

Spotlight on San Luis Obispo County

The mission of UC Cooperative Extension in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties is to improve the lives of local residents by working with growers, families, volunteers, and partners to advance science-based solutions in agriculture, natural ecosystems, community health, and youth development. We work to support the economic vitality of local agriculture and promote healthy, safe, and resilient communities.



Integrated Pest Management Advisor, Chris Greer, planting a lettuce field trial
Photo: S Klisch

Advisor-led workshops, trainings, and consultations

970 growers, land managers, and agency partners attended 37 Advisor-led education events to increase their knowledge of and capacity to:

- Manage invasive weeds and pests using economical and ecologically sustainable practices
- Sustainably use and manage rangelands
- Work with diverse communities

UCCE works to increase the stability, efficiency, and profitability of local agriculture and working landscapes.

UC ANR Mission

UCCE is part of the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR). Our mission is to cultivate thriving communities, sustainable agriculture, resilient ecosystems, and economic prosperity in California through development and sharing of equitable and collaborative science-based solutions that have national and global impact.

By The Numbers

UCCE volunteers are trained in the latest science to extend proven solutions to protect our natural ecosystems and support youth and community thriving. Volunteers are San Luis Obispo County residents, bringing local context and expertise to issues that matter in home horticulture, food safety and preservation, healthy living, and positive youth development.

433UC
Volunteers**\$1.5M**Value of
Volunteer
Hours**5854**Public
Education
Participants

UCCE's Claire Tuohey Motte, at a workshop on food safety and compliance for small scale farmers. Photo: CityFarmSLO

Supporting Small Farms

Since 2021, program staff have ensured that small- and medium-sized farms in the region have access to resources that can make a substantial impact on farm business sustainability, including disaster relief funding and educational trainings in English and Spanish to support regulatory compliance. Staff have assisted local growers applying for grants related to drought and extreme weather who have received over \$221K in reimbursements this year.

"Very engaging and informative, brought a lot of new skills and information to apply to my work."

Participant at life-skill building workshop for social workers

4-H Youth Development

4-H empowers young people with skills to lead for a lifetime.

4-H youth participate in local clubs and countywide events that challenge them to demonstrate their skills in public speaking, leadership, and agriculture.

San Luis Obispo has one of the largest 4-H programs in the state with 24 clubs supported by 255 volunteers. In a world of change, our youth are growing up "Beyond Ready".



4-H Youth at the Board of Supervisors in honor of National 4-H Week.
Photo: F Van Hooser

1199
4-H Youth



UC Master Food Preservers

Master Food Preserver volunteers provide science-based information to the public to ensure local people have the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health. They promote well-being through education on food safety and preservation and increase access to fresh produce that sustainably nourishes a healthy population and reduces diet-related chronic diseases. *The program supports the UC ANR Public Value of cultivating thriving people and communities.*

>95%

Of workshop participants gained new knowledge and intend to use the information learned.

CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE

This program delivers nutrition and food security education and support for policy, systems, and environmental changes to make the healthy choice, the easy choice. Through partnerships with schools, community organizations, and local farmers markets, the program reached 15,000 youth, families, and community members to promote access to healthy food and active living.



"I learned to try new things. Before, I didn't want to have some foods because they looked gross. Even my parents say I got better at trying new foods." – Youth participant

Nutrition education class at the S. County Boys & Girls Club.
Photo: M Costa

UC Organic Agriculture Institute

This statewide program supports certified organic, transitioning, and aspiring organic producers. SLO County currently has two organic demonstration sites where experienced organic farmers share their expertise and host on-farm demonstrations. The goals are increased adoption of organic and conservation practices, improved farmer readiness for certification, and improved access to resources for Spanish-speaking and underserved farmers. *This work supports UC ANR's public values of promoting economic prosperity for farmers and ranchers, developing an inclusive and equitable food system, and protecting California's natural resources.*

255

Adult volunteers provided more than 27K hours of service to 4-H



133

Certified UC
Master
Gardeners

2449

Public Ed.
Participants

Garden education with youth at Juvenile Services.
Photo: J Cummings

UC Master Gardeners

Volunteers provide research-based information to the public on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscapes. Master Gardeners support three demonstration gardens throughout the county and have implemented a pollinator garden at the Central Coast Zoo, and garden education at Juvenile Services. Their newspaper articles reach >42K people weekly. *This work supports UC ANR's public values of protecting California's natural resources.*

In follow-up surveys, workshop participants reported improved water conservation, pest management, and green waste management practices.

