

Volume 1 Issue 12

December 2025

# The RECap

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



**South Coast Research and Extension Center will be closed for winter curtailment from December 24, 2025 through January 1, 2026.**

What a year 2025 was! As with most years, there were many highs and lows, but the moments that really kept me going were often experienced right here at South Coast REC.

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## Featuring:

- **Special Feature:  
SCREC Wrapped**
  - Program Updates
  - Pro Tips
  - Upcoming Events
- 

After implementing a digital check-in system as well as an updated facilities reservation system this past year (thank you for your patience with these!), it was easier than ever to pull some stats from these systems and create the first-ever "SCREC Wrapped". Inspired by Spotify Wrapped, which gives you your year in review for everything you listened to on Spotify, SCREC Wrapped is a fun way to showcase some of the research and extension impacts we had throughout the year. I hope you enjoy scrolling through it!

Wishing you and yours a safe, fun, and restorative holiday season and a bright year ahead!

Lindsey Pedroncelli, PhD  
Interim Director, 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.

# SCREC 2025 Wrapped

An overview of our research  
and extension impacts in 2025

THERE WERE OVER

**200**

EVENTS AT SOUTH  
COAST REC IN 2025.

Our biggest event of  
the year was our

**Urban Ag and  
Garden Expo**

With nearly

**1,000**

attendees.

Thank you for joining us!

South Coast Stewards, Master Gardeners,  
and Master Beekeepers spent over

**6,105**

hours volunteering at  
South Coast REC.

**The GROW Program,**  
our agriculture education and workforce  
development program, hosted

**15+**

field days, serving hundreds of  
elementary, middle, and high school  
students from around Orange County.

South Coast REC supported

**32**

total research projects in 2025.

Got questions?  
We got answers.  
Science-based answers.

Our newsletter gained

**93**

subscribers.

For a total of 3,748 subscribers!  
Thanks for staying connected!

Thanks for  
**joining us**  
this year.

See you in 2026!

## Program Updates

### South Coast REC's GROW Program

South Coast REC's GROW Program, our agriculture education and workforce development program, made possible by support from the [Orange County Farm Bureau](#), is wrapping up its Fall Field Days. These field days bring hundreds of high school students to South Coast REC for a morning of hands-on learning experiences, shown in the photos below.





A staple activity at the field days is a seasonal produce tasting where students have the opportunity to taste fresh produce grown right here at South Coast REC. During the fall field days, students get to taste different varieties of citrus, persimmons, guava, apples, avocados, and more. Some students are tasting these fruits for the first time! While tasting they get to learn about the different varieties, growing seasons, marketing strategies, and the importance of plant breeding.



Students worked with the [UC Master Food Preservers](#) to make fresh guacamole using avocados grown on site at South Coast REC. The Master Food Preservers rounded out the activity by teaching the students about safe food handling skills and flavor profiles, giving students the option to kick it up a notch and customize their guacamole with additional spices.



Students had the opportunity to work in the greenhouse with our [Urban Agriculture Technology Advisor Grant Johnson](#). Grant set up an activity where students could make their own Kratky hydroponics tray, a low-input method of growing plants hydroponically. Students learned about fertilizers, potting media, and proper seeding methods, and helped Grant every step of the way, whether it was filling the tray with water, testing the pH of the water, adding fertilizers, or placing the seeds in the different media types.



Rotating through three different stations, students interacted with the [Orange County Master Beekeepers](#) and learned about pollinators and pollinator-friendly plants (pictured above) as well as bees and common bee pests. They also had the opportunity to taste three different kinds of honey!

**"Is that *the* fescue?"**

Earlier this week our Community





Education Specialists hosted a group of students from the [Fullerton College Horticulture Department](#). The students were starstruck when they visited our [CIMIS station](#), the very station where they get evapotranspiration data for their landscape irrigation class.

