



News & Notes of the UCSC Farm & Garden

Issue 158, Fall 2018

Center for Agroecology
& Sustainable Food Systems

The Apprenticeship – Bringing it All Home – Johnno Turner

Hello Farm Friends. We're all glad you're here as supporters to help make our program the best that it can be – and currently the UC Santa Cruz Farm, which is managed by the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS), is #6 in agriculture programs in the US according to Best Value Schools (news.ucsc.edu/2018/06/farm-ranking.html).

I've been given the honor of writing to you about the Apprenticeship and sharing some of the terms and techniques we've learned that might be relevant to your own gardening practices. In case you're not familiar with it, the Apprenticeship is the six-month training program in organic farming, gardening, and food systems issues that takes place at the UCSC Farm and the Alan Chadwick Garden each year.

My own Apprenticeship experience has been a pretty wild ride, since I only heard that I was attending on April 11 this year – which was day 3 of the program. I had initially been on the waiting list, and as there was an last-minute opening I was offered the spot; after a sleepless night contemplating my life and my full time job with the benefits of the Apprenticeship, I decided to say YES.

A Bit of Background

I grew up on a flat half acre in Los Gatos, in an old walnut orchard of pebbly fill soil and overplanted Monterey pines. My father was an avid gardener of ornamentals and vegetables. He had a huge love for flowers, and we spent many weekends at nurseries – many of which no longer exist. (One of his favorites was Antonelli's Begonia nursery, and we continued to go there until it burned down).

He grew annual row crops – squash, corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, lettuce, and broccoli. The pines were always an issue – roots everywhere, too much shade, and acidic soils. I remember piles of compost and bags of dolomite being delivered, which we would then load into wheelbarrows and haul to the back yard. We constantly dug the beds in our pebbly, silty soil – though in retrospect I can now see that we dug when the soil moisture content was not ideal.

It was mostly good fun, until it wasn't – such as the day when the wind blew over all 30 mature corn stalks, or when the snails would eat all the transplants overnight. For a while we put out pie tins of beer as snail traps, until the dogs discovered the beer. Then around a decade ago the snails disappeared, and I'm still puzzled as to why, as few other factors changed: similar plant communities, irrigation practices, all without the use of poisons.

Probably the worst thing was my own aversion to most vegetables at the time. I remember multiple times sitting at the dining room table for hours with my mum as I refused to eat the boiled Brussel's sprouts, broccoli, or kale. It was always a battle of wills – with no clear winners.

I did inherit, somewhat, the "green thumb" gene from my family, and I've had vegetable gardens in almost every place I've lived – Santa Fe, Denver, Canberra (Australia), Chico, and Santa Cruz – since the 1980s, when I left home. And it's been a decade-long dream to be an Apprentice, a dream generously supported by the Patagonia Santa Cruz outlet, where I managed Provisions until I became an apprentice. Provisions is Patagonia's food line, which is based on supporting best practice organic agriculture; it inspired me to learn more about best practice organic farming, and sustainable and just food systems.

Learning the Gardening Lingo

One of the many satisfying things about being an Apprentice is learning new lingo. No longer do I go out into my yard to "water." Nah. Now I go out to **irrigate**. It's not such a mystery now, since we've learned how to understand and estimate how many inches of water need to be applied to for the weekly **evapotranspiration rate** (see the Know Your Roots sidebar, next page).

Proper garden bed prep is paramount, and the **French Intensive** method for preparing beds is well suited to many home gardens, as is the addition of the recommended amount of certified organic compost for the bed size.

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The compost provides the slow release of nutrients and inoculants that help to feed the plants and build the soil.

French Intensive is a technique for preparing garden beds in which the soil is initially side forked to establish beds and paths, then “single dug” with a digging fork to loosen the soil to the depth of a single spade blade (and sometimes broken up with fork space below that when “double dug”). Loosening the soil creates air pockets and spaces for roots to extend, and promotes water retention by breaking up larger clumps into smaller soil aggregates.

