightly, but they were necessary to ensure organizational resilience during a volatile fiscal environment.

Funding support from the State, commodity boards, grant partners, and diverse constituents has been instrumental in enabling UC ANR to advance its mission of serving local communities. Five years ago, UC ANR received a historic State funding increase that served as a catalyst for organizational growth. We leveraged that initial State support to cultivate additional revenue streams. For every $1 of State funding, UC ANR aims to generate $2 from other sources and has subsequently increased total funds by 24% in this time period. As a result, UC ANR can better meet rising local needs, expand program delivery, and rebuild the academic footprint.

Philanthropic support grew last year:

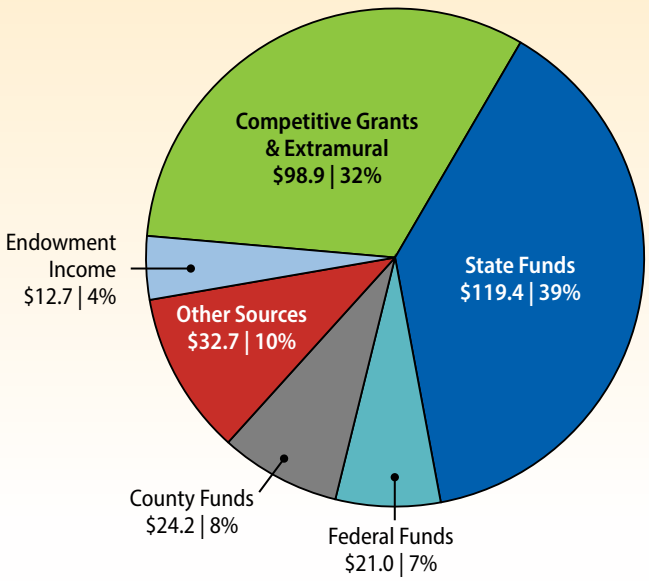
9% increase in the number of gifts and a

22% increase in total giving

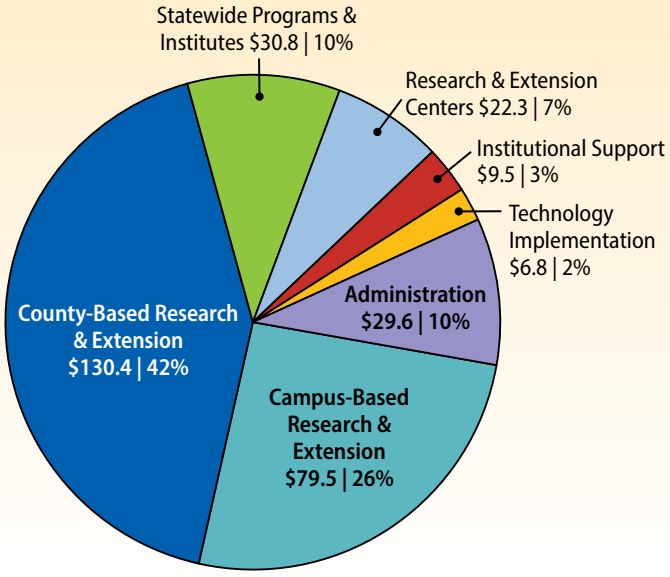
Since 2021, there has been an

80% increase in awarded grants and contracts

2024–25 Total Fund Sources = $308.9 M



2024–25 Total Fund Uses = $308.9 M



UC ANR Return on Mission

For more than 150 years, UC ANR has been a go-to resource for developing innovative solutions and extending practical tools, delivering the land-grant mission for the University.

Our 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.

Our strategic priorites

UC ANR addresses seven critical challenges where we can make the greatest difference. These include three core areas:

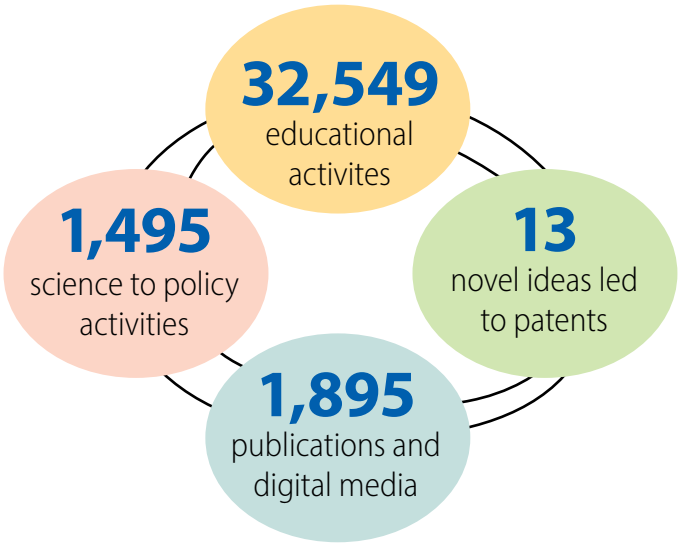
- Agriculture and Food Systems
- Natural Ecosystems and Working Landscapes
- Thriving People and Communities

