SAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES

A. *New Crops for the Coachella Valley 2010-2014.* **Pitahaya (Dragon Fruit) Variety Trial**
My collaborators are Ramiro Lobo, UCCE San Diego and Milt McGiffen, UCR and the Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District. Ramiro has introduced Pitahaya as a new crop in San Diego and southern California. His research indicates that some heat tolerant pitahaya varieties may be grown in the Coachella Valley. Our goal is to learn the cultural practices and to identify varieties that can tolerant temperatures over 100 F in the summer and occasional freezes in the winter. Pitahaya has many uses, as a fresh fruit and as a natural food coloring. Genetic work has yet to be performed on these varieties, there is doubt as to how many real varieties there are.

B. **New Crops for the Coachella Valley: 2012-2014. Olive Variety Trial**
The Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District are my collaborators and funders of this project. Olive acreage production in California greatly expanded when UC Farm Advisors demonstrated that California could produce a high quality olive oil. We have three of the most popular varieties in our trial.

C. New Crops for the Coachella Valley: 2013-2016: Stevia Trial
My cooperators are S&W seeds. Stevia peeked the interest of those searching for a sugar alternative. It is a crop from the highlands of Brazil. It was unknown how it would grow in the Coachella Valley given the climate extremes.

D. **Indio Senior Center Community Garden 2010-2014**
My collaborators are Nancy Vance, Indio Senior Center Director and Letty Vasquez, Burrtec Waste Management. From planting to harvesting the seniors were involved in setting up the garden. Each senior had a garden plot. I gave them 3 educational classes covering vegetable gardening, Insects Identification and Management, and Understanding and using fertilizers. This project has been well received and seniors have supplemented their diets with the vegetables they have grown themselves. When the Indio Boys and Girls Club heard about this project they also asked to be included in the programing.

E. Diagnosing Coachella Valley Diseases 2010-2014
My collaborators are Dr. Mike Davis, Dr. Bob Gilbertson and Steve Koike. The Pest Control Advisors are generally the first to spot problems and they bring those to my attention. Pest control advisors, growers or myself go out to fields and collect diseased samples. Every year I work to identify the common and new diseases on vegetable crops in the Coachella Valley. I then work with Pest Control Advisors to avoid economic losses. For example knowing that race 4 of downy mildew is in the area allows growers to select tolerant spinach varieties. We have now also found race 13 in our local spinach fields.

F. **Foreign Farmers Educational programs 2010-2011**
My Collaborator is Corky Lovin, UCD College of Environmental Science, International Visitors

Agricultural Program. The people served are the visiting scientists, farmers and extension agents from Iraq, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Bulgaria and Egypt. The visitors are always amazed at the agricultural activities in the Coachella Valley.

G. **Coachella Valley Farmers Educational Program**

My collaborators are the Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District, Coachella Valley Water District, Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District. This has been an ongoing project and serves as one of my direct links to all the growers in the Coachella Valley. Educational programs are under the heading of Coachella Valley Farmers Educational Program. Coachella Valley Growers use these meetings to ask specialists questions and solicit information they would not otherwise have access to.

H. **Pest Control Education Program**

My collaborators are members of California Hispanic Association of Professionals in Agriculture (CHAPA), Pesticide Association of Professionals in Agriculture (PAPA) and California Association of Pest Control Advisors (CAPCA). These groups get the benefit of the disease and insect scouting and identification.

In Process:

A. Date Book 2010-14

My collaborator is the Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District. The consumer demand for dates (fresh and processed) has led to an increase in new date plantings and an influx of new growers. There is limited information on the common date varieties and the cultural practices of these varieties. Also covered in this book will be the major insect and diseases on dates. For example ripening date fruit is susceptible to fungal growth and can be problematic during the ripening and packing stage during periods of high moisture and humidity.