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Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

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Non-Technical Summary

Numerous factors are challenging the long term viability of agriculture in the San Francisco Bay Area, including development and fragmentation of agricultural lands, and prohibitively expensive land values. At the same time, the economic, public health, and environmental benefits of sustainable regional food systems are becoming increasingly understood and valued. Diverse efforts are underway to preserve important regional agricultural lands, and to increase urban and urban-edge agricultural production capacity, so that regional agriculture can supply a higher portion of regional food needs (Wooten and Parente, 2009; Thompson, Harper and Kraus, 2008). In addition, the open space and conservation values provided by the San Francisco East Bay farm and rangelands are becoming increasingly recognized, and incorporated into regional conservation planning frameworks (Bay Area Open Space Council, et al., 2009). As Bay Area communities begin to implement their Sustainable Communities plans over the next few years (as required by CA Senate Bill 375), agriculture will have an important role to play in containing sprawl, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing regional sustainability (Alameda County, 2010). To ensure the continuation of agriculture in the Bay Area region, beginning farmers and ranchers need to know both the economic and production fundamentals of agriculture. Yet, many of these new farmers are inexperienced in best management practices and marketing, and are unaware of the technical assistance available. Through a strategic and targeted outreach, education, and mentoring program, we will serve 65 beginning farmers and ranchers in need of support in this highly diverse and populous region.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

Our project, Cultivating a New Generation of Farmers and Ranchers at the Urban-Rural Edge, aims to support the long-term sustainability of local food production at the San Francisco Bay Area urban-rural edge, by delivering training and mentorship opportunities to beginning farmers and ranchers in Alameda, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara Counties. Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE) and the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCD) will lead a collaborative effort to deliver an integrated education, outreach and mentorship program that equips beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers with the information, tools, and resources needed to establish and sustain 65 operations at the urban-rural edge. Objective number 1 Deliver 18 workshops to at least 65 beginning farmers and ranchers (BFRs) on environmental and economic sustainability topics. Objective number 2 Provide individual follow-up consultation to at least 25 workshop participants, to help them apply workshop principles to their operations. Objective number 3 Develop a robust regional network of BFRs, mentors, and technical advisors to serve as a platform for ongoing resource sharing, producer-to-producer education, and marketing collaboration.

What was accomplished under these goals?**Objective 1****1.a: Deliver 18 workshops**

Organized a total of 18 workshops which were hosted at a variety of field and classroom-based venues throughout the three-county grant area.

1.b/c: 65 BFRs attend at least 1 workshop and receive take-home materials, including referrals to additional resources

By the close of year 3, the ACRC and SAGE collectively engaged a total of 172 unique BFRs from throughout the grant area in the workshops listed above.

Materials from workshops and field days were made available at all educational venues (see 'other products').

234 unique BFRs attended a workshop, field day, farm tour or other training, with 105 attending 2 or more training sessions.

1.d: 50 BFRs adopt new resource conservation practices

71 BFRs participated in conservation planning and/or implementation of on-farm conservation practices. This includes BFRs enrolled in Farm Bill Conservation Program across all three counties in light of the collaborative Conservation Planning requisite to program enrollment.

75% of BRS who attended the workshop on Farm Bill programs demonstrated enhanced understanding of conservation practices or opportunities associated with particular production approaches or as offered by the NRCS/RCD.

1.e: 30 BFRs adopt new marketing tools or approaches

18 out of 18 Sunol AgPark farmers (representing 10 farming operations) adopted collaborative marketing tools by way of shared branding products such as produce stickers or fliers or by participating in or featuring products at AgPark community events or dinners.

After attending the marketing 101 workshop, 100% of respondents demonstrated improved understanding of key elements of a marketing strategy while 86% indicated the acquisition of new information necessary to develop an improved marketing plan related to online, wholesale and restaurant markets. 75% demonstrated an enhanced understanding for what distribution channels to pursue overall.

55 unique BFRs were trained on marketing approaches through 4 different marketing related workshops: Collaborative marketing, Business planning, Marketing 101 and Agri-Tourism.

30 BFRs adopted new marketing practices should, as indicated in end of year surveys and through the collaborative marketing tools that AgPark farmers adopted.

1.f: 15 BFRs apply for Farm Bill conservation programs in 2012 and 2013

Through direct collaboration with NRCS offices in the three county grant area, 49 BFR farmers and ranchers were enrolled in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) during program years 2012-2014, including more than 55 individual operations.

