

Position Title: Cooperative Extension Climate Resilient Indigenous Farming and Food Sovereignty Area Advisor for San Diego/Riverside Counties

Position: The advisor is responsible for co-developing and delivering a robust applied research and extension program in partnership with Native American tribes and tribal communities to strengthen Indigenous food and farming systems as well as Indigenous food sovereignty in San Diego and Riverside counties. (1) A graduate degree in food systems, nutrition, horticulture, agronomy, urban agriculture, natural resource management, environmental science, Native American Studies, geography, community development, and/or related fields is required. (2) The ability to work with tribes, tribal communities, and/or tribal serving organizations (hereafter shortened to “tribal communities”) is essential. Experience working with tribal communities around food justice and food sovereignty, cultural heritage preservation, organic farming or gardening, climate resilience, food system and food policy, and/or Indigenous land stewardship, are highly desired. Excellent written and verbal communication skills are necessary along with knowledge of and experience with community-engaged research and education. (3) The position will be located in and report to San Diego CD, but will deliver programs in San Diego and Riverside in collaboration with local advisors, AES and CE faculty, and relevant SWPs and PTs. *This position is part of the Indigenous Communities cluster hire proposal.*

Justification: Native Californians have stewarded the California landscape for thousands of years for foods, fibers, medicines and wildfire mitigation. Yet colonization has had a devastating impact on the landscape, as well as the lives, livelihoods and cultural foodways of Native Americans. California is experiencing unprecedented drought and wildfires, which requires increased attention to building climate resilient landscapes and climate smart agriculture and food systems. Tribal communities are advocating to restore Indigenous land stewardship to revitalize their traditional foodways and improve community food resources, which can help address high rates of poverty, food insecurity and diet-related diseases among their communities. San Diego and Riverside counties alone are home to twenty-nine sovereign Native American tribes with the largest population of urban Indians in our state. Native voices and expertise are critical to finding solutions to food insecurity and the climate crisis, issues that disproportionately affect Native communities. The advisor will partner with tribal communities to develop a research and outreach program, integrating Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) and western scientific approaches to restore and measure the impacts of Indigenous farming and land management practices for improved food security, food sovereignty, climate resilience, and positive health outcomes. They will advance policies and programming to support tribal sovereignty over ancestral lands and protection of cultural resources, increase tribal and youth engagement in land management, promote more drought and fire resilient communities, and strengthen regional food systems. In addition, the CE advisor will provide academic and administrative oversight for the UC Master Gardener Program in San Diego County which is one of the largest and most active in the state. This position will contribute to promoting healthy people and communities, protecting California’s natural resources, safeguarding abundant and healthy food for all Californians, promoting economic prosperity and developing an inclusive and equitable society.

Extension: Developing effective outreach programs with tribal communities requires deep listening, and a commitment toward building and sustaining relationships over time. This position will partner with tribal communities and coalitions, as well as public and private land managers, government agencies including the Intertribal Agriculture Council, NRCS, and RCDs to develop their research and outreach program. Extension activities may include (1) co-designing, implementing, and evaluating Indigenous farming and food sovereignty initiatives identified by tribal communities, (2) strengthening tribal capacity to enhance production of culturally relevant foods, fibers and medicines through farms, gardens, and/or landscape level management at the household, tribe and county levels, (3) supporting the development of climate-resilience plans including, for example, drought planning and mitigation, fire risk assessment and cultural burns, and co-management for Indigenous land stewardship, (4) contributing to regional and statewide policy dialogue on building a more resilient California landscape while protecting tribal cultural heritage and cultural resources, (5) developing culturally-relevant outreach programming that can be replicated and shared statewide and (6) following the UC Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation Policy to facilitate the return of ancestors and cultural items to California Indians and other Native American tribes.

Research: Conventional approaches to research, evaluation, and data collection have often excluded traditional practices and voices of Native people. This advisor will foster an Indigenous perspective and approach to co-developing their research and education program in partnership tribal communities to uplift their desires, goals and priorities. Key research areas or topics of inquiry could include (1) conducting a comprehensive Indigenous food sovereignty assessment in the two counties, identifying key barriers and opportunities to enhance Indigenous food security, food sovereignty and land management, (2) research and promote climate resilience and climate smart agriculture and food systems with respect to Indigenous community priorities, that can inform regional climate change preparedness and planning initiatives, and be replicated by other tribes and (3) research policies and best practices to enhance Indigenous land stewardship, including innovative co-management models, that can enhance food security, as well as improve mental, physical and cultural health.

ANR Network: The advisor would significantly augment ANR's capacity to engage with California's Native communities to enhance food security, food sovereignty and climate resilience. The advisor will serve as a liaison among other ANR programs in the counties to strengthen outreach with tribal communities and ensure that UC ANR academics and staff understand and implement best practices for protecting tribal cultural resources and honoring tribal sovereignty. Supporting and collaborating units may include CE advisors, CE and AES faculty at UCB, UCD and UCR [e.g. ESPM (e.g. Hoover, Nelson, Sowerwine), Food Sciences, Entomology, Plant Pathology, Weed Science], relevant SWPs, Small Farms, Diversified Farming Systems, DEIJ PT, and California Communities PTs, the Native American Community Partnerships and Urban Agriculture workgroups, CFHL, UCCE EFNEP and 4-H, as well as the various networks focused on disaster and climate resilience including the fire advisor network, and the food system, health and water resiliency network.

Network External to ANR: The advisor would be expected to collaborate first and foremost with tribes (both federally and non-federally recognized), tribal communities and tribal-serving organizations such as United Indian Health Services, Tribal TANF, Intertribal Agriculture Council, First Nations Development Institute, among others. They would also work with the Climate Science Alliance tribal working group, the NRCS statewide tribal liaison, Christina Snider (Tribal Liaison to Governor Newsom), the Tribal EPA working group, the statewide association of tribal heritage preservation officers, as well as local and regional land management agencies. They may collaborate with marketing advisory boards, and/or county and Farm Bureau offices.

Support: Support for this position, including office space, transportation, communication (telephone, internet), computer and printer, office supplies and clerical support, are provided in existing budgets from both counties.

Other support: It is expected that research support will come from competitive grants in collaboration with partnering organizations and ANR colleagues, as well as grants from USDA (FRTEP, NIFA, WSARE), CDFA speciality crop block grants, local community groups and tribes, the California Tribal Fund, and national level organizations such as the First Nations Development Institute.

Headquarters and Coverage Area: The area advisor will be based in the UC Cooperative Extension Office for San Diego County. Programmatic coverage will be provided to San Diego and Riverside Counties. The new Advisor will collaborate locally with a team of advisors and staff working in food systems; Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences; Natural Resources; Master Gardeners; forestry; and 4-H Youth Development.

Developed and proposed by: UC SAREP, California Communities PT, Native American Community Partnerships Workgroup, with an [endorsement letter from the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians](#), and input from Diversified Farming and Food Systems PT, CE San Diego and Riverside offices and external stakeholders from the San Diego region as well as Intertribal Agriculture Council and First Nations Development Institute.