



UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
Agriculture & Natural Resources



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
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March 14, 2009

Dear Friends of UC Cooperative Extension,

WE NEED YOUR HELP! The proposed budget that has been presented to the Board of Supervisors by CAO David Twa has **eliminated funding for UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in Contra Costa County**. The Board of Supervisors will be presented with the budget this coming **Tuesday (3/17) morning**. They will vote on the final budget the following Tuesday, March 24. If county funding is removed as recommended, the entire office closes. This will mean the loss of all farm, nutrition, sea grant, natural resource and the youth advisors and their programs in this county. Services will NOT be available from other counties to help Contra Costa farmers and ranchers.

If you value these programs we are asking you to email or call your local supervisor to let them know **before the end of this week!** You'll find below a sample letter (modify as you see fit), a contact list for the Supervisors, and a Situation Overview with some Talking Points for your consideration and use.

If you email your letter, the subject line should read: Support Cooperative Extension in Contra Costa

The Board of Supervisors budget hearing meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 17** at:
County Administration Building
651 Pine St.
Room 107
Martinez, CA 94553

All meetings are open to the public and you are encouraged to attend. The meeting begins at **9:30am**. Public comment will begin soon after the budget is presented. If you would like to make a 2 minute presentation to address the Board, let me know. We can prepare and group the UCCE speaker cards which will allow us to speaker earlier and in sequence for a more effective presentation.

Your support is greatly appreciated,

Janet Caprile
Farm Advisor



SAMPLE LETTER:

If you e-mail this letter the subject line should read:

“Support Cooperative Extension in Contra Costa “

Name
Address

Date

Dear Supervisor _____

I am a *strong/long term* supporter of UC Cooperative Extension Programs in Contra Costa County. The services they provide are essential to the sustainability of agriculture in this county. They provide a benefit to all residents of the county who enjoy a cleaner environment and a safe and affordable food supply.

I am concerned because the proposed county budget does not include funding for UC Cooperative Extension. The elimination of this office would put local farmers at a serious, competitive disadvantage in being able to address the ongoing challenges facing agriculture today. Farmers in every other county in California have access to this primary resource.

We greatly value the assistance provided by Cooperative Extension staff. *You can add a brief statement of your association with UCCE and the received.*

You have our strongest support for continuing to fund UC Cooperative Extension programs in Contra Costa County.

Sincerely,

XXXXXX

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MARCH 2009**

District I Sup. Gioia – John Gioia

Area: El Cerrito, Richmond, San Pablo

Map of District: http://www.ccmmap.us/library/sup_1.pdf

Home Page: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.asp?NID=589>

Contact Info:

11780 San Pablo Ave., Suite D

El Cerrito, CA 94530

Ph: (510) 374-3231

Fax: (510) 374-342

Email: dist1@bos.co.contra-costa.ca.us

District II Sup. Uilkema – Gayle B. Uilkema

Area: Canyon, Crockett, Hercules, Lafayette, Moraga, Martinez, Orinda, Port Costa Rodeo, Walnut Creek (west)

Home Page: <http://ca-contracostacounty.civicplus.com/static/depart/dis2/bosdistrict2/>

Contact Info:

651 Pine Street, Room 108A
Martinez, CA 94553
Phone: (925) 335-1046
Fax: (925) 335-1076
E-Mail: gayle@bos.cccounty.us

District III Sup. Piepho – Mary N. Peopho

Area: Alamo, Blackhawk, Brentwood, Byron, Danville, Diablo, Discovery Bay, Dougherty Valley, Knightsen, San Ramon, Walnut Creek (south)

Map of District: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/DocumentView.asp?DID=893>

Home Page: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.asp?NID=740>

Contact Info:

Danville Office
309 Diablo Rd.
Danville, CA 94526
Ph: (925) 820-8683

Brentwood Office
1200 Central Blvd.
Suite B
Brentwood, CA 94513
Ph: (925) 240-7260
Email: dist3@bos.cccounty.us

District IV Sup. Bonilla - Susan A. Bonilla

Area: Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek

District Map: <http://susanbonilla.org/Default.aspx?tabid=198>

Home Page: <http://susanbonilla.org/>

Contact Info:

2151 Salvio Street, Suite R
Concord, CA 94520
Ph: (925) 521-7100
Fax: (925) 646-5202
Email: Dist4@bos.cccounty.us

District V Sup. Glover - Federal D. Glover

Area: Antioch, Oakley, Pittsburg, Bay Point, Bethel Island

Home Page: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.asp?nid=781>

Contact Info:

315 E. Leland Rd.
Pittsburg, CA 94565
Ph: (925) 427-8138
Ph: (925) 634-5915
Fax: (925) 427-8142
Email: dist5@bos.cccounty.us
Contact us page: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/forms.asp?fid=44&admin=1>

BACKGROUND AND TALKING POINTS FOR MAINTAINING UCCE IN CCC

Overview:

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) is a cooperative venture between county, state, and federal partners. We bring \$3.2 million in resources to the residents of Contra Costa County to deliver Agriculture, Horticulture, Natural Resources, Nutrition, and Youth Development (including 4-H) programs. The state & federal partners, our volunteers and our extra mural funding provide 88% of the resources for UCCE's Contra Costa County programs (\$3,220,594). Contra Costa County provides only 12% of the funding for these programs (\$385,152). But this is a very important 12%. Without reasonable partnership funding from the County, there is no partnership and we cannot offer these programs in this county. **Contra Costa County has proposed the complete elimination of UCCE from their budget.** The residents of Contra Costa County would lose close to \$3 million in program resources for the lack a very small amount of local support dollars.