Objective 2**2.a: 25 BFRs receive individual consultations**

TA was requested by a total of 81 BFRs over the grant period on topics ranging from conservation planning to marketing, land access, specific production considerations, drought, irrigation, pest management and more. TA was delivered to 55 BFRs by a range of entities including program directors and in-house staff, subcontractors with expertise in BFR support, UC Cooperative Extension, NRCS and other partners. Technical assistance ranged from ongoing consultation about complex issues to simple inquiries, referrals or compilation of information to be shared with a BFR.

TA was also provided to partners and established producers on topics related to support of beginning farmers. Specifically, SAGE provided TA to a mentor producer as well as a partner from UCCE on the topic of establishing AgParks for beginning farmers within the grant area.

2.b: 15 BFRs adopt new business planning tools

23 BFRs received individual consultation for business planning while more than 38 were equipped with new skills through a business planning workshop.

17 BFRs were trained on starting farm budgets, realistic growth curves, assessing markets, basic financial record keeping, farm to market tools, and loan financing options through the production 101 workshop. 11 BFRs reported significantly better understanding of small-scale farm finances.

2.c: 10 family farms and ranches begin or improve succession plans

More than 12 families adopted, improved or increased their capacity for succession planning through participation in a two-session workshop and clinic hosted by the ACRC with support from California FarmLink. Many resource providers were also trained in how to incorporate succession-related considerations into their work with landowners.

2.d: 15 BFRs adopt or improve legal/tax practices

In light of demand for training on other topics, a workshop on income taxes for BFRs was not held. However, discussion of legal and tax considerations associated with farming and ranching was included in a number of workshops including the following: Succession Planning Workshop, Production 101, Agri-Tourism and Small Business Planning for Financial Sustainability.

Objective 3**3.a: Recruit 12 experienced mentors to participate in program**

17 experienced farmer or rancher mentors were recruited during the grant period and provided either formal or informal support, feedback or technical assistance to a beginning farmer or rancher.

6 of these mentors hosted farm tours or field days at their production sites.

3.b: Organize 9 field days

12 field days were organized over the course of the grant period by SAGE and the ACRCO. These field days took place in a diversity of locations featuring a wide-range of production systems and training objectives.

3.c: 35 BFRs attend mentoring events

44 BFRs attended mentoring events, primarily in the form of field days/farm tours lead by a mentor farmer. 27 BFRs attended events where a panel of mentors shared their experience.

3.d: Develop and manage a regional list for 65 BFRs

80 BFRs have signed up for a Google group designed and facilitated as a forum for information sharing. This listserv also includes experienced and mentor farmers and ranchers, as well as technical experts across the Bay Area.

3.e: Organize 3 meetings for BFRs to explore collaborative marketing opportunities.

The following meetings and forums related to collaborative marketing for BFRs were conducted during the grant period:

Meetings with growers to discuss Coyote Valley branding resulted in interest from several growers that will help the Discover Coyote Valley initiative build and support both established growers and BFRs in the future.

Several calls and one in-person meeting were held to discuss the potential for developing a Bay Area Farm Trail. These preliminary meetings were attended by a diversity of stakeholders and intended to inform a broader feasibility assessment in which BFR's will be directly consulted.

Facilitated meeting of East and South Bay olive producers as an add-on to a workshop to discuss historical collaborations between producers and current needs related to a Livermore Valley cooperative.

Polled participants of Marketing 101 workshop regarding potential interest in a Bay Area Buy Fresh Buy Local Campaign.

Hosted and facilitated several meetings for Sunol AgPark Farmers to design and disseminate collaborative marketing tools such as labels, signage, brochures and more.

BFR participants were given the opportunity to market their products collectively by way of a series of events, dinners, and gatherings including the following:

- 2013 ACRCO Annual Meeting and Producer Showcase
- 2012 and 2013 Outstanding in the Field Dinners at the Sunol AgPark
- Sunol Harvest Festival featuring AgPark and other local producers
- 2013 Slow Money Farm Festival at the AgPark
- 2014 Spring Plant Sale and public farm tours at the AgPark
- 2014 BFR Summer Celebration and Producer Showcase

Other Accomplishments

SAGE developed an additional information-sharing tool, which we will be of value to BFRs, mentors, technical advisors and partner organizations that provide support to BFRs.

