

U.C. COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION/  
COUNTY OF  
VENTURA FARM  
ADVISOR  
669 COUNTY SQUARE  
DR., #100  
VENTURA, CA 93003  
<http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu>



# UC Cooperative Extension Report

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## We're the University of California Cooperative Extension

Many people think of the University of California as solely campuses with professors and students. But our research and education programs extend beyond that. UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) is the public service division of the University of California, focusing on issues relating to agriculture, natural resources and communities.

UCCE is a collaboration between UC and the County of Ventura. This county-based service is your direct connection to University knowledge and expertise.

In Ventura County since 1914, we've been helping people solve problems and secure opportunities. You see our fingerprints all

over the county. Our UC advisors work and live in this community, enhancing the quality of life for people here in many ways – from providing science-based solutions that sustain local farms, fisheries or nurseries, to hosting educational programs on nutrition, gardening, leadership, citizenship and other life skills.

To tackle complex economic, environmental and social issues throughout the county, we actively collaborate with many different groups – including farmers and fishermen, professional educators and service providers, community leaders and non-profit organizations.



## From the Acting County Director

I'm Rose Hayden-Smith, and I'm serving as the Acting County Director for UCCE.

I joined UCCE sixteen years ago as a 4-H Youth Development Advisor. I also work with the UC Hansen Trust, where I oversee the youth, community and volunteer educational programs at the Hansen Agricultural Center, which include 4-H farm field trips; programs for educators and home gardeners; and events for the general public. The work of UCCE and the Hansen Trust relies heavily on the approximately 425 volunteers working as Master Gardeners, 4-H leaders and Hansen Volunteers.

UCCE is a unique organization linking resources to keep agriculture and communities healthy and viable; bringing University research to the people; and applying scientific knowledge in practical and meaningful ways. It's a partnership that benefits the entire community. We're proud to be a part of this vital work.

I look forward to talking with you at various meetings and seeing you out in the community. If you're in the neighborhood, please stop by the UCCE Office and say "hello." We're always happy to see you. I'm

also eager to hear from you, to learn more about your needs and to hear how UCCE can better serve and support you. Don't hesitate to email me at [rmhaydensmith@ucdavis.edu](mailto:rmhaydensmith@ucdavis.edu), or to call me at 645.1466.



Rose Hayden-Smith

## CONSERVING RESOURCES AND DEVELOPING SKILLS



**“Fish on Your Dish”  
public outreach  
poster**

### Ventura County Youth Uncover Treasures of the Local Marine Environment

In July, a team of middle and high school students explored the local marine environment. During their journey, they uncovered many cultural and economic treasures provided by the Santa Barbara Channel Marine Region. Their experiences were written down and are being combined in a supplemental newspaper entitled “Current Times—Treasures of our Local Ocean.” The program is part of UCCE’s Agricultural and Natural Resources, Journalism Program, which

seeks to improve literacy in these areas while helping youth enjoy opportunities to demonstrate citizenship, leadership, and to develop new life skills.

The supplemental newspaper is being produced in collaboration with the Ventura County Star. It is expected to be distributed later this year to Ventura Star newspaper subscribers and local public school teachers and their students of the region. The 2008 effort is a team effort

of the Ventura County Sea Grant Extension and 4-H Youth Development programs. It was designed after the Fisheries Journalism Academy offered last year that resulted in the supplemental newspaper “Fish on Your Dish” ([http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Junior\\_Master\\_Gardener/Fish\\_on\\_Your\\_Dish.htm](http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Junior_Master_Gardener/Fish_on_Your_Dish.htm)), as well as an earlier agricultural predecessor, “Fields to Fridge: What’s Growing in Ventura County” ([http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Junior\\_Master\\_Gardener/Fields\\_to\\_Fridge.htm](http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Junior_Master_Gardener/Fields_to_Fridge.htm))

## Sustaining Agriculture (<http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/AgMenu/>)

### Blueberries New and Upcoming Crop

Southern Highbush blueberries are a relatively new crop for Ventura and coastal California, and UCCE Farm Advisor Ben Faber, PhD, is leading the effort. The Southern Highbush is a different species from that grown in most of the traditional blueberry growing areas, such as Michigan and Oregon. Its growth habit is different, as are its

fruit production pattern and potential and its cultivation requirements. The fruit production pattern, in particular, has potentially positive economic implications for Ventura County growers, who may be able to get the berries to market in seasons when growers in other parts of the country are unable to produce the increasingly popular fruit. We are learning slowly, but it certainly helps when

you can draw on the experience of others. Recently, UCCE hosted five Australian growers and an Australian farm advisor on a visit to Ventura County, where they shared their experiences with local growers about this new crop. This kind of research work by UCCE is helping coastal growers to diversify beyond traditional crops.



