

# Farm Advisor FY 2014 - 16 Performance Plan

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## I. Mission Statement

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

## II. Department Overview

The Farm Advisor-University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) program operate through a unique partnership between the County, the University of California (UC) system, support from the United States 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 UCCE program provides countywide services through an agreement between the County and UC that has existed since 1921. The university provides research and education services through four university professionals who are funded by the state. In addition, three 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. Program Description and Responsibilities

The Farm Advisor-UCCE connects the resources and expertise of the University of California with the residents of Marin. This land grant and cooperative extension mandate is delivered via our partnership and Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Marin. Since 1921, the

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Farm Advisor-UCCE has built strong working relationships with Marin's farmers and ranchers, youth, and environmental organizations to conduct needs assessments and then develop and implement education programs to meet those needs. This is achieved through the services described above as developed and implemented by our seven academics.

### **IV. Accomplishments for FY 2013-14**

- Re-established the Marin Food Policy Council in partnership with the Agricultural Institute of Marin and Marin Health and Human Services, and in the first year supported increases in CalFresh participation and advances in policy support for community gardens
- Completed the fifth season of Marin-Friendly Garden Walks, providing over 150 individual home garden consultations and bringing the total homeowners served to over 900
- Completed year two of weed-management trials on working dairies and ranches
- Hired the University of California Food System Advisor to develop programs that will strengthen the local food system, increasing access to healthy food and advancing agricultural viability
- Expanded Grown in Marin to over 35 participating ranchers and farmers, and currently conducting outreach to include local retailers

### **V. Key Challenges and Outstanding Issues**

- The department has been successful in expanding its programs and using efficient methods for designing and delivering educational events and developing publications and online resources. The department is making plans for continued program expansion and exploring options to secure the support needed to do this.
- Flexibility and responsiveness to emerging issues is necessary to be able to develop and implement programs in response to clientele needs. Invariably, it also requires a rapid use of reallocation resources and sufficient program support to maintain existing programs.
- All water users will have short- and long-term water conservation needs as a result of California's 2013-2014 drought. This includes Marin's ranchers, farmers, and individual homeowners recalibrating their water use and building resiliency to climate variability.

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### VI. Performance Plan

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
<b>Goal I: Strengthen the viability and long-term success of agriculture in Marin County by educating producers and next generation farmers</b>	III. Sustainable Communities

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Pasture Management: includes methods for recovery after drought and reduction of invasive species	Sustainable Agriculture
Next Generation: delivers educational support for the next generation of Marin's farmers and ranchers to be the cornerstone of Marin's local community, economy, and environment	Sustainable Agriculture

**Program:** Farm Advisor

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

Workload Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of information workshops conducted	5	7	8	7	7	7
Number of attendees at workshops	296	378	317	300	300	300
Effectiveness Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Percent of workshop attendees indicating they are planning to develop on-farm diversification projects	82%	81%	84%	80%	80%	80%
 Number of operators initiating or completing diversification projects	6	6	6	5	5	5

#### Story Behind Performance:

Efforts are now being put into supporting the restart of dormant dairies and the role of the next generation as the next agricultural innovators and members of Marin's community. Additionally, collaboration will continue with the Department of Agriculture, Weights & Measures and other partners to advance a comprehensive approach to weed management and increased pasture productivity.

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**Program:** Farm Advisor

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

Workload Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of staff hours spent on visits, consultations, and other assistance	700	650	832	700	650	650
Efficiency Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of acres converted per staff hours	4.3	3.8	13.8	2.9	3.1	3.1
Effectiveness Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Net increase in acres of pasture conversion	2,000	2,447	11,447	2,000	2,000	2,000

**Story Behind Performance:**

Marin has a higher percentage of certified organic agriculture than California or the United States. Dairy farmers and cattle ranchers continue to adapt organic pasture management into their farm and ranch management. This requires alternatives for invasive weed management. In the coming year, it will also require attention to recovering pastures after drought and implementing water conservation measures to meet water needs for livestock and row crop production.

The National Organic Program's Pasture Rule went into effect in 2010. The rule requires organic dairies to derive a minimum of 30% of herd feed requirements from pasture over 120 days of the annual production cycle. Program staff provided ranchers with support in converting pasture to organic to meet the demand for organic pasture created by this rule. The one-time result of this rule is the significantly higher acreage for pasture conversion in FY 2012-13.


Department Goal	Countywide Goal
<b>Goal II: Preserve the environment through integrated landscape management</b>	IV. Environmental Preservation

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Complete the sixth season of Bay-Friendly Garden Walks, adding an additional 150 homes and home gardeners to the 1,200 already served	Integrated Landscape Management

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**Program:** Farm Advisor

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


Workload Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of community gardens receiving program information	10	21	27	25	25	25
Effectiveness Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of community garden gardeners using information provided through outreach and education	230	550	700	1,000	1,500	1,500
 Number of community and school gardens using program information to implement and improve community garden opportunities for residents	N/A	21	27	25	25	25

**Story Behind Performance:**

The department is growing all things related to community and school gardens. This is creating access and opportunities for youth and adults to learn through experience and contribute to a stronger Marin food system.

**Program:** Farm Advisor

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

Workload Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of participating residents and homeowners in education outreach per year	200	200	300	300	300	300
Number of resident surveys completed per year	155	160	150	150	150	150
Effectiveness Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Number of residents changing conservation practices per year	100	125	120	125	150	125
 Annual amount of water usage reduced after education (millions of gallons)	2.30	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25

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### Story Behind Performance:



The department's partnership and collaboration with the Marin Municipal Water District continues to be a critical educational element for residential water conservation and environmentally friendly gardening. The University of California Master Gardeners provide one-on-one consultations with Marin's homeowners, giving them the information and motivation to change water and cultural practices. To date, the program has resulted in a total annual reduction of 13.5 million gallon in water usage by 900 participating homes since its inception. Additionally, the department answers over 5,000 individual inquiries each year from its help desk and at area farmers markets.

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
<b>Goal III: Improve water quality and watershed conditions in Marin's watershed with science-based research and information</b>	IV. Environmental Preservation

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Implementation of the Marin Carbon Project on working ranches	Sustainable Agriculture
Lead a local collaboration to conduct meta-analysis of water data to understand trends in watershed conditions within the Tomales Bay watershed	Water Quality and Watershed Management

**Program:** Farm Advisor

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

Workload Measures	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
 Number of participating ranch or dairy landowners	75	42	137	75	75	75
Number of water and soil samples collected	200	475	275	500	250	200
 Number of conservation management practices implemented on-farm	20	15	23	20	20	20

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Department Goal	Countywide Goal
<b>Goal IV: Provide direction on countywide funding for habitat restoration</b>	IV. Environmental Preservation

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Administer County funds for fish and wildlife projects through oversight of Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission	Water Quality and Watershed Management

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
<b>Goal V: Develop leadership, community service, and life skills among Marin County youth using experiential, inquiry-based learning in science literacy and environmental education</b>	III. Sustainable Communities

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Integrate sustainability training into 4-H clubs	Farm Advisor: 4-H and Youth Development
Increase support to teachers and after school program staff through 4-H in the classroom	Farm Advisor: 4-H and Youth Development