



# North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District

(formerly the Guadalupe-Coyote RCD)  
*An independent special district of the State of California*

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August 13, 2024

James A Booth, District Conservationist  
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service  
2337 Technology Parkway, Suite C  
Hollister, CA 95023

Dear Mr. Booth:

Per our meeting this afternoon, and my earlier informal request via email dated August 2, 2024, I am hereby requesting a no-cost extension through December 31, 2024, for our USDA cooperative agreement NR239104XXXXC014.

Because we lost our multilingual grant-funded employee in July due to an unexpected visa issue related to his academic work program, we were unable to complete the agreement objectives prior to the end of the original term, scheduled to expire on August 31, 2024. We are anticipating that we will be able to reinstate him prior to the end of calendar year 2024, and are therefore asking for this no-cost extension to accommodate the new employment schedule.

The current status of our deliverables per the agreement is as follows:

#	Objective	Percentage Completed	Explanation
1.	Complete agricultural producer engagement plan.	100%	The community engagement plan has been completed and approved (Attachment 1), and has guided successful project implementation throughout the Hollister Service Center.
2.	Hire a 30-hour per week multilingual conservation program coordinator to provide public education, outreach, and technical assistance services within the project area.	100%	The new employee hired for this program speaks English, Chinese and Mandarin, and has successfully engaged with our Asian grower community. He also has attended meetings or workshops hosted by other agencies and organizations within the region to assist with additional translation services.
3.	Complete multilingual outreach materials.	90%	For the 2024 NRCS-RCD Local Work Group (LWG) meeting, we provided presentations and surveys in English and Chinese, and added a multilingual page for meeting materials to the RCD's website. See: <a href="https://www.rcdsantaclara.org/2024-nrcs-rcd-local-work-group-meeting">https://www.rcdsantaclara.org/2024-nrcs-rcd-local-work-group-meeting</a>

#	Objective	Percentage Completed	Explanation
			<p>We also created a multilingual page on our website in Chinese, with instructions in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish to access the online Farmers.gov translation tool. See: <a href="https://www.rcdsantaclara.org/multilingual-resources-recursos-multilingues-tai-nguyen-da-ngon-ng">https://www.rcdsantaclara.org/multilingual-resources-recursos-multilingues-tai-nguyen-da-ngon-ng</a></p> <p>We plan to produce additional multilingual materials for the workshop we have tentatively scheduled for October 2024.</p>
4.	Host an educational workshop for up to thirty (30) participants in a language other than English.	50 %	<p>We originally planned to offer a soil health workshop in February 2024, but instead chose to host the LWG in Chinese that month. We rescheduled the workshop for July 2024, but when we found out our employee would unexpectedly have to leave employment, we had to cancel the workshop. We have tentatively rescheduled the <i>Asian Grower Soil Health Education and Networking Event</i> October 2024, pending his return to employment.</p> <p>We have drafted the workshop announcement (Attachment 2), narrowed the topics (introduction to cover crops; generating on-farm compost; transitioning to organic); lined up potential speakers, and are currently preparing the curriculum in English, to enable translation when our employee is reinstated.</p>
5.	Provide technical assistance to help identify and address resource concerns for up to twelve (12) agricultural producers.	50%	We have provided technical assistance to at least six (6) historically underserved agricultural producers via phone calls, meetings, and/or site visits. We anticipate meeting or exceeding the remaining goal via the connections we will establish during our October workshop.
6.	Provide at least four (4) hours per week of direct technical assistance to NRCS staff in the implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), on eligible lands within the approved project area.	100%	Our bilingual employee has promoted Farm Bill conservation programs throughout his interactions with producers, and has made himself readily available to NRCS and RCD staff for translation and interpretation services throughout the project area.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration of this request. Please let me know if there is any additional information you need in order to approve our request.

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Moreno*

Stephanie Moreno  
Executive Director  
831-235-1799  
smoreno@gcrcd.org



## **Farm and Ranch Resilience Program**

### **Community Engagement Plan**

#### **Introduction**

California agricultural producers are experiencing increased conservation challenges due to climate change and extreme weather events, including but not limited to drought, floods, catastrophic fires, and high wind events, and are looking to integrate climate smart agricultural practices into their operations to address specific resource concerns. Additionally, farmers and ranchers who are just starting out in agriculture within Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, particularly those from historically underserved populations, can experience financial, technical and/or cultural challenges that inhibit their ability to obtain technical assistance, negotiate leases, integrate into established agricultural networks, and understand and access the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Bill conservation programs such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). To address these conservation challenges, North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (NSCRCD), in coordination with the Loma Prieta (LPRCD) and San Benito (SBRCD) Resource Conservation Districts, is implementing the Farm and Ranch Resilience Program (“Program”), a multilingual technical assistance and education program for agricultural producers served by the USDA Hollister Service Center (“Service Area”).