Sunol Agricultural Park Case Study: A model for collaborative beginning farming integrated with public education and natural resources stewardship.

www.sagecenter.org/resources/publications

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

Over the course of the three year grant period, Project Directors and support staff enjoyed numerous formal and informal opportunities for professional development and skill enhancement. Specifically, these opportunities have included:

- Co-convening an informal working group of numerous BFR-serving organizations across CA, including two-in person meetings at Eco-Farm to share experiences, lessons learned and best practices. This group has pursued funding to continue collaborating more formally in the future and providing concrete training and evaluation opportunities for the ACRCO and other participating organizations.
- Expanding scope of work within the ACRCO to engage in more food systems support activities as a means of better supporting the diverse needs of BFRs across all production considerations. This has also enabled staff to better understand unfilled market niches within East and South Bay that might be filled by up and coming farmers and ranchers.
- Participating in the Oakland Food Policy Council as mechanism for sharing the needs of BFRs throughout the Bay Area food system and bridging urban-rural divide.
- Significantly growing the network of collaborators and partners with which the ACRCO and SAGE work, including UCCE and other technical support orgs, marketing avenues, land trusts and more. This has dramatically increased the capacity of our programs to meet different farmer/rancher needs while also providing an opportunity to disseminate information about the unique needs and challenges faced by BFRs as well as the opportunities to engage with and support them.

- Attending numerous partner-hosted workshops and trainings on topics that will directly support our program deliverable and capacity to provide technical assistance. These have included Conservation Planning training, grazing management field days, IPM training, food safety workshops, ecosystem service discussions and more.
- Hosting of a workshop on Agri-tourism including significant resources and presentations of value not only to attendees but to program directors as well.
- Helping inform the completion of the Sustaining Agriculture and Conservation Study for the Coyote Valley, and the implementation of a follow-up project - Revitalizing Specialty Crop Agriculture in the Valley of the Heart's Delight. These projects have as a major focus, creating opportunities for land access, and technical, financial and marketing assistance for BFRs. Our work on these projects have also provided significant opportunities for SAGE to deepen its partnerships with public agencies, farmer support groups, local marketing initiatives, land trusts, farmland preservation organizations and natural resources stewardship entities.
- Expanded the capacity of ACRC and partner staff to address questions and considerations of farm and ranch succession planning in conservation and other work with landowners.

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

Program results include a greatly enhanced understanding of the demographics and needs of beginning farmers within the grant area, as well opportunities for supporting and enhancing their success. Similarly, program directors have learned a lot about effective training approaches as well as other resources to draw on and refer BFRs to as a complement to our programming. Fortunately, we have had ample opportunity to share these reflections with stakeholders ranging from BFRs themselves, to educators, resource providers and agencies, to regional planners and others with influence in the local food system. These opportunities have included the following:

- Ongoing collaboration with UC Cooperative Extension Advisors regarding needs, training topics of interest, and technical assistance requests from participating BFRs
- Routine communication, check-ins and planning with the Berkeley Food Institute and NCAT-ATTR, also BFR grant recipients working in our grant area
- Participation in, and leadership of, numerous regional planning forums including the Bay Area Agricultural Conservationists, Bay Area Farm Trails steering committee, and San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR) Food Systems and Urban Agriculture Policy Board. Participation in Oakland Food Policy Council monthly meetings, covering topics of particular interest to urban beginning farmers
- Use of the Bay Area Google Group, as well as the ACRC, SAGE and partner listservs and email lists
- Frequent communication and collaboration with local conservation agencies including NRCS and RCD staff within the grant area
- Speaking opportunities at local universities
- Participation in food system forums, tours and workshops organized by partner organizations
- Direct consultation with partner organizations serving similar demographics in overlapping regions, including the Farmer Education Network and other BFRDP grant recipients in the Bay Area and Northern CA
- Ongoing consultation and communication with beginning farmers throughout the grant area including regular meetings (~ 6 per year) of Sunol AgPark farmers and stakeholders within the Coyote Valley planning area
- Outreach to experienced farmers interested in helping to start and being mentors for an incubator farm in Contra Costa County
- Direct outreach and response to regular BFR inquiries about opportunities for land access.