These aggregates are the key since they hold water, O.M. (organic matter, not Orin Martin), and all the incredible microorganisms that turn the soil into a living essence for plant growth. The friable, fertile conditions can support high density, “intensive” plantings of crops. To see a demonstration of how to prepare a single or double dug bed, check out “Preparing Garden Beds with Double Digging” on the CASFS YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/casfsvideo

Once the soil in the bed is all fluffy and soft, we initiate a **weed flush** by applying **overhead irrigation** (with an oscillating sprinkler or with a rainbird) and let the surface weeds sprout and come up over a period of 10–14 days, then take them out with a **hula hoe** (also called an oscillating hoe) while still in the **thread stage** (when the root looks like a white thread). The bed is then ready for planting.

Larger seeds are **direct seeded** into the soil to a depth not more than double their width. Some of the root crops, e.g., carrots, beets, and radishes are direct seeded at a high density and later thinned out to avoid unseen overcrowding in the soil, which may result in the so-called “ugly vegetable.”

Propagation (“prop” for short) of smaller seeds is done in trays in the greenhouse, where plants get several weeks of intensive care until the first set or two of **true leaves** and a solid **root ball** have developed. Then the plants are put on outdoor tables to **harden off** (adjust to outdoor conditions) in preparation for transplanting.

If you lack the space, equipment, or time to propagate your own starts from seeds, it may be easier and more effective to buy starts at a local nursery or the Farm & Garden’s annual spring plant sale (coming up on April 27-28, 2019). Once everything is in the ground, we do one more overhead irrigation to help establish the roots, then change to a drip irrigation system for water conservation and for precise placement of the water. There’s no need to add water to places where it’s not needed, particularly in locales where water is a precious commodity.

Minimizing Weed and Pest Damage

Since organic gardeners don’t use chemical **herbicides** (weed killers), organic gardening can potentially translate to mean lots of weeding. As mentioned above, one of the best **weed management** strategies is to catch them while they are still small, i.e., at the thread stage, and definitely before they go to seed. A quick run

Know your roots: Although we all irrigate our gardens, the practice can have an air of mystery about it. Insufficient water will stunt or wilt plants, yet too much water can be detrimental to other crops, leach nutrients from the soil, and cause some outstanding bills from Santa Cruz Municipal Utilities.

At the Farm, we’ve gotten all quantitative about irrigation and how much water (and how often) to put down. I now have an excel spreadsheet that does all the numbers, factoring in the rate of delivery for different irrigation systems and the variations of daily evaporation and transpiration (see below) Yet, the determining factors for small-scale irrigation are soil moisture, regional location, and root depth.

Soil moisture can be determined by a simple test – dig a few inches into the bed near the plants, to the depth of the roots, and check the moisture content of the soil by squeezing it to form a ball. If it’s muddy and wet, and the ball holds together easily, then no need for irrigation yet. If it forms a loose ball that barely holds together, then it is probably is time to irrigate. If it’s dry and crumbly, then it’s definitely time to irrigate. Note also that shallow-rooted plants, such as lettuce, will need water more frequently than deep-rooted plants, such as tomatoes.

How much water evaporates daily from the soil and transpires from the plant (the evapotranspiration rate), and therefore how much needs to be replaced via irrigation, varies by region. This number is available for specific regions via the California Irrigation Management Information System (cimis.water.ca.gov/Default.aspx).

A convenient method to circumvent evaporation and transpiration is by adding a thick mulch layer to the beds, which help to stifle weed growth as well.

through the beds with a hula hoe once a week can make a huge difference in the long run.

As the crops develop, keep an eye on plant health. We **fertigate** some of our crops – those that require a nitrogen boost in their growth cycle or those that appear to be stressed by

pathogens or pests, or just behind in their maturation – adding fertility with **fish emulsion** that is either pumped through the irrigation system or applied via a sprayer, while being careful not to add excessive fertility to the soil. Too much nitrogen entering the water is one of the many detrimental impacts of conventional agriculture.

Pest management – both arthropod and



Johnno Turner harvesting beets at the UCSC Farm.

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Fall Calendar

Food Day/Celebration at the Cowell College Coffeeshop

Wednesday, October 24, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm
Cowell College, UCSC

Celebrate National Food Day with the dedication of the newly repurposed Cowell College coffeeshop. The café offers basic needs services to UC Santa Cruz students, including a food pantry stocked with fresh produce from the UCSC Farm & Garden, information on basic needs resources, as well as free coffee, tea, juice, and snacks. On dedication day, enjoy talks by UCSC students about the basic needs efforts taking place on campus, starting at 4:30 pm.



