

UC Cooperative Extension



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Santa Barbara & San Luis Obispo County News

Science-based solutions for healthy and resilient communities, food systems, and environments

August 2025

Message from UCCE Director

UCCE in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties strives to be a valued partner in the agriculture industry and a leader of evidence-based solutions that promote economic vitality, workforce development and healthy people. Our local mission 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 are launching a new monthly newsletter to keep you informed of UC resources, trainings, and up-to-date information that we hope is useful to you. You can continue to receive this newsletter by clicking on the link below. After September we will only send this monthly newsletter to people who have specifically opted in - you can also unsubscribe at any time.

We hope that you will opt-in and stay engaged with us.

-Shannon Klisch, UCCE Director in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara & Ventura Counties

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UCCE Agriculture and Natural Resources Advisor Updates

Gifford Fire

As of writing, the Gifford Fire is burning in northern Santa Barbara County and San Luis Obispo County between Santa Maria and Cuyama. Most of the fire has been on rangeland and forests, with over

+130,400 acres burned. This

has significant impacts to agricultural and rangeland

operations as well as the outer-lying communities. UCCE has compiled fire information and resources for both counties including [home protection and recovery](#) for residents, and [SLO County](#) and [SB County](#) agricultural operations. We will continue to update our website with resources as they become available - including [USDA](#) disaster and emergency funding.



Recovery resources will be available at [RecoverSLO](#) and [ReadySBC](#)

[Historical Fire Recovery Webinar \(LNU Complex Fire 2020\)](#)

The 2020 LNU Lightning Complex Fire was the seventh-largest wildfire in the [recorded history](#) of [California](#). This online webinar may provide pertinent information for the Gifford Fire recovery.

[Estimating the Cost of Replacing Forage Losses an Annual Rangeland](#)

Anyone who has incurred damage due to the fire is asked to complete an Agricultural Damage Assessment form on [ReadySLO.org](#). The information obtained in the Initial Damage Assessment will then be used to assess the overall damage incurred and to identify any available federal relief. Please Click [here](#) to access the Agricultural Damage Assessment Form

Image: Gifford Fire - Mary Stason

Disaster Support for Farms

CDFA's [California Underserved and Small Producers](#) (CUSP) Program provides disaster relief funds for small and medium scale farms (grossing less than \$400k/year) that experienced drought or other extreme weather from 2017 to the present. Awards are capped at \$20,000 per farmer per 12-month period no matter the number of disasters experienced. Deadline: Ongoing. For more information, contact: Claire Tuohey-Mote at ctuoheymote@ucanr.edu for application assistance.

USDA Farm Service Agency is accepting applications for the [Supplemental Disaster Relief Program](#) (SDRP) which provides disaster relief payments to producers who suffered losses in 2023 and 2024.

Deadline: Varies. For more information, contact:
USDA Farm Service Agency, 65 S Main Street, Suite 106,
Templeton, CA
(805) 434-0398.

UCCE in SLO, Santa Barbara and Ventura Welcomes Lilian Thaoxaochay as our Disaster Resiliency, Planning, and Policy Advisor

Lilian originally joined UCANR in 2021 and worked for four years with the UCCE Fresno County Small Farms team where she provided technical assistance for small-scale growers affected by COVID-19 and various extreme weather conditions including drought and flood, and assisted with research projects on specialty crop production like long beans, moringa, and jujubes.



Lilian is an anthropologist by training (UCSC, MA 2014; Stanford University, BA 2010). She has a background in community organizing, policy, racial/ethnic health disparities and cultural competency in medical education, curriculum development, the history of agriculture in Southeast Asia, and refugee and im/migrant farming in California.

If you have any questions about disaster preparedness or recovery, she can be reached at 805-441-4119 or lilthaox@ucanr.edu.



Calling All Farmers: Join Our Organic Mentorship & Demonstration Site Programs!

The [Organic Agriculture Institute](#) is excited to announce a dual opportunity for farmers to get involved in advancing

organic agriculture. Whether you're an experienced organic farmer looking to share your wealth of knowledge, or someone transitioning to organic production, these programs are designed to foster learning, innovation, and community.