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

{Nothing to report}

Participants

{Nothing to report}

Target Audience

During the three-year grant period, Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE) and the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRC) reached a wide-diversity of agricultural producers across the three-county grant area and the Bay Area as a whole. With our combination of workshops and field days, as well as technical assistance, network building activities, support of collaborative marketing and mentorship we engaged 267 beginning farmers and ranchers. These participants range from urban farmers to cattle, hog and poultry producers to olive, orchard and mixed vegetable producers. Within the beginning farmer designation, participants demonstrated a wide-range of experience and ability; some having participated in structured training programs and others having little or no formal training. The demographics of our participant also varied widely, in keeping with our diverse Bay Area community. Participants included refugees, 5th generation ranchers,

retirees and back-to-the landers. The scale of our participant farms and ranches ranged significantly from <1 acre farm plots to >500 acres of grazing land. However, in general, the majority of producers we served are operating at a somewhat smaller scale and with a greater focus on direct markets than the majority of established California farmers.

Additionally, as our workshops and field days were open to the general public, numerous BFR participants from outside the immediate grant area also attended, augmenting the knowledge sharing and diversity of our trainings.

Below is more detailed data about the demographics of workshops participants as derived from workshop evaluations:

- 28/82 are farmers
- 29/82 are ranchers
- 29/82 identify as small-scale
- 11/48 are socially disadvantaged as determined by race or non white
- 42/82 are women
- 28/90 are 25-40 year old; 35/90 are 41-60 years old; 27/90 are 60+ years old – none are less than 25.

Products

{Nothing to report}

Other Products

Product Type

Other

Description

Workshops: Hosted a total of 18 workshops over the three year grant period:

- 1) Collaborative Marketing
- 2) Small Business Planning for Financial Sustainability
- 3) Rural Roads: Cost-Effective Methods for Ranch and Farm Roads
- 4) Grazing on Public Land: Making Rangeland Stewardship Work for Ranchers, Agencies and the Land
- 5) Introduction to Conservation Planning and Farm Bill Opportunities
- 6) Grazing for Specialty Markets: An Introduction to Grass-fed Beef Production in the East Bay
- 7) Farm Hedgerows
- 8) Grazing for Wildlife
- 9) Organic Weed Management in Vineyards and Orchards
- 10) Olive Oil Production Basics: Introduction to Irrigation Management
- 11) Farm and Ranch Succession Planning: Preserving Agricultural Lands for the Next Generations
- 12) After the Grass: A Round-table Discussion about Livestock Slaughter and Processing in the East and South Bay
- 13) Marketing 101: Developing a Marketing Plan for Veggies, Fruits and Other Specialty Crops
- 14) Soils and Soil Fertility Management
- 15) Weed Management
- 16) Irrigation Management
- 17) Production 101 for Beginning Farmers
- 18) Agri-Tourism

Product Type

Other

Description

Field Days: Convened 12 field days over the three year grant period:

- 1) Soil testing and weed management with small ruminants
- 2) Olive Oil Tasting and Pruning – Hillcrest Ranch
- 3) Hedgerow for Habitat
- 4) Irrigation Management for Small-Scale Fruit and Veggies – Hayward Community Garden
- 5) Sunol Ag Park Harvest Festival
- 6) Sunol AgPark Open House farm tours and plant sale
- 7) Olive Orchard Management and Milling – Yolo Press
- 8) Orchard Management and Composting – Frog Hollow Farm
- 9) Diversified production and marketing – Riverdog Farm
- 10) Small-scale production and pastured poultry – Free Spirit Farm

- 11) J.E. Perry Farm Tour
- 12) Pastured pork production – Magruder Ranch

Product Type

Audio or Video

Description

The ACRCRD created 8 videos over the grant period responding to requests from participants for recordings of workshops and field days. Footage was edited, enhanced and disseminated to BFR participants. Video is housed at www.acrcrd.org/Workshops.aspx. A concluding slideshow was produced with images from all our engagement activities and can be found at www.acrcrd.org/NewFarmersRanchers.aspx.

Product Type

Databases

Description

Designed and regularly updated a master list of all BFR-related contacts, key communications, TA requested and provided, workshop/field day attendance and other grant deliverables in both a Google doc and Sales Force CRM. This database also includes evaluation feedback as well as notes. As a result, each interaction with a BFR is tracked in their personal contact record, allowing us to understand that individual's history as well as the cumulative and collective impact of our programs.