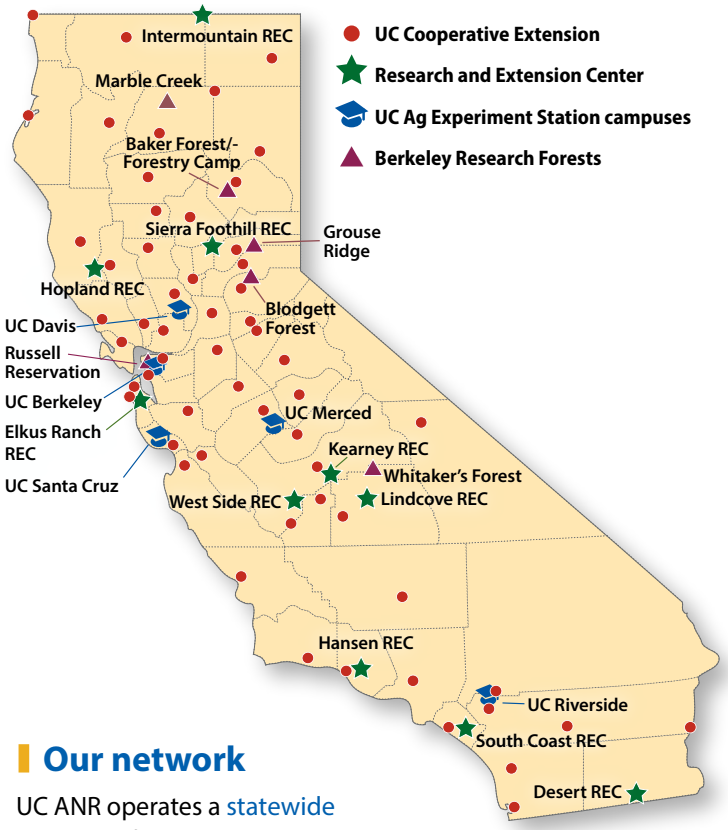
And four crosscutting areas:

- Climate Change
- Innovation
- Regulations, Policy, and Compliance
- Systemic Inequities

Our Activities

UC ANR meets these challenges through research and extension. Some of our highlighted activities from last year are below.





Our network

UC ANR operates a statewide network of nearly 900 academics and 350 community educators that integrates the multicampus Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) and statewide Cooperative Extension (UCCE). AES researchers, located at the UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Merced, UC Riverside, and UC Santa Cruz campuses, develop knowledge and technologies to address agricultural, natural resources, and health issues. UCCE serves as the University of California's "community ambassador," working in every California county to address real-world needs and expanding the University's reach beyond its 10 campuses. UC ANR administers 17 statewide programs and institutes, which focus on research and programming on high-priority issues. UC ANR's ten Research and Extension Centers (RECs) provide a network of living laboratories, generating innovative research, and supporting education and community engagement.

Our impact

Through our programs and partnerships, we saw clear evidence of positive change—people gained knowledge and skills, shifted behaviors, strengthened policies, and experienced measurable improvements in their lives. Across UC ANR, we documented more than 400 instances of meaningful outcomes last year. The following pages highlight a small sample of these impacts.

IMPACT › People

UC ANR works with communities across California to improve health and well-being, food safety, and nutrition security and increase disaster preparedness and public engagement in science. A few examples include:

Improving individual well-being

The UC ANR Community Nutrition and Health statewide program supports the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), serving eligible adults and youth in 19 counties. In the past year, EFNEP delivered evidence-based nutrition education with 13,673 participants. Among 2,190 surveyed adults, 98% increased their consumption of fruit and vegetables. Eighty-three percent enhanced physical activity behaviors, with many exercising more days per week. Research shows EFNEP graduates sustain positive changes months after they graduate from the program, and every dollar invested in California EFNEP saves $8.34 in healthcare costs. (EFNEP)