- California Farm Demonstration Network (CFDN): Host a site to showcase organic farming practices and be compensated for your time and efforts. [Learn more about CFDN.](#)
- Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) Mentorship Program: Mentor transitioning organic farmers or become a mentee and receive personalized support. Participating mentors and mentees will receive stipends.

We're especially looking for farmers who are interested in both roles - participating in mentorship and hosting a demonstration site! Contact Maria Orozco at mdlorozcoramirez@ucanr.edu for more details or [visit the website](#) for more info.



UC IPM on the South Central Coast Join us for the lettuce Fusarium wilt trials field day

Tuesday, August 26 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM.

Location:

36.4467400, -121.3621331. Take exit 305 and continue on Silliman Rd to the ranch entrance. Follow the red arrows to get to the site. There are UCCE field day signs to follow.

[Please click here for more information.](#)

Registration is Free!

Register

Interested in UC IPM on the South Central Coast? Sign up for the UC IPM Mailing List today.

Christopher (Chris) A. Greer is an Area Cooperative Extension Advisor - Integrated Pest Management and Plant Pathology with the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR). He holds a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of California, Davis. He covers San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties where his research and extension program focuses on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) of agricultural crops grown along the Central Coast of California, including strawberries and leafy vegetables. His research program currently focuses on investigating Fusarium wilt in lettuce and celery, the use of drones and multispectral imagery for pest monitoring and decision making, as well as a variety of other interesting pest management issues.

2025 Irrigation and Nutrient Management Meeting for Vegetable and Berry Crops

August 21, 2025 | 8:20 AM - 12:00 PM

Location:

United Water Conservation District 1701 Lombard Street.
Oxnard, CA 93030

Registration is Free!



Register

Attention Nursery and Cut Flower Growers!

Our horticulture program hopes to bring the local nursery, floriculture, and greenhouse industries together through regular industry meetings. If you are interested in participating, please take a moment to complete the following survey. Your input will help us better understand your needs and priorities.



Survey

Webinar: Citrus Leprosis Threat, Mites, and Mite Management

August 27, 2025 | 10:00 AM



Image: UC IPM

In this webinar, various presenters will inform citrus industry stakeholders on the threat of citrus leprosis disease and share research results about ongoing vector transmission studies. They will also discuss pest mites of citrus and mite management.

[Register](#)

Webinar: Protect California's Waters From Invasive Species

September 3, 2025 | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM



In this webinar, Martha Volkoff from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Invasive Species Program will discuss aquatic invasive species like golden mussels and nutria. She will also share simple actions you can take to help protect our waters from these destructive pests.

Image: UC Berkley

[Register](#)

Whitefly!!!!!!

Author: Ben Faber

Recently a request came in from a San Luis

Obispo Master Gardener asking about some unusual mottling on orange leaves. They didn't follow a typical nutritional deficiency or fungal disease. They actually looked like huanglongbing symptoms, but there was no history of Asian Citrus Psyllid. It looked like it could be a sucking insect, something like a stink bug, whitefly or mite feeding. But the Master Gardener and grower couldn't find any insects



or any fecal or other debris, indicating an insect's presence. The symptoms looked familiar, though and I just couldn't put my finger on it. Then we got a call from a Valencia grower in Fillmore, and they had some really good images of similar symptoms with clear feeding sites on the back side of the leaves. And some whitefly colonies, too.

Image: UC IPM

[Continue reading...](#)

UCCE Community Education Programs

Edna 4-H of San Luis Obispo celebrates 100 years of 'good, wholesome, family fun'

The story of this 4-H club starts with pigs.

In 1925, boys and girls from the Edna

Valley – a region tucked between San Luis Obispo and Arroyo Grande – raised a litter of swine together under the supervision of local ranchers and a University of California Cooperative Extension agricultural advisor.

That humble effort transformed into Edna 4-H, the longest-running 4-H club in San Luis Obispo County, now celebrating its 100-year anniversary. Over that time, dedicated adult volunteers have guided youth through all sorts of projects centered on building life and leadership skills.

Image: Caroline Champlin. Reporter books from throughout the 100-year history of Edna 4-H were on display for attendees to browse, before the books are stored at the History Center of San Luis Obispo.