Product Type

Evaluation Instruments

Description

Developed numerous evaluation instruments including one for each workshop as well as two annual evaluations conducted by phone and electronically and several field day evaluations. All data was compiled, analyzed and utilized to inform educational programming decisions.

Product Type

Other

Description

Network Building/BFR Events: Hosted numerous network-building events during the grant period to facilitate connections between new and experienced producers, buyers, resource organizations and consumers. These included: (1) 2013 ARCRD Annual meeting, workshop series and local producer showcase; (2) Grassfed Beef meeting featuring local grassfed beef producers; (3) Two Outstanding in the Field dinners featuring BFR producers; (4) Slow Money pot-luck dinner and event for local BFR producers to present to potential funders; (5) Four meetings of the Coyote Valley Ag Enterprise & Conservation Program (COVAEC) advisory committee; and (6) Bay Area BFR Summer Celebration and Networking event featuring chefs, buyers, BFRs and mentors as well as resource organizations. While some networking events were hosted specifically with the goal of building connections, other events, as extensions of workshops or field days, helped address the considerable demand for networking opportunities.

Product Type

Other

Description

Collaborative Marketing: In collaboration with and support of Sunol AgPark farmers, SAGE designed, produced and distributed a range of outreach materials supporting collaborative marketing, including: (1) a flyer and brochure with descriptions and photos of each farm (4000 distributed); (2) stickers that identify the AgPark and can be placed easily on all produce boxes (2000 distributed); (3) individualized signs for each farm at the AgPark; and (4) large directional street signs outside the AgPark. Additionally, SAGE in collaboration with the ACRCRD and other partners hosted a Harvest Festival which attracted more than 1000 attendees and which featured farm tours and marketing opportunities for AgPark Farmers. SAGE also hosted a springtime plant sale at the AgPark where farmers held farm tours and sold plant starts and other products while directly engaging with 200 local residents. Additional collaborative marketing support includes the initiation of a feasibility assessment for the establishment of a Bay Area Farm Trail which would provide unified marketing opportunities for local farmers and ranchers; as well as extensive work with the Coyote Valley Ag Enterprise &

Conservation Program (COVAEC) advisory committee to develop a brand and identify around the Coyote Valley agricultural community and potential farming opportunities therein. The CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant: Revitalizing Specialty Crop Agriculture in the Coyote Valley, sets a goal of 30% increase in agri-tourism visitors and 20% increase in sales of specialty crops to local markets, of which much work towards these goals involve targeted, collaborative opportunities for beginning farmers and beginning specialty crop operations.

Product Type

Other

Description

Facilitation of listservs: (1) Updated and managed internals (ACRCD/SAGE) email distribution lists including routine communication about educational offerings, events, and technical assistance opportunities; (2) Continued facilitation of Bay Area Beginning Farmer Google group with 91 members across a diversity of scales and production systems; and (3) Development of issue specific email lists managed by the ACRCD on topics such as livestock processing and slaughter, East Bay olive production, farm finance, and land acquisition.

Product Type

Other

Description

Development and trial of mentorship program: Developed and launched a formal mentorship program with application available at an online mentorship portal and at all workshops and field days. Ultimately, participation in the program was limited despite ongoing interest from BFRs in receiving guidance from more established producers. Such mentor-mentee engagement was facilitated through organization of 5 farm tours/field days hosted by experienced producers throughout the grant area. Each farm tour provided significant opportunities for dialog and questions from an intimate group of BFR attendees.

Product Type

Other

Description

Website: Each partner has and maintains a website which references its collaborative BFR program area. Both include information about upcoming workshops, field days and other events of interest as well as a compiled list of previous workshops with all materials and in some cases, videos, hyperlinked. Website also includes a list of other resource providers locally and nationally, as well as an opportunity to sign up for the listserv and workshops.

Product Type

Other

Description

Binders: All workshop materials are compiled within a binder with extra copies of presentations, worksheets, factsheets, and more, which can be shared at workshops and field days.

Product Type

Other

Description

Media coverage: SAGE and the ACRCD's BFR Program benefited from a diversity of media coverage during the grant period. Articles referring to its educational programs, technical assistance, networking events and/or mentorship programs appeared in the following publications: Livermore Magazine, The Independent, Edible East Bay, East Bay Express, Gilroy Dispatch, KPIX 5 News, The Huffington Post, San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco Gate, San Francisco Magazine and CUESA (Center for Urban Education Sustainable Agriculture). Such media coverage typically enhanced inquiries about or participation within the program.