Last Day of 2018 Market Cart

Friday, October 26, 12 pm – 6 pm
Corner of Bay & High Streets, base of the UCSC campus

Don't miss your last chance to shop at the Farm & Garden's Market Cart stand for the 2018 season. Stock up on organically grown winter squash and maybe a pumpkin or two for carving or eating (or both!) along with some delicious fall produce and a fall bouquet.

Grow Great Garlic! Cultivating Organic Garlic in the Home Garden

Saturday, October 27, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
Cowell Ranch Hay Barn

Attention garlic lovers! Join us for a special workshop led by garlic farmer Pete Rasmussen of Sandhill Farms in Eden, Utah. Pete will discuss the ins and outs of selecting, planting, growing, harvesting, and storing organic garlic.

Cost: \$20 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members (pre-registered) or \$30 (at the door); \$30 general admission (pre-registered) or \$40 (at the door); \$15 for UCSC students and limited-income (pre-registered) or \$20 (at the door).

Learn more and sign up at: garlic2018.bpt.me. This workshop takes place rain or shine!

Fall Birding Walk on the UCSC Farm

Sunday, October 28, 9 am – 11 am
Cowell Ranch Hay Barn

Join us for an introductory birding walk at the UCSC Farm with natural history instructor Breck Tyler. This guided walk will feature a leisurely pace with frequent stops to observe, identify, and appreciate the local birds and their interesting behaviors. All levels of birding experience are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.

\$10 general public, \$5 Friends of the Farm & Garden and limited income, free for UCSC students. Meet at the Hay Barn to walk up to the Farm. **Space is limited!** Please pre-register at: birdwalk2018.bpt.me. Heavy rain cancels.

Free Guided Tour of the UCSC Farm

Sunday, November 5, 2 pm – 3:30 pm
Cowell Ranch Hay Barn

Join us for the final monthly guided tour of the 2018 season. Enjoy a fall stroll on the 30-acre organic UCSC Farm and learn about the research, education, and community outreach projects taking place. No registration necessary; meet at the Hay Barn. Heavy rain cancels.

Annual Meeting of the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden

Wednesday, November 14, 6 pm – 8 pm
Soif Wine Bar, 105 Walnut St., Santa Cruz
No-host bar

The Friends of the Farm & Garden Board of Directors is delighted to invite you to come as our guest to savor delicious hors d'oeuvres and the good company of other Friends and supporters.

Hear about Farm & Garden 2018 highlights and plans for the upcoming year. Current Friends' members may vote for the slate of Board Officer nominees. RSVP is required. RSVP to casfs@ucsc.edu by November 9 (please put "Friends RSVP" in the email subject line and include your email address and phone), or call 831.459-3240.

Board Officer nominations: Amy Bolton, President; Robin Somers, Vice President; Delise Weir, Secretary; Dan Dion, Treasurer.

If you'd like more information about these events, need directions, or have questions about access, please call 831.459-3240, email casfs@ucsc.edu, or see our web site, casfs.ucsc.edu.

Co-sponsored by CASFS and the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden.

Fall Harvest Festival at the UCSC Farm – Thank You to Our Supporters!

The Fall Harvest Festival at the UCSC Farm on September 30 drew over 1,200 visitors for a day of lively music, great food, tours, workshops, kids' crafts, hay rides, and of course the ever-popular apple pie contest!

Many thanks to all who attended and to the local businesses that supported the event—Companion Bakeshop, Farmer Freed's Culinary Salts, The Garden Company, San Lorenzo Garden Center

Want to see some scenes from this year's festival? Check out the CASFS YouTube channel, youtube.com/user/casfsvideo/videos

Farm to Fork Raises Funds for Education Programs

A beautiful summer afternoon greeted attendees of the 7th Farm to Fork fundraising event on the UCSC Farm. Founded by CASFS Farm & Garden Apprenticeship graduate Matthew Raiford in 2011, the event raises funds for educational programs at the UCSC Farm & Garden managed by the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS).

