

# California 2018-20 PDP project

## Final report for WSP18-004

Project Type: PDP State Program

Funds awarded in 2018: \$28,636.00

Projected End Date: 06/30/2021

Host Institution Award ID: G159-19-W7506

Grant Recipient: University of California - Extension

Region: Western

State: California

State Coordinators:

[Dr. Sonja Brodt](#)

University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program

Co-Coordinators:

[Jeffrey Stackhouse](#)

University of California Cooperative Extension

## Project Information

### Abstract:

In order to streamline the execution of the PDP program in California, we decided to continue using the PDP award to fund mini-grants. We have successfully established an active committee to prioritize funding criteria and review submitted proposals for this proposal's funding cycle. We also have assistance available through the UC Agriculture and Natural Resources division to manage the mini-grant / travel scholarship application and funding process. We funded three mini-grants after our formal request for proposal was closed, but unfortunately, one of the funded projects has since been discontinued and those funds were allocated as additional resources to the other two projects. The incredible diversity of California's agriculture creates an equally diverse need for educational and professional development. Current high-priority topics include:

- Climate change
- Fire: Wild and Prescribed
- Nutrient management practices to minimize environmental impairments
- Water use efficiency
- Integrated Pest Management
- Alternative marketing approaches
- Succession planning
- Community-based food systems

These identified topics were used to prioritize projects during the review of PDP mini-grant proposals. That said, the two funded mini-grants were in the topic areas of prescribed fire and native bee pollinators. Two very useful and relevant projects for our state at this time. Both mini-grants will utilize their funds in 2020. With the

complexity of the UC system (with 9 distinct universities within it), the slow timeliness of SARE funding flow-through, and the need for a formal request for proposal and review process, we were not able to get these funds out, and the grant closed by the March 2020 deadline, and as such, requested a no cost extension that was granted for one additional year.

### Project Objectives:

The objective of this project is to increase the capacity of Cooperative Extension advisors, NRCS field staff, and other agriculture professionals to apply the principles of sustainable agriculture while working with their clientele (farmers, ranchers, consumers, youth, businesses, government, or communities). This will be accomplished primarily through workshops that will:

- 1) extend emerging sustainable agricultural practices to extension educators and agriculture professionals, and
- 2) bring together extension educators and university faculty working on sustainable agriculture to develop collaborative priorities, goals and strategies for researching and extending sustainable agriculture issues.

Other activities that will contribute to the overall goal include an evaluation process that will be embedded in all workshops and meetings and a planning meeting or conference call with the California PDP advisory committee to prioritize training needs for future PDP applications. See Attachment B for details on expected outcomes and the evaluation plan.

## Advisors

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State Conservation Agronomist

Natural Resources Conservation Service (Government agency)

## Education

Educational approach:

Due to COVID-19, the pollinator workshop was reworked into a webinar.

The Prescribed burn Association workshop was in-person in January 2020 with expert panelists and over 50 participants representing 23 up and coming PBAs across the state.

Cooperative Extension staff were provided with registration scholarships to attend the online 2021 EcoFarm Conference, put on annually by the Ecological Farming Association.

The remaining funds were utilized to organize and present two webinars in a series on "Racial Equity in Extension", the first focusing on engaging with farmworkers, and the second focusing on engaging with farmers of color. Both 90-minute webinars were presented as panel discussions followed by extensive Q&A opportunities with the audience. Each panel comprised 3 speakers who were farmers of color, as well as nonprofit staff and academic/extension staff who work with farmworkers and farmers of color. The webinars were recorded and posted for public access on a UC Agriculture and Natural Resources Youtube channel.

## Education & Outreach Initiatives

### **Updating agricultural professionals on current status of threats to pollinators and native bee identification workshop**

Objective:

This mini-grant to UC Riverside had the objective to offer a workshop to educate agricultural professionals about current research on the effect of agricultural practices on bees and to create awareness of California's native pollinators.

Description:

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the grantees were not able to approach this workshop in the originally proposed manner to hold in-person workshops across the state. However, instead, they held a widely publicized webinar on April 9, 2020. The webinar took the same format as the in-person workshops would have in terms of presentations and content. The webinar also offered 2.5 DPR Continuing Education units to attendees who were interested and/or needed it. The webinar had 260 attendees, which the grantees felt was likely more people than they would have been able to reach with in-person workshops, due to capacity limitations at meeting spaces.

Outcomes and impacts:

Attendees learned about native bees as pollinators and about pesticide effects on

bees. 106 out of 111 evaluation respondents reported that they gained or increased their knowledge, skills and or attitudes about this topic.

## **Organization of the State of California Prescribed Burn Association**

Objective:

To facilitate learning and education of leaders of prescribed burn associations across the state to foster shared understanding, networking, and organizational techniques for different prescribed burn associations across the state to help private people regain their right to use fire as a land management tool.

Description:

This project was an opportunity to reach out to community leaders across the state who were interested in starting a prescribed burn association to educate, network, and collaborate with those individuals to support them in their efforts. Prescribed Burn Associations (PBAs) are community based, mutual aid networks that help private landowners put "good fire" on their land. We invited 28 participants from around the state to a 3 day event where we hosted prescribed successful PBA leaders, fire experts, regulators, and lawyers to provide a full spectrum of information necessary to understand the concepts, rules, and laws around private lands burning and when/why we burn when we do, ecologically. It was a very successful workshop that will have a long-lasting impact in California.