#### **Program Purpose**

NSCRCD’s mission is “to provide education and technical assistance to constituents and watershed stakeholders to sustainably manage soil, water and wildlife with the best available science”. This Program will support the mission of the NSCRCD, and its planned activities will help it meet the following goals set forth in its 2019-2024 Long-Range Plan:

- Preserve agricultural lands by providing producers and land managers with access to best management practices and technical assistance so they may maintain economically viable enterprises while preserving soil health, enhancing crop diversity, and protecting natural resources.
- Promote biodiversity through the conservation and protection of natural habitats and ecosystems that provide a variety of ecosystem services, such as protection of water resources, maintenance of soil health, appropriate nutrient storage, contributions to climate stability, and improved resiliency after natural disasters.
- Contribute to improvements in water quality available for the benefit of agricultural production, wildlife, and aquatic habitat within District watersheds.
- Contribute to regional climate change efforts by raising public awareness of the need for individual action, while recognizing and addressing the differences in capacity of individual communities and populations to respond to requests for action.

- Ensure the public is aware of the role watersheds play in maintaining a healthy and resilient community, and the personal importance of preserving agricultural lands and healthy ecosystems.

Additionally, the Program will support USDA efforts to meet the following strategic goals set forth in the USDA Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026:

- Combat climate change to support America’s working lands, natural resources and communities.
- Ensure America’s agricultural system is equitable, resilient, and prosperous.
- Foster an equitable and competitive marketplace for all agricultural producers.

### **Program Objectives**

The Program’s three main objectives are to:

- Provide technical assistance to agricultural producers experiencing conservation issues as a result of climate change and extreme weather events in order to assist them in incorporating climate intelligent conservation measures into their businesses.
- Conduct culturally appropriate regional outreach in at least two languages other than English to historically underserved agricultural producers.
- Provide direct technical assistance to USDA staff in the implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs on eligible lands within the approved project area.

### **Partners**

The following organizations are financially contributing and/or otherwise collaborating in the development and implementation of this Program:

- USDA-NRCS provided necessary funding for the Program to launch through a \$75,000 Historically Underserved Outreach and Technical Assistance cooperative agreement. They are also providing assistance by participating in Program development and outreach activities; conducting producer site visits; and participating in and presenting at meetings and workshops.
- USDA-Farm Service Agency is providing assistance by providing Chinese translation services, and participating in and/or presenting at producer meetings and workshops.
- LPRCD and SBRCDC are providing assistance by assisting with Program development, co-hosting, participating in and/or presenting at producer meetings, workshops and site visits, and cooperating in the sharing of resources and information.
- The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD), through a USDA-Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) grant, is providing translation services, grower coordination and outreach opportunities, and hosting, participating in and/or presenting at producer meetings and workshops.
- University of California Cooperative Extension for Santa Clara County (UCCE) is providing assistance with agricultural producer coordination and workshop facilitation.
- The County of Santa Clara is providing venues and coordination for objectives related to the County’s Food Systems Workplan.

### **Target Populations for Engagement**

- **Agricultural Producers:** farmers and ranchers operating within the Service Area.
- **Historically Underserved:** those who may be interested and/or involved in commercial or community agricultural activities, including beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers, but who have not traditionally had equitable access to USDA programs and services due to various barriers, such as having a primary language other than English.
- **Stakeholder Organizations:** trade associations, community-based organizations, or public agencies who may be engaged with historically underserved populations and may be able to provide opportunities for engagement for their clients involved or interested in agricultural production.

### **Engagement Principles**

NSCRCD will conduct its community outreach and engagement activities in compliance with USDA’s Nondiscrimination Statement.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, NSCRCD is committed to 1) dissolving existing environmental justice barriers; 2) rectifying previous imbalances to marginalized communities; and 3) increasing transparency in how the program supports environmental justice in its decision-making and actions. In furtherance of this commitment, NSCRCD commits to the following when engaging the community and implementing the Program:

- Ensuring the Program does not negatively impact low-income and communities of color.
- Promoting Program activities that avoid, minimize or mitigate climate change impacts on vulnerable populations.
- Including sustainable strategies to protect the natural resources from degradation and the community from potential health hazards.
- Ensuring diversity and environmental justice are key components of the Program’s strategic planning and programmatic work.

### **Engagement Opportunities**

- **Phone Outreach:**
  - Call producers individually to provide personalized support and information about the Program.
  - Make follow-up calls to producers who have participated in workshops or training sessions to answer any additional questions, provide further resources, and offer encouragement in implementing sustainable practices.
- **Electronic Outreach:**
  - Launch a regular multilingual email newsletter containing updates about upcoming events, success stories, tips from experts, and links to relevant articles. Encourage farmers to subscribe during outreach events and workshops.
  - Organize webinars and online workshops covering various topics such as soil health, water conservation, livestock management, and financial planning. Promote these events through social media, community forums, and agricultural websites. Record the sessions for those who cannot attend live.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>

- Provide links on the NSCRCD website for producers for easier access to resources, tutorial videos, and expert advice.
- Develop multilingual content to encourage more engagement on NSCRCD social media channels.
- Send program information to Stakeholder Organizations engaged with the target populations.
- In-Person Outreach:
  - Participate in pre-arranged site visits with producers to foster community engagement, provide hands-on learning experiences, and connect producers with experts and local resources.
  - Provide multilingual paper copies of conservation practices from our online resources and webinars.
  - Offer opportunities for soil and water testing.
  - Provide a Chinese language session at the 2024 NRCS-RCD Local Work Group meeting.
  - Make presentations to local Stakeholder Organizations regarding NSCRCD, the Program and other current projects and environmental education opportunities.