## Orange County Master Beekeeper Program

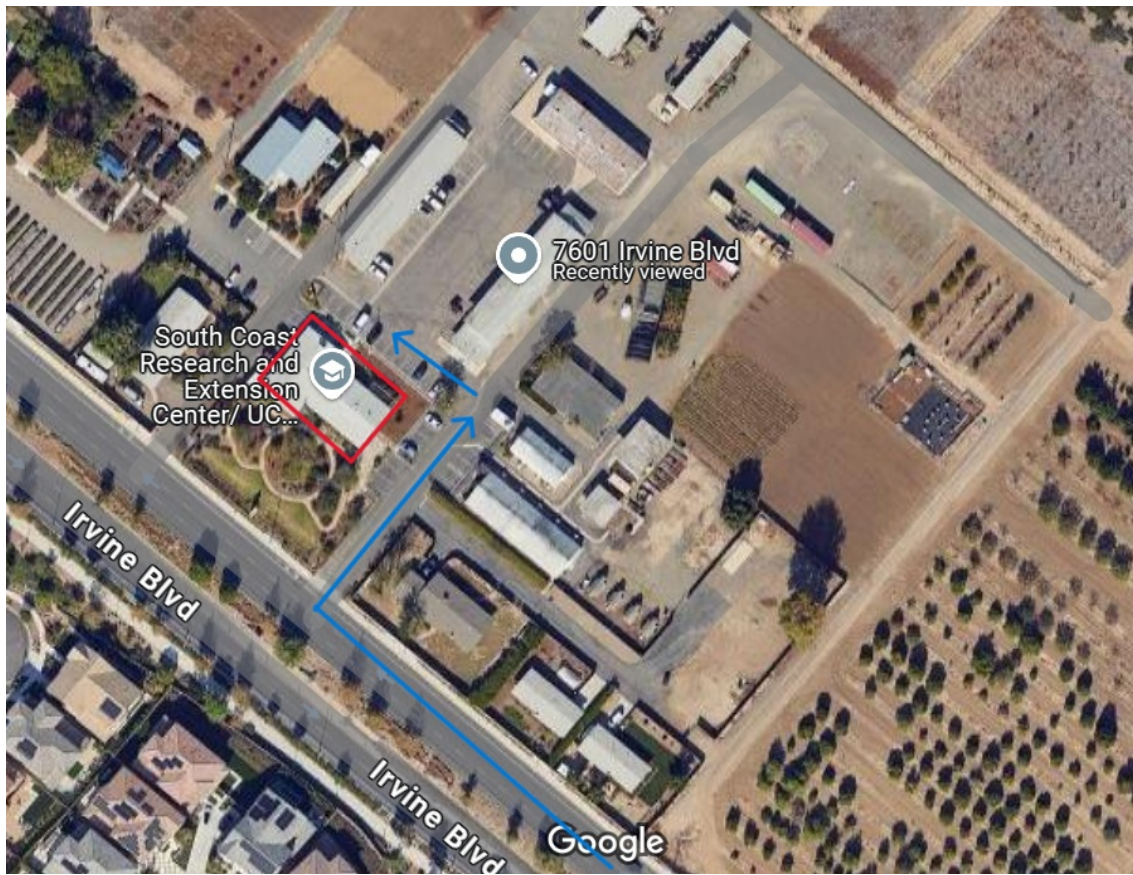


The [Orange County Bee Team](#) is now offering Nosema testing!

Nosema is a disease that affects the digestive system of the honey bee, *Apis mellifera*. *Nosema* spp. are spore-forming microsporidia. Nosematosis is an important factor that leads to a weakening of the defenses of hives and, together with other factors, to their collapse.

You can drop off samples every **Tuesday from 8am to noon** at South Coast Research and Extension Center: **7601 Irvine Blvd. Irvine, CA 92618 in the Main Office.**

Blue arrows in the map below indicate the entrance off Irvine Blvd. and where you can park in front of the Main Office, which is indicated by the red rectangle.



Test results will be e-mailed promptly.

**Cost: \$10 cash/sample**

For information about how to collect samples and more information about Nosema, [visit our website: https://ocbeeteam.org/lab-services/](https://ocbeeteam.org/lab-services/)

Questions? Email us at [ocbeeteam@gmail.com](mailto:ocbeeteam@gmail.com)



## Orange County 4-H Youth Development Program

### Book Drive

A big thank you to all who dropped off new books in the donation bin at SCREC. The CHOC patients and their families will certainly appreciate having some new books to choose from in their library. We are grateful for your generosity.

With your help  
we collected **160 books**  
for CHOC library!



thanks  
for your  
support



4-H Youth  
Development Program  
University of California  
Agriculture & Natural Resources



HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS

from OC 4-H



4-H Youth  
Development Program  
University of California  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

### Happy Holidays!

What a great year 2025 has been! We thank all who participated in our program! Keep an eye out for so many great events ahead in 2026! We welcome new families and can always find work for willing adult volunteer hands, so if you are looking for something new in 2026 – think of 4-H! Come join us!