Outcomes and impacts:

From this meeting, a new state organization was formed to help support community leaders interested in starting a prescribed burn association (California Prescribed Burn Association). We also created a website to serve as a path for new interested parties to join the group and gain information and resources from others who have traveled the same road ([calpba.org](http://calpba.org)). The Cal PBA website is a one-stop shop for PBAs in California - providing contact information for active PBAs and useful prescribed fire resources. Since this inaugural event, over 15 PBAs have been started across the state, successfully implementing fuels reduction projects, providing those communities a path toward regaining a positive relationship with fire. This one workshop has lead to over 700 PBA members across the state and over 3000 acres of implemented projects in the last 2 years. These PBAs are educating communities about benefits of fire, providing essential live fire training for fire departments that otherwise would not be available to them, and reducing hazardous fuels and treating invasive species across the state.

## **EcoFarm Conference travel grants**

Objective:

To provide educational opportunities in a range of current sustainable agriculture topics for University of California Cooperative Extension staff.

Description:

This initiative provided conference registration funding for UC extension-related employees to attend the virtual Eco-Farm Conference organized by the Ecological Farming Association, in January, 2021. This conference covered a wide range of

topics from environmentally-friendly production practices, to how to maintain a viable farm business, to what indigenous cultures contribute to sustainable agriculture and food systems and how to engage constructively with constituents who are black, indigenous, or people of color.

Outcomes and impacts:

Fifteen people attended the conference, and all reported increasing their knowledge about sustainable agriculture topics. The topics most commonly mentioned were issues surrounding the agricultural and natural resources knowledge and expertise of indigenous and other BIPOC communities and issues with environmental justice and reparations for these communities. Other topics noted included organic farming practices, the development of the organic agriculture movement in the US, and the effects of specific soil management practices on carbon sequestration. Thirteen attendees reported that they were planning to use what they learned in their own extension and communications programming.

### **Racial Equity in Extension Webinar Series**

Objective:

To educate extension professionals in California on the extension needs and approaches to engaging constructively with farm workers and also farm owners/operators of color, both of whom are traditionally underserved populations in extension programming.

Description:

This grant covered the first two in a series of six webinars. The remaining four will be conducted with the next California state PDP grant.

Two 90-minute webinars were held, one on June 18th and one on June 25th. Each webinar consisted of a facilitated panel discussion, followed by at least 30 minutes during which attendees could post questions to the panelists and hear their responses. The panel for each webinar comprised three people, from academics and extension professionals who work with these communities, to people of color who operate their own farm enterprises.

Recordings of the webinars, titled "Racial Equity in Extension: Farm Workers are Farmers" and "Racial Equity in Extension: Serving Farmers of Color", are posted in the Youtube channel of UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR).

Outcomes and impacts:

Out of 78 attendees at the farm worker webinar, 25 completed an post-webinar evaluation survey. 24 indicated that the webinar improved their awareness of the topic, and 25 said they gained new knowledge and 21 said the webinar modified their opinions of the topic. 20 said they are likely to use what they learned in future educational programming. 7 learned new skills. Several attendees appreciated the suggestions to provide more outreach materials in the form of visual graphics, and to consider adding indigenous Mexican and Central American languages, since for many farmworkers in California, Spanish is not their primary language. Many people asked about suggestions for organizations to partner with, in order to effectively engage with farmworkers, and they appreciated the concrete suggestions provided by the panel.

One group of Cooperative Extension advisors, who have in the past mostly engaged

with farm owners around crop production issues, and not farmworkers, have formed an online group and are holding meetings to brainstorm with each other on what they can do in their programming to better engage with farmworkers. The webinar spurred their thinking and increased interest among others to join this informal group.

Of 57 total attendees at the farmers of color webinar, 24 completed the post-webinar evaluation survey. 23 respondents indicated that the webinar increased their awareness and improved their knowledge of the subject. 18 indicated that it modified their opinions of the topic and 8 said they learned new skills. 17 indicated they were likely to use what they learned in future educational programming.

One attendee indicated that they are involved with affirmative action and civil rights compliance training for UC Agriculture and Natural Resources and planned to use parts of the webinar recording in future training sessions for Cooperative Extension and related staff. Others indicated that they would change how they value agricultural knowledge from different sources (e.g. farmers of color) and how they think about the economic and life challenges faced by many low-income farmers of color and how that affects them. Another attendee will consider providing payment to knowledgeable farmers for their services when collaborating with them on projects.

## Educational & Outreach Activities

- 18** Consultations
- 3** Curricula, factsheets or educational tools
- 1** Journal articles
- 2** Minigrants
- 4** Online trainings
- 10** Study circle/focus groups
- 27** Travel Scholarships
- 16** Webinars / talks / presentations
- 3** Workshop field days

## **PARTICIPATION SUMMARY:**

- 91** Extension
- 6** NRCS
- 27** Researchers
- 58** Nonprofit
- 29** Agency

**49** Ag service providers (other or unspecified)

**23** Farmers/ranchers

**71** Others

**23** Farmers

## Learning Outcomes

**197** Participants gained or increased knowledge, skills and/or attitudes about sustainable agriculture topics, practices, strategies, approaches

**65** Ag professionals intend to use knowledge, attitudes, skills and/or awareness learned

## Project Outcomes

**2** Grants received that built upon this project

**66** New working collaborations

**30** Agricultural service provider participants who used knowledge and skills learned through this project (or incorporated project materials) in their educational activities, services, information products and/or tools for farmers

**3** Farmers reached through participant's programs

## Face of SARE

Face of SARE:

Set-up display tables at all workshops with flash drives, publications, and other informational WSARE material.

Email WSARE RFP to all UC, CSU, USDA, CDFA, and nonprofits that we have to our disposal as UC employees.

**50** Farmers received information about SARE grant programs and information resources

**350** Ag professionals received information about SARE grant programs and information resources



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