

Volume 1 Issue 10

October 2025

The RECap

*A newsletter from South Coast Research and Extension Center
and UC Cooperative Extension Orange County*



Featuring:

- Event Recap
 - Upcoming Events
-

We kicked off the fall season with a very successful pumpkin u-pick event during our annual Urban Ag & Garden Expo last Saturday, October 11th. We had nearly 1,000 people attend the Expo and they had a great time taking tractor tours of the center, learning from our expert researchers and programs, and interacting with our community partners. We have a couple of u-pick opportunities coming up in a few weeks so be on the lookout for those dates once we know when things will be ready to harvest!

Sincerely,
Lindsey Pedroncelli, Ph.D., Interim Director of South Coast REC

P.S. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter in the future, please unsubscribe at the bottom of this email.

Event Recap

Urban Ag and Garden Expo

On October 11th we hosted our annual Urban Ag and Garden Expo, a family-friendly event that gives the public a behind-the-scenes look at all that we do at South Coast REC. Even before we officially opened, folks were lined up and ready to pick pumpkins and enjoy the day. From 9am to 2pm we had nearly 1,000 attendees! Scroll down to see some photos of the event and to learn more about all of the activities we offered.

[Click here to let us know what you thought of the Expo.](#)



Expo attendees had the opportunity to interact with all of our researchers, Cooperative Extension programs, and community partners.



The produce tasting is a very popular booth where folks can taste pomegranates, avocados, citrus, and more, all grown on site at South Coast REC.

Folks walked through our vendor fair to interact with our researchers, UC Cooperative Extension programs, and community partners, where they learned about everything from garden hydroponics to growing rare fruit to beekeeping! We also offered presentations from our expert partners and researchers, highlighting projects happening at South Coast REC and throughout Orange County. See below for a full list of presenters and booths.

Attendees had the opportunity to taste produce grown on site, including avocados, pomegranates, and several varieties of citrus. Folks could also take a tractor tour of the center, get their gardening tools sharpened, and tour the Master Gardener's demonstration gardens and landscapes, getting an idea of what they can grow in their own communities.

Thank you to our presenters for your engaging talks!

- [Juan Garcia, Senior Water Efficiency Specialist, Irvine Ranch Water District](#)
 - [Natalie Levy, SCREC Soil Health and Organic Materials Management Advisor](#)
 - [Eric Focht, UC Riverside Avocado Research Associate](#)
 - [Beatriz Nobua Behrmann, UCCE Urban Forestry Advisor](#)
 - [Grant Johnson, SCREC Urban Agriculture Technology Advisor](#)
 - [Niamh Quinn, UCCE Human-Wildlife Interactions Advisor](#)
-



For just \$1, attendees could take a tractor tour of the research center, learning about current and past research projects.



Folks were lined up to purchase their u-pick pumpkins and drought-tolerant landscape plants!



Our Urban Agriculture Technology Advisor Grant Johnson talked with folks about Kratky hydroponic systems.

Thank you to Irvine Ranch Water District for sponsoring lunch for our volunteers and DJ Art for providing sound equipment and music!



The pumpkin u-pick was a highlight of the Expo. This year, we grew the most pumpkins we've ever grown and we had several different shapes, sizes, and colors to offer. People also got to browse and buy drought-tolerant plants propagated by our very own UC Master Gardeners. Just across from the pumpkin patch, folks could visit the Master Gardener Education Garden and Compost Site to learn about different crops and planting methods they can use in their own gardens. Natalie Levy, our Soil Health and Organic Materials Management Advisor, was present with the Master Gardener Compost Team to educate the public about why composting is so important and how to use it.



Thank you to our UC partners who hosted a booth for the day!

- [4-H Youth Development Program of Orange County](#)
- [California Master Beekeepers Orange County Team](#)
- [Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program of Orange County](#)
- [UC Avocado Research](#)
- [UCCE Organic Waste and Composting](#)

Our Soil Health and Organic Materials Management Advisor Natalie Levy and her daughter enjoyed the pumpkin u-pick!



