



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Agriculture and Natural Resources

Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center

September 17, 2020

Dear friend and stakeholder:

As you know, for many years we have planned to relocate the Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC) to a new location that will better serve the needs of the agricultural community in Ventura County. On September 21, the current HAREC property will be placed on the market. To aid in the transition between locations, the sales arrangement includes an 18-month leaseback of approximately one-third of our current property.

Funds from the sale of the property will be used toward the purchase of a new property. We are actively seeking 40 to 70 acres on the Oxnard Plain that will lend itself to the types of research most relevant for our area.

Attached you will find a Frequently Asked Questions document providing details about the sale and sales process as well as contact information. While change is always challenging, we are excited to be one step closer to a new location where we can expand our programs and research to better serve our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ruben Alarcon".

Ruben Alarcon
Chair, Hansen Advisory Board

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Annemiek Schilder".

Annemiek Schilder
Director, UCCE Ventura County/HAREC

Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center Frequently Asked Questions

September 2020

What is a UC ANR Research and Extension Center?

The University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Division (UC ANR) operates nine Research and Extension Centers (RECs) throughout the state. Extending from the Oregon border in the north, through the Sierra Foothills and Central Valley, along the Pacific Coast and south to the Mexico border, the REC System covers rich and unique resources connecting research and extension activities to regional challenges and issues.

The REC System is the only statewide program in the UC ecosystem that provides a premier research management organization including land, labor, facilities, and equipment that delivers services to academics and the public. Centers are also focal points for community participation and for active involvement in current and relevant regional agricultural and natural resource challenges. The RECs support projects involving county-based Cooperative Extension academics and campus-based academics, as well as researchers from land grant institutions in other states, the California State University System and U.S. Department of Agriculture in conducting their research and education programs.

One of these nine RECs is the Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC) located in Ventura County.

How does the Hansen Agricultural REC relate to the Faulkner Farm?

Thelma Hansen, a UC Berkeley graduate, returned to Ventura County in the 1920s and took over business operations of the Hansen family farm. Thelma developed a deep appreciation of the importance of agriculture, which led her to establish a trust that endowed a generous portion of her estate to the University of California. Following her death, the Thelma Hansen Fund was created in 1993 as an endowment to support and maintain University research and extension activities for the sustainability and benefit of agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County.

The UCCE Ventura County Director at the time and the original Advisory Board concluded that establishment of a center to conduct educational outreach programs and research would best serve the wishes of Thelma Hansen. In 1997, the University purchased the 27-acre farm known as the Faulkner Farm. The Center, originally named the Hansen Agricultural Learning Center, became part of the UC Research and Extension Center System (RECS) in December 2008. The Center is the newest and smallest of the nine RECS facilities.

The UC Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC) is located near Santa Paula, 11 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and enjoys a mild climate. HAREC provides land, labor, equipment, and facilities to researchers for small to medium-sized plot projects that are relevant to Ventura County agricultural issues. Projects include water management and conservation, evaluation of new crops and varieties, evaluation of horticultural practices, fertilizer studies, cover crops, pesticide alternatives, and biological controls for weeds and pests. The Center also offers 4-H youth agricultural literacy programs and is an approved site for the UC Master Gardener Program to deliver gardening workshops and maintain demonstration gardens.

Background:

Due to ongoing and increased costs of maintenance for historical buildings at the Faulkner Farm property and limited acreage for agricultural research, the Hansen Advisory Board along with key county agriculture stakeholders were unanimous in their January 2019 recommendation that UC ANR divest all or part of the property in order to honor the terms of Thelma Hansen's Trust. Previous boards had recommended the sale for over a decade.

Why is UC selling the historic Faulkner Farm property?

The Faulkner Farm property has required the diversion of significant mission and program funds to support the historical landmark facility, which has been an impediment to honoring the terms of the endowment regarding support of UCCE agricultural research and education.

How can the University sell Thelma Hansen's property?

The Faulkner Farm was never Thelma's property. Proceeds from the Thelma Hansen Fund were used to purchase the farm.

Does the sale of the property go against Thelma Hansen's wishes?