### New Family Webinars



4-H has so much to offer – are you getting the most out of your membership? Join us for one of our New Family Webinars “So We Enrolled...Now What?” coming in January.

- Register for Thurs Jan 22 at 7pm:



[https://ucanr.zoom.us/meeting/register/gfLIYTWnTJyXI1tN\\_kttyA](https://ucanr.zoom.us/meeting/register/gfLIYTWnTJyXI1tN_kttyA)

- Register for Sun Jan 25 at 3pm:

<https://ucanr.zoom.us/meeting/register/GiCRtdYfRqudEVuFfNe8TA>

## Pro Tips

*Tips, tricks, and advice from our program experts*

### Host Healthy: Food Safety & the Holidays

As [Master Food Preservers](#), we take our responsibility to food safety seriously. As the holidays approach, I wanted to share some helpful tips for how to properly present and store food at your next holiday gathering.

1. Keep food refrigerated until it is time to eat, and keep food at 40 degrees or colder when serving.
2. Perishable food should be refrigerated or tossed after 2 hours.
3. If you plan to leave food out longer than 2 hours, place perishable food on top of containers filled with ice.
4. Hot food should be presented in slow cookers, chafing dishes, or warming trays AND kept at a temperature at or above 140 degrees F when serving.
5. Keep serving sizes small on buffet tables. If you're expecting a large crowd, refrigerate additional serving dishes and restock the buffet as needed.
6. Bring take-home containers with you to the gathering. Most hosts are thrilled to see leftovers go home with guests. It's a way to help clean the kitchen without getting your hands wet!



Wishing you and yours a very happy holiday season!

Jennifer Borges and the Master Food Preservers of Orange County

[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](mailto:jhborges@ucanr.edu). For quick answers to your food preservation and safety questions, contact the MFP Helpline: [uccemfp@ucdavis.edu](mailto:uccemfp@ucdavis.edu)

## Upcoming Events

### UC ANR's Before You Buy Webinar Pt. 3: Financial Practicalities of Owning Forestland



Are you interested in buying forestland in California, but have questions about the cost of ownership? Join a panel of forestry experts and landowners to learn about options for affording management activities, fire insurance, and more. Get equipped with the knowledge you need to make informed buying decisions.

#### Webinar Details

**When:** Thursday December 11, 2025. 6:00-7:30 PM.

**Where:** Zoom

**Cost:** Free!

This is the final part of a 3-part series on what Californians should know before buying forestland. Watch the first two webinars on forest stewardship and living with fire on the [Before you Buy webpage here](#).

[Register Here](#)

### UC ANR Forest Stewardship Workshop: San Diego and Surrounding Counties

Join UC ANR's team of forestry experts online and in-person at the San Diego Forest Stewardship Workshop, starting January 2026! Get equipped with the knowledge to understand forest management in



California, and earn a free site visit with a Registered Professional Forester, CA Range Manager, or Burn Boss (an \$800 value).

If you live in the forest, near a forest, or are interested in trees, this educational opportunity is for you. Learn about forest ecology, methods to reduce fire risk on your property, forest management planning, and more. Participants in this nine-week workshop series will gain the skills to identify their forest management goals and draft a forest management plan.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Forest Stewardship

## REGISTER NOW!

Sign up today for the San Diego Forest Stewardship Workshop.  
Participants receive a free site visit from an RPF, CRM, or Burn Boss.



**Your healthy, fire-resilient forest starts here.  
Share and shape your stewardship goals with UCCE!**

Weekly Zoom meetings January 27-March 24, 2026

In-person field day on Saturday February 28, 2026

Registration: \$60, scholarships available by request.

### Workshop Details

**When:** Tuesday evenings (6:00-7:30 PM) January 27-March 24, 2026

In-person field day February 28, 2026

**Where:** Weekly meetings over Zoom, in-person field day in San Diego County

**Cost:** \$60, need-based scholarships available by request. Please reach out to Kim Ingram ([kcingram@ucanr.edu](mailto:kcingram@ucanr.edu)) to request a scholarship.

[Learn more and register here](#)



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