### **Planned Activities**

- Produce an outreach list and location map of Agricultural Producers operating within the Service Area to identify key areas and opportunities for community outreach and engagement. Map would be considered a confidential client document and used as an in-house reference only.
- Develop and implement multilingual (English, Chinese, and Spanish) Agricultural Producer outreach, public education, and technical assistance to facilitate engagement with Historically Underserved Producers interested in implementing climate intelligent conservation practices and Farm Bill conservation programs designed to improve productivity and reduce environmental impact.
- Encourage Agricultural Producers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices, such as soil conservation, erosion management, carbon farm planning, and wildlife protection, to improve productivity and reduce environmental impact.
- Produce an outreach list of Stakeholder Organizations working with Historically Underserved Producers.
- Contact Stakeholder Organizations to increase awareness of the Program, develop collaboration opportunities with the RCDs, and facilitate enrollment of their clients and members in NRCS and RCD programs.
- Identify and work to address critical gaps in USDA and RCD program access by Historically Underserved Producers.
- Host and/or attend meetings with collaboration partners to coordinate overlapping activities and leverage available resources to implement the Program and help meet mutual goals and strategies.

### **Outreach Products**

- Multilingual meeting and workshop announcements in languages primarily spoken by the target audiences (e.g., English, Chinese, Spanish).

- Multilingual flyers with graphics to hand out at workshops and onsite visits in languages primarily spoken by the target audiences (e.g., English, Chinese, Spanish). Possible topics include RCD projects, NRCS programs, notices of technical assistance and educational workshop opportunities, soil health, cover crops, erosion control, and wildlife protection.
- Website materials in a downloadable format for those who cannot attend meetings and workshops in person.
- Translation link added to the NSCRCD website to allow for automated translation of website information.

**Community Engagement Evaluation**

At Program completion, NSCRCD will evaluate whether the community engagement plan produced the desired level of outreach and engagement, and make recommendations for future outreach efforts. Metrics and information will be collected voluntarily and with permission of the Program participants.

Metrics and information to be collected include, but are not limited to:

- Number of participants attending meetings and workshops.
- Number of participants requesting follow up from NRCS and/or NSCRCD.
- How participants are connected to agriculture (farmer, rancher, public agency, CBO, community garden, trade association, etc.)
- Demographics (race, ethnicity, gender, primary language spoken, etc.)
- Geographical diversity.
- Type of agricultural commodity produced.
- Satisfaction level from survey and general group chat feedback.
- Numbers of post reviews and people engaging on social media.
- Participant case studies highlighting successes, challenges and perceived barriers.

**Engagement Task Timeline**

Activity	Target Completion Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin development of Agricultural Producer engagement list and start building relationships with existing communities, focusing on the historically underserved.</li> <li>• Begin development of multilingual outreach materials.</li> <li>• Begin outreach activities and individual consultations.</li> </ul>	December 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate outreach to Stakeholder Organizations and research opportunities in-person outreach opportunities.</li> <li>• Develop community engagement plan.</li> </ul>	January 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate a Chinese speaking session into the 2024 RCD Local Work Group meeting.</li> </ul>	February 2024



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete development of multilingual outreach materials.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with Partners to develop and implement an educational workshop series for up to thirty (30) participants in a language other than English.</li> <li>• Collect metrics and information.</li> <li>• Finalize meeting summary and next steps for Partners.</li> </ul>	April through July 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue individual consultation with members on an as-requested basis.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance to help identify and address resource concerns for up to twelve (12) agricultural producers.</li> <li>• Provide direct technical assistance to NRCS staff on an as-requested basis in the implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), on eligible lands within the approved project area.</li> </ul>	January through July 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete program evaluation.</li> <li>• Develop and distribute community report.</li> </ul>	August 2024

# 亚洲种植者土壤健康教育与交流活动

房东：North Santa Clara RCD and Loma Prieta RCD

## Asian Grower Soil Health Education and Networking Event



请加入我们，聆听有关土壤健康主题（覆盖作物、农场堆肥和向有机农业过渡）的演讲。当地机构和组织将随时为种植者了解圣克拉拉县农业生产者可用的资源和机会。

*Please join us to hear presentations on soil health topics (cover crops, on-farm composting, and transitioning to organic farming). Local agencies and organizations will be on hand for growers to learn about resources and opportunities available for agricultural producers in Santa Clara County.*

**Date TBD**

**Time TBD**

圣克拉拉县动物服务中心

12425 Monterey Road, 圣马丁, CA

**Date TBD**

**Time TBD**

County of Santa Clara Animal Services

12425 Monterey Road, San Martin, CA

根据美国残疾人法案（ADA），如果您需要帮助参加会议，请致电 408-320-7565，发送电子邮件 [gcrccd@gcrccd.org](mailto:gcrccd@gcrccd.org)，或给我们留言 <https://www.rcdsantaclara.org/contact-us>。