This year's sold-out event focused on the theme of "home," and the work that CASFS apprentices, students, staff, and faculty are doing to ensure food security and a sense of home for all UCSC students.

As part of the basic needs efforts taking place through CASFS in partnership with other UCSC programs, a variety of programs served more than 4,100 students in 2017–2018. Food raised on the UCSC Farm supplied free food pantries, low-cost organic produce sales, and dining hall meals. Other efforts included low-CalFresh sign ups, free cooking workshops, and a new basic needs website.

Those efforts will expand this coming year when the Cowell Coffeeshop opens as a "basic needs café," offering students free coffee, tea, and prepared food, and hosting the east campus food pantry, nutrition workshops, and other programs (see more on page 3).

Farm to Fork speakers (l-r): Daniel Press, Marlene Tromp, Rosalinda Gallegos, Tim Galarneau, and David Robles



Apprentices Receive CCOF Foundation Future Organic Farmer Grants

Makshya Tolbert and David Robles, participants in UC Santa Cruz's 2018 Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture training program, have received Future Organic Farmer grants from the California Certified Organic Farmers Foundation. Offered to students in higher education and vocational programs in organic agriculture, the competitive grants provide help with tuition and other educational expenses.

Tolbert is part of the six-month training program in organic farming and gardening at the UCSC Farm & Garden, coordinated by the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS). Robles, a 2017 Apprenticeship graduate, is continuing his training and serving as an assistant instructor in this year's Apprenticeship program as he helps run the UCSC Farm's hand-worked gardens.

Before coming to the Apprenticeship, Makshya Tolbert worked most recently in New York City on projects to prioritize racial equity in the food system.

In describing what drew her to farming, she says, "Organic farming is a trade and lifestyle that naturally lends itself to storytelling. I first found that to be true as an undergrad, studying the intersection of nature poetry and black history and wanting to write poems that expressed the intimacy between the two."

She notes that as she began learning to grow food on campus farms and gardens.



Makshya Tolbert

"I felt empowered to write about my experiences. I was eager to fill the gap of women of color farmers, striving to reassert our multidimensional roles across the environment," says Tolbert. "Farming has taught me to love working with my hands. What began with organic farming at Stanford has evolved into seeing myself as a cook and potter who feels most empowered when my hands are wedging, blending, kneading, and carving." Following graduation, Makshya will be part of the Agroecology Fellows cohort for 2018-19, continuing her learning at the UCSC Farm & Garden, and serving as an assistant instructor for the 2019 Apprenticeship class.

Agriculture has long been a part of Robles's life. "My family history cannot be separated from agriculture. Food systems form the foundation of my culture and because of this I find myself shaping my entire

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New USDA Grant to Support Beginning Farmer Education Programs

With the average age of U.S. farmers approaching 60, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has invested significantly in programs that support beginning farmers and ranchers. Now, the USDA is funding an effort to help those programs evaluate their success.

Led by UC Santa Cruz, the new program is designed to take the dread out of evaluation and help administrators build feedback and reflection into their day-to-day operations.

“We want to make evaluation painless to administer,” said project leader Jan Perez, a research specialist with the UCSC Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS). “Good information can help administrators improve their programs, get better at what they’re doing, and get more funding.”



Jan Perez

“The needs of farmers during their first 10 years in agriculture vary regionally, as do support programs across the country, said Perez. “It’s hard to get into farming in much of California because land costs are so high,” said Perez. “In some areas in the Midwest, it’s not as hard to get started, but it’s hard to stay in farming.”

Support and training programs focus on everything from land acquisition and agricultural skills to marketing strategies and business competencies. Some programs are tailored to the unique needs of certain groups, including female farmers and immigrants who are new to the country.

Assessing effectiveness

With all the resources, time, and effort going into beginning-farmer support, Perez says it only makes sense to help all these programs assess their effectiveness. “This grant is about helping them improve what they do and giving them a place to discuss what’s working—and what isn’t,” she said.

Assessing effectiveness

Perez, who won the competitive three-year, \$600,000 grant, is in a good position to know. UC Santa Cruz is home to the Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture, one of the longest-running, university-based organic beginning-farmer training programs in the country. In 2009, Perez led a follow-up survey of apprenticeship graduates—the first of several evaluations of beginning farmer programs she would conduct. In 2012, with support from UCSC’s first USDA grant for beginning farmers, Perez led a more comprehensive evaluation of the apprenticeship. She designed workshop evaluations and an annual assess-

ment tool that apprentices use to reflect on what they’ve learned, and she developed systems that make it easy for staff to enter and analyze data.