UCCE has done an excellent job of leveraging resources by drawing in experts from other counties and the campuses, utilizing volunteers, and working cooperatively with other county departments and agencies to deliver effective programs in the most efficient and cost effective manner. During the Depression, Cooperative Extension was the "go to" agency to help struggling families survive. Cooperative Extension is needed now more than ever.

The Agriculture Program Talking Points:

The Contra Costa County UC Cooperative Extension Agriculture programs focus specifically on solving problems for local farmers. This benefits all the citizens of CCC as it assures a safe, affordable food supply which is produced in an environmentally responsible manner.

UCCE is the first resource growers turn to when there is a problem or change needed in their operation.

UCCE provides local farmers with sound, scientific information that promote sustainability in Contra Costa County. This includes:

- Safer pest management programs that protect people and the environment
- Identification and management of pests and production problems
- Selecting new crops, varieties and farming enterprises
- Adapting to new regulations
- Production economics and viability
- Proper harvest activities to assure safe food for consumers
- Water conservation techniques & irrigation management
- Pollution reduction techniques and practices
- Addressing agriculture-urban interface problems

All farmers in every county in CA have access to UCCE resources at the county level. Elimination of such a primary agricultural resource in this county would put CCC farmers at a competitive disadvantage. It would add to the challenges that already threaten the sustainability

of our local farms, our food supply, and our environment: development pressure, regulatory restrictions, new pests and a global economy. UCCE programs address all these problems.

Services or support would NOT be available to Contra Costa County farmers from other counties or the campuses.

Some of the education and problem solving research programs that would be eliminated if the CCC UCCE office were closed include:

- Over 300 personal consultations annually with local farmers to address problems specific to their farms.
- Crop Currents Quarterly newsletter – goes out to all growers in the county and contains timely, scientifically based information addressing issues of local concern.
- Tree Pest updates program & newsletter – goes out to tree fruit growers in the county to assist them in improving their pest management programs.
- Annual Pesticide Safety Training programs for farmworkers to assure personal and environmental safety
- Cherry Buskin survey, education, and eradication program - UCCE discovered this new and deadly disease in this county; conducts an annual survey to keep the disease from spreading; coordinates a grower task force and educational programs for eradication.
- Problem solving research to address specific CCC farming problems and issues

Background for growers:

Here are some specific projects and research programs conducted by UCCE in CCC in recent years that may have addressed issues of on your farm. This long list isn't going to mean much to politicians but may remind you of something you would specifically like to mention in a letter or conversation:

- Sweet Corn
 - Developing a corn earworm monitoring program – the traps, the lures, field location, thresholds
 - Evaluating corn suckering practices
 - Evaluating environmentally friendly corn herbicides (the CCC work allowed Chateau to be registered on corn in CA)
 - Monitoring for corn leafhopper and corn stunt – a potential new disease
 - Post harvest comparison of Brentwood Diamonds and other varieties
- Tomatoes
 - Processing tomato variety trials
 - Processing tomato weed and disease trials
- Apples
 - Reduced risk pest management programs
 - Mating disruption – areawide program
 - Safer but effective codling moth sprays (all the work to get these safer products registered for apples was conducted by UCCE in CCC)

- Reduced risk wooly apple aphid sprays
 - Developing an organic apple production system and publishing an Organic Apple Production Manual
 - Examining causes and solutions for apple bitter pit
 - Fireblight resistant rootstock trials
 - Red Gala variety trial
- Cherry
 - Cherry Buckskin Disease – disease detection & eradication program
 - Evaluating Coral Champagne for development of Cherry Buckskin symptoms
 - Identifying new cherry canker diseases in CCC
 - Evaluating rest breaking agents (CAN 17 and Dormex)
- Walnut
 - Blackline trials – “resistant” varieties & rootstocks
 - Using beneficial insects to control codling moth
- Grape
 - New pests
 - Glassy wing sharpshooter (GWSS) – the UCCE educational posters led to the early detection and rapid elimination in CCC.
 - Vine mealy bug – again, early detection and action led to the elimination in CCC
 - IPM program for grape mealy bug
 - Improving winegrape quality with irrigation management
 - Using hay bales to reduce noise from bird scaring cannons
- Economic Viability and Marketing
 - Support, development and education on new Roadside Stand ordinance for CCC (with others)
 - Support and education on AB2168 – new state law to value added products to be sold at roadside stands (with others)
 - Tree & Vine Loss calculator – to help growers accurately assess losses and replacement values
 - Development of UC Cost studies for cherries, apples.