

Volume 1 Issue 11

November 2025

The RECap

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



We hope you are enjoying the fall season! The weather is starting to cool down, there is rain in the forecast, and the fall veggies are ready to harvest. Will we see you at our veggie u-pick?

Featuring:

- Program Update
 - Employee Spotlight
 - Pro Tips
 - Upcoming Events
-

In this issue we are excited to bring back the Employee Spotlight, featuring South Coast REC's Senior Agricultural Technician, Naomi Robles. We are also sharing the first of many delicious recipes provided by our UC Master Food Preservers. Plus, there are a lot of exciting upcoming events to check out!

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.

Program Update

Orange County 4-H Youth Development Program

Looking for a way to give back to your community?

Have a special skill or talent you want to share?

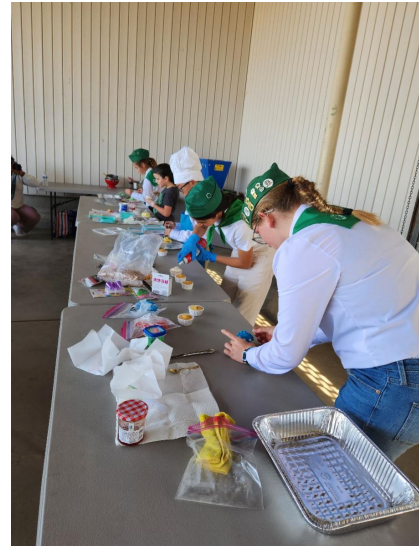
OC 4-H is always happy to have new volunteers to support our program!



For example, you could lead a project in an area that is a special spark or hobby for you. And, we always need evaluators for youth presentations at our amazing events like Food Fiesta or Field Day.

Bring your heart for helping kids and we will find a place for you! Of course, enrollment is open for youth members as well, so if you know someone who would be perfect for 4-H, share this information with them too!

We also have in-school and after-school programs – see if your local school would like to have a 4-H club or enrichment program! Contact oc4h@ucanr.edu for more information or [sign up here](#) and someone will contact you.



Employee Spotlight

Get to know the folks who work with South Coast REC and UCCE Orange County.

Get to know

Naomi Robles

**Senior Agricultural Technician
at South Coast REC**



Hi everyone, my name is Naomi Robles & I've been working for UC ANR for over six years. My agricultural career started in high school with Future Farmers of America, where I mainly raised and showed livestock through the Orange Section Covina FFA chapter. In 2018, I graduated from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona with a B.S. in Agricultural Science. A year later, I was hired at UC South Coast Research & Extension Center. I started as a Farm laborer, then was promoted six months later into the role I have now, as the REC's Senior



Agricultural Technician. For over 17 years, I've had the privilege of learning & working in this beautiful industry. Not many people get to see the "behind the scenes" aspects of where our food, fiber, and fuel come from... let alone how that process is done. So, when people ask me what I do for work, I tell them I'm a 'Fancy Farmer' (research = fancy).

What does a "typical" day look like for you?

A "typical" day for me? Well, every day can be different, especially out in the field. As field staff, we put on many hats & adapt to special/changing needs of Agricultural & Horticultural research in the areas of: Potable/Reclaim Water, Avocado Breeding/Rootstock, Plant Pathology, Subtropical Fruits, Landscape/Tree Management, Ornamental Plant Nursery Production, Entomology, Biological Control, Soil Science, Turf Grass, Agronomic Crops, Integrated Pest Management, & Data Sampling/Analysis. You might see me zooming around the REC on my Kubota, going back & forth between projects. Tasks can range from performing a wide variety of standard repetitive field experimental procedures in multiple field experiments to specialized/general agricultural field work/irrigation, to even routine operational records on-site at UC South Coast REC.



What part of your work are you most excited about or proud of right now?

The aspect of my job that brings me the most sense of pride would have to be...seeing the fruits of my labor unfold before my eyes. From taking care of groves that are older than I've been alive to seeing some I've planted around the time I first started working here. Nothing beats watching the literal representation of your growth alongside you. Watching the groves and veggie crops change throughout the season, seeing the entire process from start to finish & everything else in between. To me, getting my hands dirty & being outside, sure, it's a lot of work, but it's so rewarding in the end.

What's your favorite fruit/vegetable/plant we grow at SCREC?

Speaking of fruit, my favorite fruit to eat on site would have to be the Meiwa Kumquat (*Fortunella crassifolia* Swingle). There's only one tree on site, & usually Kumquats come off very tart, this particular tree produces consistently sweet fruit! My favorite fruit to show people is the Australian Finger Limes! Just

cutting one open & having them squeeze it...only for tiny, caviar-like citrus pearls to come out; it's super unique/ fun to show off.

