Position Title: Community Health, Nutrition & Food Security Advisor in Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Sutter, and Yuba Counties

Position: The Advisor will serve the diverse populations across the counties of Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Sutter, and Yuba Counties focusing on nutrition and chronic disease prevention, including associated issues such as physical activity, food security, food resource management and food budgeting. The Advisor will develop an extension education and applied problem-solving research program based on priority community needs and assets to address the broad areas of nutrition; food security, access to physical activity opportunities; and health equity. The Advisor requires a minimum of a Master’s degree in Public or Community Health, Nutrition or other closely related field. Priority will be given to candidates with expertise in community nutrition, health equity and health education; community-based program experience, and interest in food systems and food security work. The Advisor will be located in the Butte County office working with county directors and advisors, nutrition community education specialists, and Community Health and Nutrition statewide program personnel. The Advisor will collaborate with colleagues in the Food Literacy and Healthy Lifestyles and California Communities Program Teams in support of the UC ANR Healthy Families and Communities and Sustainable Food Systems Strategic Initiatives, as well as the advisors and specialist in the proposed Community Health Resilience & Nutrition Cohort.

Justification: Diet and physical activity-related chronic disease remain a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in CA with poverty and food insecurity substantially contributing to the burden of disease. According to a 2016 report by the California Department of Public Health and the Nutrition Policy Institute, prevalence of obesity among adults in the five counties ranked on average 34 (1=lowest obesity, 44=highest) among all California counties, putting the five county area in the lowest 25th percentile. According to the UCLA Center for Health and Policy Research, childhood obesity prevalence in Colusa and Glenn counties is significantly higher (46.6%) than the California average. The advisor will oversee over $1 million in CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE and EFNEP annual grants and provides leadership to a successful nutrition program that serves five counties with 13 full time staff, housed in four UCCE offices (Butte, Glenn, Colusa, and Sutter/Yuba).

This position contributes to three of UC ANRs public values: Safeguarding abundant and healthy food for all Californians, Promoting healthy people and communities, and Developing an inclusive and equitable society. The expected condition changes will be in the areas of improved food security; improved access to positive built and natural environments; improved community health and wellness; and improved living and working conditions for California’s food system and farm workers.

Extension: The advisor will provide academic leadership to EFNEP and CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE and disseminate practical resources and information to consumers and collaborative partners and professionals in five counties. An emphasis is serving at-risk, low-income families and youth related organizations. The Advisor will provide an essential link between stakeholder groups and community organizations, UC resources and personnel, and local decision makers. They will be expected to provide leadership via multiple channels including providing information to individuals and groups through in-person presentations, web-based resources, active social media presence, and print publications targeted to broad audiences such as local media, county-based publications and UC blogs. The Advisor will work with external partners and stakeholders to address local and regional needs and document outcomes in order to inform broader policy efforts. Activities could involve providing guidance and expertise, coordinating efforts to build local collaborations, and building the evidence-base for policy, systems or environmental changes.

Research: The Advisor will develop an applied research program in community health, nutrition and food security that aims to 1) Understand barriers to accessing healthy food and safe drinking water and impacts on individual and community health, 2) Develop intervention programs and conduct research to evaluate the community health impacts of addressing barriers to access related to food, drinking water and/or physical activity opportunities, and 3) Co-develop applied research projects with vulnerable and underserved communities to
address community health priorities related to chronic disease prevention and overall community health. The Advisor is expected to publish in external publications intended for all stakeholders, and in peer-reviewed scientific journals such as: American Journal of Public Health; Journal of Extension; Health Education & Behavior; Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development and others.

**ANR Network:** Building capacity for Health Resilience and Food System Networks is of high priority to ANR. This position will work with these networks to address community health issues related to food, physical activity and drinking water access to build a stronger and more resilient population. COVID-19 revealed existing vulnerabilities in both our food and healthcare systems. Indeed, communities struggling with poverty, structural racism, food and water insecurity, and diet-related chronic disease were the most vulnerable to COVID-19. Working with local communities to address upstream factors and prevent chronic disease will be essential moving forward as we emerge from the pandemic and prepare to face ongoing and emerging health issues. This position will also work with the network of NFCS, YFC, 4-H Youth development, and proposed cohort hires. With additional potential to collaborate with Community Development and Small Farms Advisors on issues related to transportation to local food outlets, outdoor recreation access, and support for farmers who want to offer CalFresh or WIC as a form of payment at direct to consumer outlets.

**Network External to ANR:** The Advisor will engage with government and non-governmental organizations at local, regional and state levels, to provide technical assistance and expertise in community assessment and program planning, identifying and modifying evidence-based resources, evaluation and data analysis and dissemination. Examples of potential local partners include schools, community colleges and local universities, public health and social services agencies, groups serving diverse populations, food banks, local policymakers, and food policy councils. The advisor works with local partners and provides collaborative leadership through the County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP) required by USDA and Chico State University Research Foundation Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion.

**Support:** Basic operational support of the advisor will be covered by the County of Butte budget provided to the local UC Cooperative Extension. Travel to required programmatic meetings will be covered by EFNEP and CalFresh Healthy Living, UC. The UCCE Butte County office will provide office space, administrative clerical support, office supplies, IT support services, communication, and a dedicated county vehicle for transportation. Available Butte County facilities include a kitchen, meeting room and storage facilities for program supplies.

**Other support:** It is expected that the current support from EFNEP and CalFresh Healthy Living, UC will continue. The Support Group of Butte County UCCE provides needed support in addition to the County of Butte budget. County Directors of the four surrounding counties provide space and clerical support to staff conducting programing in their counties.

**Headquarters and Coverage Area:** This position will be headquartered in the Butte County Cooperative Extension office in order to be centrally located within the region. The position will serve high-priority communities (to be defined during community assessment) in Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Sutter, and Yuba counties. There is currently no Advisor in any of the five Counties focused on nutrition or community health. All counties have 4-H and CalFresh Healthy Living, UC programs for potential collaborations.

**Developed and proposed by:** This position was developed Butte County UCCE County Director, Luis Espino; San Luis Obispo & Santa Barbara County Director, Katherine Soule; and the CalFresh Healthy Living, UC Program. **This position is included in the Community Health Resilience & Nutrition Cohort proposal.** The position is being proposed by Dustin Blakey, Inyo-Mono UCCE County Director.