[Read more here...](#)

4-H Youth Development

4-H Youth from Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties had the opportunity to show off their hard work this Summer at the Salinas Valley Fair, Santa Barbara County Fair and Mid-State Fair. From the livestock barns to dog training, still exhibits to the equestrian arena, 4-H Youth shined. A heartfelt congratulations from the UCCE staff to

our members and volunteers on their hard work and dedication, they have much to be proud of.

4-H Youth Development Program offers youth in our counties and nationwide the opportunity to take on projects in areas of community service, leadership, the arts, small animals, livestock, floral design, bee keeping and much, much more. Our Youth Development Program seeks to create an environment where youth *Thrive* with confidence, caring, character, connection, competence and contribution. We strive to develop youth to be *Beyond Ready* —*building a ready generation in a world of change*.



To learn more about the 4-H Youth Development Program, visit [4-H Santa Barbara County](#) and [4-H San Luis Obispo County](#). To help us reach more youth in diverse and meaningful ways, please consider giving to [The California 4-H Foundation](#).

Image: Templeton 4H Bees- Ana Torres



Image: Beyond Ready- UCANR



UC Master Gardeners of San Luis Obispo

Become a Master Gardener: 2026 Master Gardener Training Program



The UC Master Gardener Program trains volunteers to share research-based gardening knowledge with the public. This course is how you become a certified Master Gardener in San Luis Obispo County. It's not just a series of workshops — it's an application-based program with tuition, weekly classes, and a volunteer

service commitment.

Not everyone who applies will be accepted. Applicants must attend training, pass a final exam, and commit to at least 50 hours of volunteer service in the first year. Space is limited.

How to Apply

To apply, click the button below to open and complete the online application. Be sure to submit your form by Monday, September 15, 2025.

[Application Form](#)

[Check out the Master Gardeners of San Luis Obispo County Upcoming Events](#)

UC Master Gardeners of Santa Barbara County



Ready to improve your gardening skills? Join us for hands on workshops throughout the year, covering topics from mastering tomato growing to creating water-wise landscapes. We have an event for you.

[Master Gardeners of Santa Barbara County](#)

[Check out the Master Gardeners of Santa Barbara County Upcoming Events](#)

2026 Master Food Preserver Training Program

The UC Master Food Preserver Program trains volunteers to share safe, research-based home food preservation techniques with the public. Our next training class information will be announced soon. Please check back here in July for details about the application window, informational meetings, class schedule, and tuition. Space is limited and not everyone who applies will be accepted. Applicants must attend training, pass a final exam, and complete a minimum number of volunteer hours in the first year.

How to Apply

Application instructions and a link to the form are coming soon!



Check out the Master Food Preservers of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties

Upcoming Events



June 2-3, 2026

The International Carrot Conference is held every 18 to 24 months and its purpose is to bring together everyone and anyone interested in carrots: growers, packers, shippers, seed producers, breeders, pathologists, sellers, marketers, University and government researchers, Extension specialists, students and anyone interested in the carrot industry.

This conference will be hosted by the University of California Cooperative Extension. This is a biennial meeting that attracts people from private industry, government, and universities from throughout the world. The conference is an excellent way for people to exchange ideas and concerns in all aspects of carrot production. Topics such as breeding, new products, production, and pest management are discussed in formal paper sessions, poster sessions, and a field tour. There will also be ample opportunity to interact with others in social gatherings.

This year, the International Carrot Conference will be held in Bakersfield California, which is in the heart of carrot production for the United States. Besides carrots, vegetable crops such as processing tomatoes, potatoes, garlic and onions, melons and a plethora of winter vegetables are grown in Kern County. Almonds, grapes and citrus are actually the largest crops grown in Kern County. We hope to make time during the conference so people can see many of the crops here. Bakersfield is also central to many locations in California with everything only a couple of hours away: Beaches, Los Angeles, The Sierra Nevada Mountains and Mojave Desert!

More information on registration and costs coming soon!

Would you like to Receive this Newsletter Monthly?

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The University of California Cooperative Extension in San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County conduct research and education activities in agriculture, natural resources, and positive youth development. We strive to promote a healthy food system, healthy environment, and healthy communities.

Your support helps in many ways.

Thank you.

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Contact Us



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