Eric Focht, Avocado Research Associate with UC Riverside, talked with folks about avocado breeding and research.



Some of our awesome, dedicated South Coast Stewards volunteers who helped make sure the event ran smoothly!

- [UCCE Urban Agriculture Technology](#)
- [UCCE Urban Forestry and Pest Management](#)
- [UCCE Water Conservation and Quality](#)
- [UC Master Food Preservers of Orange County](#)
- [UC Master Gardeners of Orange County: Hydroponics Team, Tool Care Team, Education Garden Team, and Composting Team](#)
- [South Coast REC GROW Program](#)
- [South Coast REC fruit tasting team](#)

Thank you to our community partners who hosted a booth for the day!

- [Arrak Outdoor USA](#)
- [Bahco Tools](#)
- [California Rare Fruit Growers](#)
- [Cool OC](#)
- [El Toro Water District](#)
- [H2OC Stormwater Program](#)
- [H.I.R.E. OC](#)
- [Irvine Ranch Water District](#)
- [K-9 Indigo Dog Training](#)
- [Orange County Agricultural Commissioner](#)
- [Orange County Waste and Recycling](#)
- [Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County](#)
- [Southern California Bluebird Club](#)

I want to give a huge thank you to everyone who attended and express my deep gratitude for the South Coast REC team that spent countless hours planning and organizing the event, especially Tammy Majcherek and Jason Suppes, our Community Education Specialists. The event went so smoothly and it was very special to see so many people enjoying the research center. It truly would not have been possible without our amazing team of employees, volunteers, and supporters. Thank you for your dedication, energy, and enthusiasm! We have already started planning next year's Expo, so mark your calendars for the first Saturday of October!

-Lindsey

Upcoming Events

3-part Forestry Webinar Series



Hosted by:

UC Forest Stewardship
Program

in collaboration with:

UC Fire Network



The Forest Stewardship Education Initiative is a CAL FIRE funded contract (8CA04547), awarded July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2027, to Susie Kocher, RPF#2874, University of California Cooperative Extension, to help landowners develop forest management plans.



Register Now!

'Before You Buy Forestland' 3-part webinar series for prospective and new forestland owners

Online Thursdays, October 2nd, November 13th and December 11th

6:00pm – 7:30pm

The Forest Stewardship Program, in collaboration with the UC ANR Fire Network, is hosting this webinar series to provide prospective forest landowners with tools and resources to make an informed and thoughtful purchasing decision before buying forestland.

Join us to learn more about:

- Forest Stewardship considerations (motivations for purchasing forestland; forest conditions; and living in the woods)
- Living with wildfire risk (risk and evacuation planning; defensible space requirements; home hardening; and prescribed fire)
- Financial Practicalities of Owning Forestland (insurance; collaboration efforts; and conservation easements)



UC ANR Fire Network

University of California
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Registration is free. Sign up now at:

<https://surveys.ucanr.edu/survey.cfm?surveynumber=46897>

For questions, contact Kim Ingram, kcingram@ucanr.edu

Register Here

H2O for HOAs: Free Education and Networking Event

REGISTER TODAY!



H₂O
for
HOAs

THURSDAY

OCT 23

8AM - 12NOON

Norman P. Murray Community & Senior Center

24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo

bit.ly/H2OforHOAs2025

Register Here

UC Landscape Plant Irrigation Trials Fall Open House

UC Landscape Plant Irrigation Trials™

South Coast REC FALL 2025 Open House

Who should attend? Professionals from Landscape, Horticulture, and related fields; City Planners/Urban Designers; UC Master Gardeners; Water Conservationists; Academics/Educators; Garden Writers.