Product Type

Other

Description

Event flyers: More than 30 colorful event flyers were developed in both electronic and paper format – one for each workshop and field day which were disseminated through print and electronic media, listservs, as well as

by posting on event boards and distributing paper copies to partner organizations.

Changes/Problems

In general, there were no major changes to the approach or deliverables pursued during the grant period. However, feedback from BFRs, both informal and formal, as well as from partners and other educators resulted in the following noteworthy adaptations:

As noted previously, despite our initial efforts to develop a more formal mentorship program with an application, program guidelines and matching service, it appears that program participants and potential mentors prefer a more informal kind of network. As such, though we still have the more formal mentorship program available for those who prefer it, we have moved to a referral-based model. In this adapted model, inquiries from BFRs are viewed both through the lens of what TA can be provided as well as which experienced producers within the community might be suited to that provide guidance. In a number of instances, individuals with 5-10 years of experience end up being particularly interested in providing that mentorship, given their still-fresh memory of the challenging early years. Additionally and perhaps most effective even than one-on-one referrals, has been the facilitation of a series of field days hosted by mentor farmers and ranchers. In this manner, a group of 10-20 BFRs has the opportunity to hear directly from a mentor about all aspects of the farm operation with ample opportunity for Q&A. In most cases, the mentor host has willingly offered to consult with attendees after the visit. Program Directors have worked hard to address the demand of participating BFRs for an enhanced sense of community within the grant area. In particular, we have approached this through an effort to build and support networks, as described in our proposal. One approach, that of building and maintaining a Google group of Bay Area Beginning Farmers and Ranchers has not taken on a life of its own as we had hoped. While it has steadily gained members and an increasing number of subscriber posts, it appears that other online forums, hosted by organizations with a focus on promoting online networking are better suited to this task. We have happily participated in these forums and referred our BFRs to join them, finding they complement our Google group, which focuses more specifically on training and events within the immediate Bay Area. Beyond online networking, PDs have discovered that providing time for informal discussion and networking is a key demand from BFRs and an important dual function provided by workshops, field days and other events. In particular, we have found that bringing together established producers, BFRs, and buyers/vendors or other consumer side entities has greatly enhanced the sense of cohesion and vitality within the program. As such we have made it a priority to include these opportunities in each training as well as to host additional events which focus on promoting networking, though this was not a clear objective in our proposal.

Another network that the project has worked to develop is that of organizations working to support BFRs in the region. The need for this kind of collaboration was unanticipated at the time of our application and as such, has been an addition to our networking deliverables. This work has included a series of conference calls and two in-person meetings to share best practices, identify opportunities for collaboration, and potential training redundancies or gaps. Beneficial though these meetings have been, most participants have indicated a concern about insufficient funding or time to fully realize their potential. As such, key members of this group, including the ACRC and SAGE, have worked to develop a funding proposal to support more concrete and ongoing collaboration and training for participating organizations.

Another challenge faced in implementing our program goals has been reaching BFRs from all regions of the three-county grant area equally. The nature of production in this area is quite fragmented, often in light of geography, urban development and natural resource availability. As a result, a workshop in Contra Costa's Pleasant Hill is unlikely to draw farmers from the southern reaches of Santa Clara County. Because Alameda County has little irrigated annual production, BFRs from Alameda are unlikely to attend a field day on irrigation management in Gilroy. For this reason, we have decided to focus on a handful of geographies and producer groups where we feel we can have the greatest impact. This includes beginning ranchers from all counties, who have generally similar needs and interests, diversified row and orchard crop producers from the Sunol Ag Park and Brentwood regions, urban and peri-urban producers in the East Bay and diversified producers from the Coyote Valley area of Santa Clara County. Irrespective of this targeting, all workshops are nevertheless advertised and open to all participants within the grant area and the region in general.

Though we far exceeded our grant deliverables in terms of TA provided, a clear need for consistent, deep TA particularly for small-scale BFRs remains to be met. In many cases, such needs fall outside the expertise of program staff, therefore implying an increased need for support from small business advisors as well as from already-stretched-thin UC Farm and Livestock Advisors. While this realization did not result in a change in approach for this grant, PDs recognize that the provision of TA in the future needs to be well-thought out and well-funded.