“At first, staff did it because it was required, but it’s really gratifying for me because they found value in it and have kept doing it,” said Perez. Instructors get feedback on their teaching and the content of their lessons, apprentices get a chance to reflect on how much they have learned, and program managers put the input to use by tweaking the curriculum, filling gaps, and improving the learning experience for everyone.

“Evaluation is a powerful tool for continual program improvement,” said Perez.

But administrators are often initially skeptical, viewing evaluation as a burdensome chore. “Universities often have more experience and resources for doing it, but a lot of nonprofits feel pretty overwhelmed by the task. It’s more work,” said Perez, whose goal is to make evaluation easier and more attractive.

Supporting a new generation of farmers

The USDA is eager to grow a new crop of successful owner-operator farmers, and Perez’s goal is to create an “evaluation learning community” of people running programs that support beginning farmers. Supported by this new grant, she will use webinars, teleconferencing, and digital tools to build the community. She hopes to showcase “evaluation advocates”—members of training organizations who will share their experiences, including their initial reluctance to “add one more thing,” and speak to the benefits of evaluation.

“I want to make it relevant and useful to organizations, so they can see how evaluation can help them build their reputation, attract more participants—and be accountable to them,” said Perez.



Participants in the Apprenticeship at the UCSC Farm provide feedback via evaluations throughout the program.

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vertebrate – and disease management become significant as the plants grow and mature. If gophers are an issue, plan for some gopher losses in the garden, i.e., put in extra plants to compensate for gopher loss, and consider dispatching the gophers with **Cinch-type** traps. Gophers are solitary so there's no need to worry about gangs of them, yet they will cross the road to seek greener pastures or any other scrumptious garden, and just one gopher can wreak havoc on a garden. Wire mesh gopher cages are useful for protecting perennials, and although gopher-wire raised bed "linings" are beyond the scope of this essay, they are a good option as well (see www.gophers-limited.com for more information).

Insects can be a total buzz kill, and often when using organic insect management techniques there's no way to avoid some insect damage. Always remove damaged crop residue and clean up the beds around the plant to eliminate attractants. Border the garden with flowering plants to attract beneficial insects that prey on the destructive insects.

To help limit the impact of pathogens, keep the beds clean and remove diseased parts or plants as soon as possible. The best defense can be a good offense – giving the plants supplemental fertility via a **side dressing** of compost or fertigation and being conscious about proper irrigation will strengthen the plant's resistance. Some pathogens are best dealt with by planting resistant cultivars, using pathogen-free planting materials, doing seasonal crop rotations, and minimizing conditions that promote the spread of disease-causing organisms. These all take some extra research, either online, from books, or perhaps most effectively, via conversations with other local gardeners and nursery staff.

Know your harvest windows

Knowing when to harvest is important. It's easy to miss the ideal **harvest window** for the lettuce and have it bolt when our lives are so packed full. Yet one of the advantages of having a garden is to awaken to the rhythm of the plants and the seasons, and to gain some insight into other forms of life, those that sustain us yet have a very different existence than ours.

The best time to harvest is in the early morning when the plants are still cool from the night, or in the early evening when the plants have had a good day of **photosynthesis** and packed themselves with sugars. Always wash and sanitize hands and tools before going out to harvest.

The important nuance of the harvest is to do it correctly for the plant – with a clean cut of the stem, or pull of the leaf, or twist to break off the fruit – to handle the harvested items with care, to chill and wash the crops in a water bath or with a dry towel and (if appropriate) to put them into cool storage in order to maintain vitality, freshness, and durability.

Once the bed has been fully harvested, it should be cleaned up – green plant residue can be used to make

Book learning & workshops – Books hold a vast array of knowledge about gardening and offer a good source of easy-to-reference information. Yet the experience of a workshop with an accomplished instructor in the garden is invaluable. I've seen this firsthand after five months of stellar instruction here at the UCSC Farm and the Chadwick Garden, and I know I'll miss the personal interactions and chance to ask obscure questions.