Pro Tips

Tips, tricks, and advice from our program experts

Make a Batch from Scratch: Preserving Cranberries

If cranberries are a staple on your holiday table, try making a batch from scratch! The simplest cranberry relish is printed right on the packaging and it makes an easy, and rewarding, activity to do with children.



Here are some tips for making the perfect sauce:

- Make sure you bring the recipe to a full boil TWICE – once when making the simple syrup, and again after you add the cranberries. Boiling is critical to binding the sugar to the pectin to create a gelled product.
- Spice your sauce up by adding a spice sachet (whole spices like cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom secured in cheesecloth) to the pot when you add the cranberries.
- A 12-oz bag of cranberries will make roughly 2 ¼ cups of sauce.
- Measure after chopping if the recipe specifies the use of chopped berries.
- It is not necessary to thaw frozen berries before use.
- Dehydrated cranberries cannot be used to make sauce - they do not contain enough pectin.
- Sauce needs to be cooled at room temperature – chilling too quickly may affect the gel.
- Whole cranberries can be frozen whole & in the original packaging (sort and rinse before using).
- Freezing sauce is not recommended – it can separate and get watery in the freezer.

Involve children in the project by having them measure the sugar and water. Let them help choose any spices you add to the recipe to familiarize them with how different whole spices look and smell. Older children can manage and stir the pot to prevent scorching. Get creative and package the sauce in 4-ounce jars so extra can be gifted to neighbors or used later. Be sure to share with any recipients that cranberry sauce will last for 10-14 days when properly stored in the refrigerator.



[Jennifer Borges](#) is the new Program Coordinator for the Master Food Preservers of Orange County. She can be reached with questions or inquiries at jhborges@ucanr.edu. For quick answers to your food preservation and safety questions, contact the MFP Helpline: uccemfp@ucdavis.edu

Upcoming Events

Fall Veggie U-pick



Register soon, spots are limited!

Saturday, November 8, 2025 - Rain or Shine

Register for one of the available sessions:

8:30am - 9:30am

10:00am - 11:00am

11:30am - 12:30pm

Fee: \$30.00 per group of four - includes (1) bag per group provided on site.

All proceeds benefit our outreach and extension activities for the local community.

More Information and Registration

Persimmon U-pick

Date: Saturday, November 15th

Time: 10:00am - 12:00pm

Event Fee: \$75.00

(1) bag will be provided per registered purchase. Limit of (3) guests per registrant from the same household.

Fuyu and Hachiya types available!

It's not too late to start your Hoshigaki for holiday gifts.

Register now, space is limited!



More Information and Registration

The Landscape Expo

Invasive Borers in Urban Forests: Identification, Impacts, and IPM Solutions

Thursday, November 13th - 8:00 AM PST

The Landscape Expo

Anaheim Convention Center

Sign Up Today @
TheLandscapeExpo.com

Use Code: **SEM-25**
for **\$10.00** off Seminars



Beatriz Nobua-Behrmann, Ph.D.
UC Coop. Est.

Several representatives from UCANR will be attending and presenting at the upcoming Landscape Expo in Anaheim, CA November 12th and 13th!

Attend [Dr. Beatriz Nobua-Behrmann's](#) talk on Invasive Borers in Urban Forests on Thursday, November 12th at 8am.

Stop by the Emerging Tree Pests Program booth as well!

Attend [Dr. Natalie Levy's](#) talk on "Growing L.A. After The Fires" on Thursday, November 12th at 9:45am.

[Check out the full schedule of events here.](#)

[Learn more about the Landscape](#)

[Expo here.](#)

The Future of Landscape Panel

Growing L.A. After The Fires

Thursday, November 13th - 9:45 AM PST

The Landscape Expo
Anaheim Convention Center

Sign Up Today @
TheLandscapeExpo.com

Use Code: **SEM-25**
for \$10.00 off Seminars



Gregory Rubin • Doug Kent
• Natalie Levy • Stephanie Landregan

4-H Outreach at *Shucked* Musical



Now that's a discorn**t**

30% OFF*

shucked

Use Code:
4HOC

shucked
November 11 - 23

 **Seegerstrom
Center for the Arts®**

*Offer valid on all evening performances. Not applicable on previously purchased tickets while supplies last.

OC 4-H will be hosting an outreach table at the Seegerstrom Center for the Arts

through the run of the Tony Award-winning *Shucked* musical comedy full of clever puns, catchy songs, and a whole lot of heart.

The show runs from November 11th through November 23rd.

This hilarious and audacious farm-to-fable musical is about the one thing Americans everywhere can't get enough of: corn! *Shucked* proves that sometimes tearing down a few walls, rather than growing them, is the only way to preserve our way of life. Whether you're a Broadway fan, a comedy lover, or just in need of some feel-good fun, *Shucked* will have you grinning ear to ear. Stop by and see us on show day!

Use Code 4HOC for a 30% off discount on tickets!

Get Tickets Here!

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

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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