

Farm Advisor

FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Farm Advisor-University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension program is to sustain a vital agriculture, environment, and community in Marin County by providing UC research-based information in agriculture, natural resource management, nutrition, and youth development.

II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Farm Advisor's programs operate through a unique partnership between the County, the University of California (UC) system, support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other private funds. Backed by the resources of the UC campuses, the department's educational programs use practically applied research information to solve community problems. The Farm Advisor, with its supporting partners, consults with individuals and organizations, publishes newsletters, produces information for mass media and conducts seminars and workshops. The UC Cooperative Extension program provides countywide services through an agreement between the County and the University of California that has existed since 1921. The University provides research and education services through three university professionals who are funded by the state. In addition, four Sonoma-based UC advisors work cross-county between Marin and Sonoma counties. The County provides support staff and basic operational costs.

The Farm Advisor provides the following services:

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Integrated Landscape Management
- Water Quality and Watershed Management
- 4-H Youth Development

III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY 2010-11

- Organized and facilitated the 2010 Marin Agricultural Summit on November 13, 2010 with 90 plus agricultural producers and partners laying out the needs and opportunities for Marin's agriculture (Summary notes and video capture of the day will be posted on the Summit website: <http://ucanr.org/sites/2010AgSum2/>)
- Received national recognition for the second year of the Naturalist Leader youth development program
- Facilitated farmer compliance with increased labor code enforcement and led development of options for farm apprenticeships and internships to train the next generation of farmers
- Supported dairy farmers and grazing livestock producers to comply with new national organic certification requirements to meet forage needs through documented pasture use
- Generated and disseminated needed information for preventing the movement of Sudden Oak Death in commercial and retail nurseries
- Completed the Marin County Community Garden Needs Assessment, which is advancing access to and support of community gardens countywide

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

IV. GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES FOR FY 2011-12

Countywide Goals				
I. Healthy Communities	II. Safe Communities	III. Sustainable Communities	IV. Environmental Preservation	V. Community Participation
VI. Excellent Customer Service	VII. Employer of Choice	VIII. Effective Communication	IX. Managing for Results	X. Financial Responsibility

GOAL I

Strengthen the viability and long-term success of agriculture of Marin County by educating producers and next generation farmers

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Implement the 2010 Agricultural Summit initiatives in partnership with County and community organizations	V. Community Participation
2. Advance farmer and rancher use of social media and technology in agricultural product direct marketing	IX. Managing for Results
3. Evaluate and facilitate the opportunities for increased acreage in row crop production	IV. Environmental Preservation
4. Initiate research and education on pasture weed management that reduces their impact on forage production and farm bottom-line	IV. Environmental Preservation

GOAL II

Preserve the environment through integrated landscape management

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Deliver forest and watershed stewardship information and support to San Geronimo Valley (SGV) homeowners to support their participation in the SGV Salmon Enhancement Plan	VIII. Effective Communication

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

2. Continue delivery of Bay-friendly Water Walks with expanded sustainable landscaping content

I. Healthy Communities

3. Research and educate on carbon sequestration in soils through livestock grazing management and stream restoration

IV. Environmental Preservation

GOAL III

Improve water quality in Tomales Bay and its environs with science-based research and information

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Expansion of livestock ranch support to increase on-farm implementation of water quality improving conservation practices	III. Sustainable Communities
2. Secure funding and develop water quality improving management practices for manure application on dairy pastures	IV. Environmental Preservation
3. Support San Geronimo homeowners with water quality improving gardening, including options for pesticide use reduction, in collaboration with Department of Public Works Department	IV. Environmental Preservation

GOAL IV

Provide direction on countywide funding for habitat restoration

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Administer County funds for fish and wildlife projects through oversight of County Fish and Wildlife Commission and funding partnership with Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP)	X. Financial Responsibility

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

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| 2. Disseminate results and implications from completed programmatic review of soil and water conservation practices completed on private ranch lands since the 1950s | VIII. Effective Communication |
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GOAL V

Develop leadership, community service, and life skills among Marin County youth using experiential, inquiry-based learning in science literacy and environmental education

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Collaborate with Conservation Corps, Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), Boys and Girls Club and other youth serving organizations to expand science literacy to educators and youth countywide	I. Healthy Communities
2. Deliver vegetable gardening and environmental education to 15 schools and at three demonstration gardens throughout the County	I. Healthy Communities