Increased youth civic engagement helps shape city's General Plan

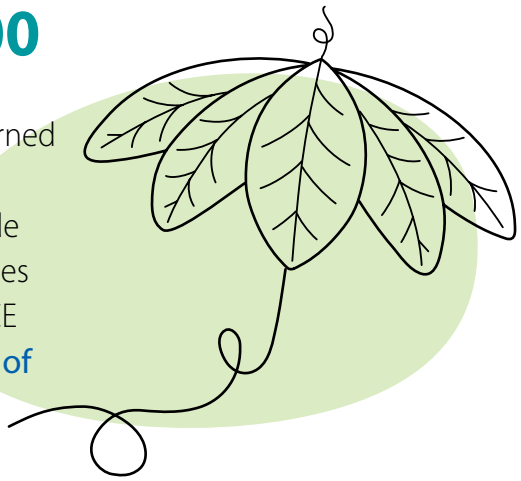
UCCE strengthened civic engagement among Redding youth by partnering with the City of Redding to involve high school seniors in the city's General Plan update. Through 15 in-class focus groups, a UCCE Community Nutrition and Health Advisor engaged more than 325 students, empowering them to identify priorities for their community. Findings were shared in public workshops and presented to the City Planning Commission with proposed policy language. As a result, the City of Redding adopted several youth-driven recommendations, including strategies to support unhoused residents, reduce drug access, expand recreation and career opportunities, enhance safety, and promote community diversity. (Janessa Hartmann)

Building improved readiness for college and careers through AgTech

UCCE advanced youth engagement in agricultural technology through coordinated programs across California, introducing students and educators to future high-demand careers in ag tech, precision agriculture, and urban farming. At South Coast REC, more than 250 high school students participated in hands-on instruction in hydroponics and agrivoltaics, increasing their interest in ag tech careers. UC 4-H Advisors also piloted the SkyMappers and other drone curricula with 98 youth, who showed strong gains in understanding drone safety, airspace rules, crew roles, and how to turn aerial imagery into GIS maps. At Kearney REC, workshops for K–12 educators and students as well as undergraduates produced strong learning outcomes, with most participants reporting increased knowledge of agricultural research and career pathways. (Nathaniel Caeton, Grant Johnson, Peter Larbi, Matthew Rodriguez, and Steven Worker)

138,000

community members learned about critical need for shade in urban spaces from the UCCE show, "Roots of Cool"



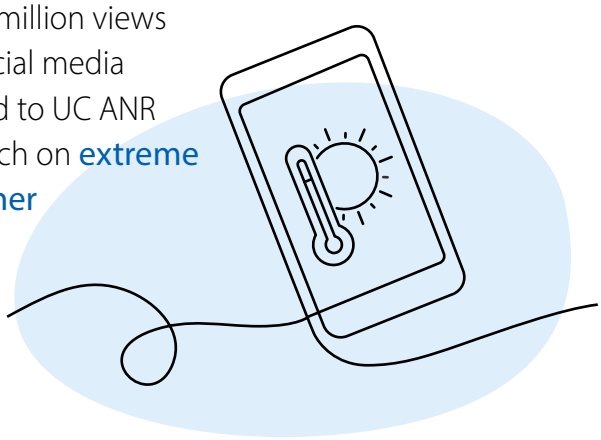
IMPACT › Planet

Through diverse partnerships, UC ANR pursues research and education that improve the ecological sustainability of agriculture, working landscapes, and natural ecosystems; increase ecosystem resilience; and enhance waste reduction, recovery, and economic reuse. A few examples include:

Improving soil health and safety after the LA Fires

UCCE's Soil Health and Organic Materials Management Advisor collaborated with UC Master Gardeners, a local compost producer, LA County Public Works, and UC Merced AES researchers to support post-fire recovery in Altadena through free composted mulch, soil testing, and science-based guidance. Fourteen homes had compost blankets applied to bare soil, with plans to expand application across the community. At an outreach event, UCCE provided 121 resident consultations on reducing heavy metal exposure and stabilizing fire impacted soils. By promoting compost as an effective first step for soil protection and watershed health, the project strengthened community confidence in safe, practical post-fire remediation practices. (Natalie Levy and Rebecca Ryals)

22 million views on social media related to UC ANR research on **extreme weather**