**UCCE’s Ben Faber introduces lichii, Logan, blueberry and mandarin crops to local farmers**



**Dr. Oleg Daugovish,  
UCCE’s Strawberry  
Expert**

## Strawberry Fields Forever

### Methyl Bromide Alternatives Research

Dr. Oleg Daugovish feels strongly about preserving Ventura County’s greenbelts for agriculture. As a strawberry and vegetable Farm Advisor for seven years, his work has given him a special appreciation for the unique attributes of the Oxnard Plain, which feature a happy combination of soil and climate perfect for strawberry and vegetable production.

One of his current projects has been to find safe and economically feasible alternatives to methyl bromide, a commonly used fumigant that is being phased out due to its contribution to depleting the ozone layer. To help spread the message Dr. Daugovish recently gave an informative and well-received presentation on methyl bromide alternatives at the County Fair.

Dr. Daugovish is conducting a variety of research experiments designed to test the effective-

ness of new methods designed to reduce the emissions of methyl bromide. One of the methods of reducing fumigant emissions is to use virtually or semi-impermeable films to cover the ground. These films can increase fumigant concentration in soil by 250 percent and reduce emissions by 95 percent compared to standard tarp. However, these films are almost twice as expensive as standard plastic and other methods are being considered.

## Strawberry Fields Forever, Continued

This work has distinct benefits to Ventura County, where strawberry production accounts for approximately \$300 to \$400 million dollars annually, making it the most profitable commodity. Dr. Daugovich is concerned that high costs and regulatory pressure could drive strawberry production out of the county before researchers are able to develop new effective and economical non-fumigant alternatives for soil disinfection.

Dr. Daugovich developed his passion for agriculture in Latvia where his family grew strawberries, potatoes and apples. He attended the University of Idaho and earned a PhD in plant science.

After twenty years of experience in the field Dr. Daugovich still loves his works. He explains, "My job never ends. It's dynamic. I get to work on acute problems that one of our County's most important industries faces."

When Dr. Daugovich isn't wrestling with the problem of how to sustain agriculture in a changing world, he spends time hiking, fishing, body boarding and relaxing with his wife, who is also a scientist.

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## Exploring Alternatives (<http://groups.ucanr.org/Hansen/>)

### 4-H Farm Field Trip Program in Full Swing

Beginning September 9<sup>th</sup> thru the end of October, nearly 500 students will visit the UC Hansen Agricultural Center for a special program designed to introduce them to the basics of plant growth and development, pollination and nutrition. Harvesting and taste testing vegetables grown especially for their field trip helps students develop a better understanding of where our food comes from. The program aligns with California Teaching Standards. The target audience is 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and special education. Our spring field trip program, which tar-

gets Kindergarten with the message "From Farm to Fork," currently has a waiting list of 400.

A new 4-H Classroom Outreach program – Farm-to-School Learning – debuts this fall and targets approximately 200 Kindergarten students who can't visit the farm. This literature-based program will be delivered by trained UC volunteers. For more information about our agricultural education programs, please visit our website.

### UC to Host Santa Paula Rotary Pumpkin Patch and Harvest Festival

The UC Hansen Agricultural Center will once again host an annual Pumpkin Patch at the Faulkner Farm. This is the second year that UC has contracted with the Santa Paula Rotary to continue this popular, family farm experience. In 2007, the Santa Paula Rotary netted \$80,000 from Pumpkin Patch activities, which has benefitted a wide range of community-based programs and organizations in Santa Paula. The event runs Saturdays and Sundays in October from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.




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## Conserving Resources ([http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Natural\\_Resources/](http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/Natural_Resources/))

### Ventura County SAFE Landscapes 2009 Calendar

The Ventura County SAFE Landscapes 2009 Calendar and Guidebook is now available! As part of the Sustainable and Fire Safe Landscapes Project, this calendar will help homeowners improve the fire readiness of their homes and property, while also helping them be better stewards of the surrounding wildlands by avoiding

invasive plants. SAFE Landscapes is a collaborative project of UCCE, the Ventura County Fire Department, the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council and the National Park Service. Many homeowners in the high fire risk wildland urban interface areas of Ventura County will be receiving the Calendar by mail in October. It can also be downloaded from our web site now. Or come by

the office or check at your local fire station in October/November!

**Fire season SAFE landscape's calendar available for county residents**



## Growing Communities ([http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/mg\\_menu/](http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/mg_menu/))

UCCE Master Gardeners are highly trained, certified volunteers who extend horticultural knowledge to home and community gardeners. These volunteers play a vital role in providing consumers with non-biased, science-based gardening information.