Thelma's desire was to support Cooperative Extension's ability to maintain robust, innovative agricultural production and protect natural resources in Ventura County as indicated in the trust. Selling the property will allow us to better fulfill Thelma's wishes.

Will the property be divided (i.e. the house sold separately)?

The real estate broker has recommended that we sell the property as a single property.

What will the proceeds from the sale of the property be used for?

All proceeds will return to the endowment, which is under the stewardship of UC, and will continue to be used according to the directives established by Thelma Hansen in the trust. The funds cannot be used for any other purpose. The University is actively seeking acreage and will use the proceeds to purchase the new property.

When will the property be put on the market?

The property will be put on the market in September 2020.

How is the sale process conducted?

The sale of property owned by The Regents of the University of California is governed by The Stull Act. This requires that there be a sealed bid process. Bids are scheduled to be opened in mid-November and reviewed by the University. The announcement of the selection would be made approximately two business days after bid opening. The University will select the offer that it deems to have the best combination of price, terms, and bidder's qualifications, or may reject all offers if the University determines that it is in its own best interest. The suggested asking price is \$3.7 million.

What is the process for someone interested in purchasing the property?

The process is fully described in the Bid Package, but in summary, an interested party would need to submit a qualified bid to the University of California, Office of the President by the bid receipt date. All bids will be opened on the bid opening day, with UC Real Estate Services and Strategies (RESS)/UC ANR selecting of the Bid/Bidder two days later. The bidders required due diligence period and proposed closing date are part of the criteria that RESS/UC ANR will evaluate all bids. All questions related to the property and sale should be directed to the broker, Scott Dunbar. See contact list below.

Will there be a new property and, if so, where?

We are committed to having a UC Research and Extension Center in Ventura County, with more acreage to facilitate research on a wider range of crops and cropping systems, and better facilities for research and education. UC ANR is working with real estate professionals to find a location in the county that will allow us to fully honor Thelma Hansen's wishes as she stated in the trust. Specifically, we are looking for 40 to 70 acres on the Oxnard Plain, ideally near potential partners/collaborators and suited for row and permanent crops. We will move our REC staff to the site and establish facilities for equipment storage and other needed outbuildings. Our goal is to build a larger facility with offices, laboratories, and conference rooms to support our mission.

What will happen to the programs and research projects?

Transition plans are underway, and we are requesting a leaseback option for 18 months as a condition of the sale in order to complete a small number of research projects and maintain some activities. On-site programs will be adjusted accordingly. Master Gardeners will also continue to have access and use of the property during this leaseback period.

What happens to the staff until a new site is found?

Modular office buildings are included in the leaseback area (approximately 10 acres) so staff can remain on the premises or work out of the Cooperative Extension office in Ventura.

How long will it take to get a new property?

We are already looking at new properties. We want to carefully and thoughtfully find a site that will best fulfill Thelma Hansen's vision of supporting research and education to benefit agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County.

What will happen to the gardens at the conclusion of the leaseback period?

This will depend on the buyer, but we have a dynamic Master Gardener program that operates at numerous sites across Ventura County, and that robust program will continue.

How do we know that the person or entity purchasing the property will take care of it?

Purchasers of historic properties know that they are buying a property with specific requirements and cannot make changes the way one can on other types of property. RESS, UC ANR and the Broker will do their best to qualify all bidders; however, there is no guarantee on the level of care a bidder will give a property.

What if the buyer wants to use the property for non-agricultural activities?

The buyer of the property will have to follow all zoning and use regulations in place for agricultural properties and historic buildings.

Can't the University donate the property to a non-profit or community organization?

The trust spelled out that the assets are specifically for UC ANR research and education to benefit agriculture and natural resources in Ventura County. We would not be meeting the requirement of the trust if we were to donate the property.

General Questions:

Mark Lagrimini, Vice Provost of Research and Extension

Phone: (510) 750-1369

Email: mlagrimini@ucanr.edu

Linda Forbes, Director of Strategic Communications

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Annemiek Schilder, Director, UCCE Ventura County/HAREC

Phone: 805-662-6943

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Property Sale Questions:

Scott Dunbar, Broker

Email: vcbranches@gmail.com