UCCE strengthens circular economy practices in California's dairy sector

UCCE has advanced byproduct feeding research for the dairy industry since 2017, demonstrating that high levels of agricultural byproducts can be incorporated into dairy rations without compromising animal health or production. This work also identified byproduct alternatives to forages during periods of water scarcity or high feed costs. Findings were shared with producers and consumers, strengthening understanding of dairies' role in a circular economy. As a result, the California Milk Advisory Board incorporated UCCE's findings into consumer communications, highlighting that byproduct feeding in California diverts the equivalent of 1,100 garbage trucks from landfills each day. (Jennifer Heguy)

Evaluating how livestock grazing can support biodiversity

UCCE advanced endangered species conservation on California rangelands by assessing the effects of livestock grazing on all 282 federally listed species in the state. Findings were shared through workshops and meetings, along with training on ground squirrel management and rangeland restoration practices that protect native species and water resources. This research directly informed conservation grazing plans for San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation and the County of San Mateo, guiding management across 211,000 acres. UCCE's work shows that most listed species occur on grazed lands and that targeted grazing helps reduce threats from invasive plants and nitrogen deposition. (Sheila Barry)

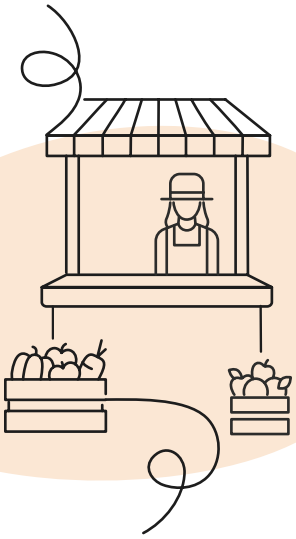
IMPACT › Prosperity

Through research and extension activities across the state, UC ANR increases the stability, efficiency, and profitability of agriculture and working landscapes, enhances food systems and markets, improves workforce development, enhances community economic development, and strengthens individual and household financial stability. A few examples include:

Protecting animal welfare with sensor-based fly detection

Biting and nuisance flies cause over a billion dollars in annual losses to US poultry and livestock producers and can pose threats to public health, a growing concern with the re-emergence of the New World screwworm. At UC Riverside, AES and UCCE researchers are pioneering a novel, data-driven approach to manage noxious flies. Motion sensors paired with video capture real-time animal responses, generating algorithms that automatically monitor fly activity and evaluate the effectiveness of repellents. This innovation has the potential to improve animal welfare and prevent economic losses while reducing the risk of pathogens transferring from livestock to humans, pets, and backyard animals. (Alec Gerry and Amy Murillo)

352 food and farm businesses reported increased revenue after working with the Southwest Regional Food Business Center



UCCE drives innovations across California's raisin industry

UCCE research is transforming California raisin production to ensure the industry's long-term viability. Responding to grower and packer needs, an advisor and specialist are advancing mechanization while evaluating Sunpreme, a natural dry-on-vine raisin variety, through trials at Kearney REC and in commercial vineyards. Their work has accelerated adoption, with 1,500 acres of Sunpreme now planted in Fresno County. Dry-on-vine cultivars like Sunpreme support the transition to fully mechanized production, reducing labor needs, lowering costs, and improving profitability. Research shows Sunpreme can cut labor costs by over 50% while more than doubling yield. (George Zhuang and Matthew Fidelibus)

Strengthening the workforce in forestry and fire management

Loss of technical expertise and skilled labor is one of the greatest threats to maintaining healthy forest ecosystems: 40% of natural resource industries experience labor shortages with employers indicating 30% of positions being unfilled. To meet this challenge, UCCE is expanding the career pipeline in forestry and fire management. The UC ANR Fire Network leads transformative training for fire practitioners (including men) through the Women-in-Fire Training Exchange (WTREX) Program. Since 2016, 750+ people have participated in WTREX, and events have been hosted in five US states and seven countries across five continents. (Lenya Quinn-Davidson)

> *"I am not the same firefighter, nor the same woman, as day 1 of WTREX. I am a firefighter with new knowledge and an empowered woman, confident in my abilities."*

Get Involved

Learn

639,430

number of times that people directly engaged with UCCE for science-based information

Volunteer

19,070

people volunteered

Give

55%

increase in UC ANR's self-generated income since FY 2019

Join

200+

new hires in UCCE since FY 2022

For more information on how to get involved scan or click QR code.

For inquiries related to the UC ANR Annual Report, please contact: Jennifer Sedell, jennifer.sedell@ucop.edu, or Katherine Webb-Martinez, katherine.webb-martinez@ucop.edu.

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