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Re: North Bay Food Systems Advisor

Dear David,

Thank you for sending me a copy of the description for this very important new position. As you are well aware, this is a critical time to add this function to Extension's capacity here in the North Bay, as agriculture here is in the early stages of very substantial change—primarily driven by generation transfer; but also significantly reflecting the painful decline in the dairy industry, consumer demand for locally grown, high quality food, and lack of infrastructure for new enterprises/food products.

Additionally, many young and beginning farmers and ranchers feel overwhelmed by the technical, regulatory, marketing, and business management hurdles in transitioning to a different agricultural model. Our region has enormous potential to capitalize on the highly educated, loyal, Bay Area consumers who are eager to support local agriculture. In Marin and Sonoma counties, we have made great strides in preserving the land necessary for next generation farming; so the stage is set for the next step toward a viable, sustainable food production system.

I believe this position could be the critical catalyst we need to build on what is already underway and to accelerate the transition to a new agricultural economy on the North Coast.

Please know that I fully support this new position, and stand ready to assist in any way I can.

Very Sincerely,

Ralph Grossi