Each year, Master Gardeners volunteer about 10,000 hours to gardening programs throughout Ventura County. These programs include every-

thing from hosting garden-based field trips for school children, building community gardens, serving as docents at botanical gardens, hosting farm field trips, sponsoring educational programs and assisting UCCE Farm Advisors with agricultural research.

Hundreds of Ventura County residents call the Master Gardener Help Line which is staffed on Tuesday

and Thursday afternoons. Master Gardeners provide callers with free gardening advice and troubleshoot common gardening problems.

UCCE is recruiting volunteers for our 2009 Master Gardener Program. Please contact Leah Haynes at [lijaynes@ucdavis.edu](mailto:lijaynes@ucdavis.edu) if you are interested in receiving additional information.

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## Web Highlights

***“I wish that this had been available when I was taking classes for my degree.”***

Acting County Director Rose Hayden-Smith is a 2008-09 [National Food and Society Policy Fellow](#), focusing on the role of gardening in sustainable food systems. A practicing U.S. historian, Hayden-Smith was inspired by the Victory Garden programs of WWI and WWII to create a new UC website, [VictoryGrower](#). In addition to providing links to valuable gardening resources that support school, home and community garden efforts, the site contains a wealth of historical information about school, home and community garden programs in

the United States. In addition, Hayden-Smith regularly writes a [VictoryGrower Blog](#), focusing on a variety of issues relating to sustainable food systems.

[Weeds and Invasive Plants of Ventura County](#) started a few years ago as a Master Gardener Project developed by volunteer Susan Latham, who with the assistance of Master Gardener Sue Mills, collected information and pictures of the most common weeds and invasive plants in Ventura County. These stellar volunteers created alphabetical lists of weeds by

both common and scientific name. Since then, flash files that can be flipped through for visual identification have been added. UC’s Weed Work Group provided valuable assistance by checking the lists and pictures for accuracy.

We have received favorable comments from growers and weed science professors from all over the world, as well as from home gardeners. One professor from the east coast stated, “I wish that this had been available when I was taking classes for my degree.”

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## Grant Activity

One of the ways that UCCE leverages state and county funding is to secure grants that fund research that benefits agriculture, natural resources and people programs in Ventura County, and beyond. A sampling of recent grants received include:

- “Implementation of Best Management Practices to Reduce Agricultural Total Maximum Daily Loads” (\$722,141)
- “Fate, Persistence, and Source Identification of Pathogens, Pathogen Indicator Bacteria, and Human Specific Markers in Coastal Wetlands and Sediments of Southern California” (\$250,000)
- “Research and Education for Students and Teachers about the Ormond Beach Wetland Restoration Project” (\$60,000)

***“Education is not the filling of the pail, but the lighting of a fire.”***

*William Butler Yeats*

## Published Research

One of the roles of UCCE Ventura County academic, research and program staff is to publish the results of the wide-range of research that UCCE conducts, so that it may benefit others and increase the body of knowledge available on topics vital to the sustainability of agriculture. This is an area in which Ventura County staff excels. Below are some recent publications produced by members of our staff.

- Volunteer Researchers: Moving Beyond Cooperators
- Detention and recycling basins for managing nutrient and pesticide runoff from nurseries
- Survival of plant pathogens in static piles of ground green
- Light Brown Apple Moth Invades Santa Barbara County
- Phytophthora IPM and Fungicides
- Citrus Leafminer update
- The silver mite work-group
- New registration for the biocontrol Plant Shield HC against Hypodermis gummosis of citrus
- What's for lunch? A review of school food and garden-based education in the United States using Portland public schools as a model for change




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University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws.

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**Our mission is to serve the people of California through the creation, development and application of knowledge in agricultural, natural human resources.**



## **We Are...**

**Acting County Director:**

**Rose Hayden-Smith**

**County Advisors:**

**Carrie Culver**

**Oleg Daugovish**

**Jim Downer**

**Ben Faber**

**Monique Myers**

**Julie Newman**

**Research Staff:**

**Sal Mangiafico**

**Maren Mochizuki**

**Dale Zurawski**

**Cross County Advisors:**

**Carl Bell**

**Sabrina Drill**

**Program Representatives:**

**Susana Bruzzone-Miller\***

**Susan Gloeckler**

**Leah Haynes\***

**IT Technician:**

**Steve Griffin**

**Support Staff:**

**Georgetta Brickey**

**Tisha Fisher**

**Cris Johnson**

**Chris Webb**

*\*UC Hansen Agricultural Center*



*( This Countywide e-mail has been approved for distribution by the County Executive Office)*