V. KEY CHALLENGES AND OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- Implementing the FY 2010-11 Agricultural Summit action plan initiatives to support the development and strengthening of the family farm operations and enterprises
- Monitoring the Local Coastal Program development, a critical process with the potential to positively and negatively impact viability of family farm operations
- Securing funding for the Bay-Friend Water Walks, which will be discontinued if funding is unavailable

VI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Objective: Increase the planned number of on-farm diversification projects to help producers sustain profitable agriculture enterprise

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
Workload Measures					
Number of information workshops conducted	10	7	7	5	7
Number of attendees at workshops	250	389	300	250	350
Effectiveness Measures					
Percent of workshop attendees indicating they are planning to develop on-farm diversification projects	80%	84%	83%	80%	80%
➔ Number of operators initiating or completing diversification projects	8	10	7	7	5

➔ indicates Key Measure

Story Behind Performance:

As intended, the 2010 Marin Agricultural Summit was a direction setting process and event. The department will use the initiatives and direction from the summit to shape workshop, newsletter, and website information, as well as guide collaborations and partnerships in service to Marin agriculture.

Objective: Increase the number of pasture conversions to help producers improve their profitability margins

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
Workload Measures					
Number of staff hours spent on visits, consultations, and other assistance	675	650	700	650	650
Efficiency Measures					
Number of staff hours per acre conversion	4.4	5.5	4.3	4.3	4.3
Effectiveness Measures					
Net increase in acres of pasture conversion	3,000	4,000	3,000	1,500	1,500

Story Behind Performance:

In partnership with Agriculture, Weights and Measures and Marin Organic Certified Agriculture staff, Farm Advisor has developed options and support for compliance with new pasture use requirements from the National Organic Program. Organic dairies and grazing livestock ranches risked losing their certification if they could not comply, and the options and tools provided safeguarded the previous successes of these producers and our partnership. In the coming year, the department will continue to support compliance of the pasture requirements so producers can maintain their organic certification.

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Objective: Increase the quantity and quality of experience for Marin residents participating in community gardening

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
Workload Measures					
Number of community gardens receiving program information	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	18
Effectiveness Measures					
Number of community garden gardeners using information provided through outreach and education	n/a	n/a	n/a	150	500
→ Number of community and school gardens using program information to implement and improve community garden opportunities for residents	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	18

→ indicates Key Measure

Story Behind Performance:

Community and school gardens face many obstacles to successful development and implementation. Providing direct support to these gardens, including management information and support to leaders and horticultural expertise to individual gardeners will increase access to these gardens and the benefit derived from each garden plot.

Access to community gardens and having a positive experience in those community garden can have long lasting benefits to the quality of life for participants and their community at large. The Marin Garden Project is beginning to delivery information and support to organize community gardens and technically support gardeners for these purposes.

WATER QUALITY AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Objective: Improve management practices on agricultural operations resulting in lowered pollutant loading in the watershed and to the bay

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
Workload Measures					
→ Number of participating ranch or dairy landowners	10	14	150	50	75
Number of water and soil samples collected	400	1,300	150	150	200
→ Number of conservation management practices implemented on-farm	25	7	10	15	15

→ indicates Key Measure

Farm Advisor FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

Story Behind Performance:

Through delivery of support services to comply with Regional Water Quality Control Board policies and requirements, Farm Advisor will facilitate participation of ranchers in the implementation of water quality improving management practices. Additionally, research on the benefits grazing management and stream restoration to California plant communities, soil carbon sequestration, and rangeland productivity will improve the ecosystem services of Marin's agricultural lands.

Objective: Increase bay-friendly water conservation and landscape practices to lower water and pesticide use in the watershed

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
Workload Measures					
Number of participating residents and homeowners in education outreach	n/a	259	200	200	150
Number of resident surveys completed	n/a	259	200	150	150
Effectiveness Measures					
Number of residents who changed conservation practices	n/a	110	115	100	100
→ Amount of water usage reduced after education (millions of gallons)	n/a	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25

→ indicates Key Measure

Story Behind Performance:

Individual homeowners are eager to implement landscape practices and measures that reduce environmental impacts from home gardening and realize savings on utility bills. This objective and activities provides homeowners with the information and motivation to make these changes.