What's involved: Evaluating aesthetic qualities of selected plants (takes ~60 mins)

When: Tuesday, October 28th between 8:00 am and 12:00 pm

Where: South Coast Research and Extension Center, 7601 Irvine Blvd., Irvine 92618

Registration is required: <https://surveys.ucanr.edu/survey.cfm?surveynumber=46991>



About the event: Join us for the second Open House of the 2025 Climate Ready Vines trial. Participants will assess the impact of different levels of irrigation on vine plant performance following the summer heat. After a short introduction to the rubric, participants will evaluate the aesthetic qualities of selected plants independently at their own pace. We will provide a clipboard, rating sheet & pen. Sturdy, comfortable shoes, sunscreen and/or a hat are suggested as the field is uneven mulch/packed dirt in full sun. Carpooling is encouraged but not required. Cold water will be provided.

About the Project: UCLPIT™ seeks to improve urban water-use efficiency and develop irrigation recommendations by evaluating landscape plant performance on three irrigation treatments that correspond to the Water Use Classification of Landscape Species (WUCOLS) High, Moderate, and Low categories of water need.

Participation is voluntary. UC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Scan QR code for event registration!

Questions?

Email Nathan Lo at nclo@ucanr.edu

More about the project:

<https://uclpit.ucdavis.edu/>

Spring Open House Recap Video

<https://youtube.com/shorts/61tCNnZZHAc>

UC DAVIS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCES

UC
CE



Register Here

Learn more about the [UC Landscape Plant Irrigation Trials here](#) and watch the video below for a look at the Spring Open House!



UCCE San Diego Vineyard Management Event

Advances in Vineyard Management: Water, Pests, Diseases, and Regulations

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 | 7:30am – 12:30pm.
San Diego Farm Bureau: 420 S Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025

[Register Here!](#)

Workshop Agenda

- 7:30 am** Registration/Check-in and Morning Refreshments
- 7:55 am** Welcome and Introduction
- 8:00 am** **Grapevine Trunk Diseases: Pruning Wound Protection and Aspergillus Vine Canker Management.** *Akif Eskalen, Professor and Cooperative Extension Specialist, Department of Plant Pathology, UC Davis*
- 8:45 am** **Controlling Powdery Mildew in Winegrapes: 2025 Trial Results**
Ana M. Pastrana, Plant Pathology Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension
- 9:05 am** **Current Status of Pierce's Disease in California and Management Practices** *Philippe Rolshausen, Professor of Cooperative Extension, Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, UC Riverside*
- 9:35 am** **Managing Common Vineyard Pests Using IPM**
Eric Middleton, IPM Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension
- 10:05 am** **Managing Insect Vectors of Grapevine Diseases**
Matt Daugherty, Assistant Professor, Department of Entomology, UC Riverside
- 10:35 am** Break
- 10:50 am** **Manage Vineyard Water to Achieve Optimal Productivity, Quality, and Disease Control.**
George Zhuang, Viticulture Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Fresno County.
- 11:35 am** **Water Quality Regulations for Grape Production in the San Diego Region**
Val Mellano, Farm Advisor Emeritus, UC Cooperative Extension
- 12:05 pm** **Weed management strategies in California grape vines**
Matthew Fatino, Subtropical Crop Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension
- 12:30 pm** Adjourn and Lunch

Pending CEU Approval: California DPR (3.5h), CA Crop Advisor-CCA (4.5h) & SDRILG (1 h)

Funding for this project is provided in part by our Sponsors.

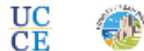


For questions regarding the workshop, please contact Ana M. Pastrana at ampastrana@uconn.edu or Matt Fatino at mfatino@ucanr.edu

If you require any accommodations to participate in this event, please submit your request to the email listed above.

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Register Here

4-H Youth Development Book Drive



Join OC 4-H in our Fall Community Service Project: 1000 New Books Drive for CHOC Hospital Little Library, which provides books to patients and their families during their hospital stay. Until November 16, drop off NEW BOOKS ONLY in the box in Building 103 at South Coast REC.



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