Good instruction brings more than just a body of knowledge — it breeds joy and inspiration for the tasks at hand, which can be many in the garden. I can highly recommend any workshop offered at the UCSC Farm and the Alan Chadwick garden. It's a chance to learn from accomplished and practiced instructors, to ask specific questions, and to strike up new friendships, all in a garden-based community.

compost or dug in as **green manure** that will break down and add organic matter to the soil. Then the beds can be prepped again and replanted with something for the oncoming season. For beds that aren't used for **overwintering** food or flower crops, a **cover crop** should be planted to add soil nutrients and to protect the soil during the winter rains. While the soil is still warm, direct seed and overhead irrigate the beds so the cover crops will germinate and will be growing before winter sets in. And then it's time to plan next year's garden.

Seeing the bigger picture

The most significant takeaway from the Apprenticeship has been the opportunity to see more fully the need to quickly subvert the dominant food system. Soil health and organic methods of growing are of paramount importance for a healthy future – and great strides have been made in the last few decades to regain, develop, and utilize the knowledge and practices of "peasant" agriculture (including principles of **agroecology**) that have worked for thousands of years before the advent of the "green revolution" (when synthetic inputs were glorified to be the cure-all that would feed the world). Yet it's also abundantly clear that the current food system is based on the abuse of people and labor – of undocumented folks, people of color, and those marginalized by the dominant economic system. The people who help to grow, harvest, and process our food are truly the least rewarded in the food system, even though they do the hard work that no one else is willing to do, are poorly paid, and have the most to lose in terms of economic opportunity, political and social stability, and the rights of health and safety in the workplace.

The current food system is built upon the labor and the injustices to the food worker, all in the name of keeping food cheap and abundant, no matter what the true cost is. Besides unspeakably harsh labor practices (just try picking strawberries in the field for more than an hour and then standing up straight – then imagine 8 or more hours a day all week long), there's the lack of safety and

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Apprenticeship Updates

Here's a brief look at what some of the graduates of the Apprenticeship training program at the UCSC Farm & Garden have been doing recently, along with some of their recent writings. Apprenticeship alumni, we welcome your updates! Please send them to casfs@ucsc.edu.

Moretta (Mo) Browne (2016) is a Farmer Justice Fellow working in the East Bay for the Pesticide Action Network, North America (PANNA, panna.org). As part of her fellowship work, Mo supports the work of the California Farmer Justice Collaborative. She recently helped organize the Farmer Justice Days event in Sacramento, which many past and current Apprentices attended. Read more at www.panna.org/blog/farmer-justice-takes-center-stage-ca-capitol

Amy (Ridout) Rice-Jones (2006) is working for The Backyard Farm Company in Marin County (thebackyard-farmcompany.com), mentoring families in how to grow their own food. Read an article by Amy in *Edible Marin and Wine Country*: ediblemarinandwinecountry.ediblecommunities.com/eat/how-does-your-garden-grow

Hannah Shulman (2010) is Director of Programs for Education Outside (educationoutside.org), an organization that advances science in San Francisco Bay Area public schools through school gardens. They currently serve more than 20,000 students with standards-based science lessons.

Brent Walker (2008) returned to the UCSC Farm this year as an assistant manager of the farm's production fields and an Apprenticeship instructor. Prior to his return, Brent worked at the East Bay organizations Phat Beets and Planting Justice.

Edible Monterey Bay featured the CASFS Farm & Garden Apprenticeship in its current Fall issue, with an article by Ellen Farmer entitled "On the Farm: Genius and Justice." Writes Farmer, "As one of the country's most respected organic training courses, UCSC's farm apprenticeship program has been challenging conventional agriculture for 50 years, but now the focus is shifting with instructors, students and alumni—like Ana Rasmussen [founder of Watsonville-based Mesa Verde Gardens and Esperanza Community Farms]—challenging the nation's food system as a whole, asking why some people still don't have access to healthy food and others still go hungry." Read the article at ediblemontereybay.com/online-magazine/fall-2018/on-the-farm-genius-and-justice/

Keep Up with Farm & Garden News!

Keep up with the latest news from CASFS/UCSC Farm & Garden by becoming a Facebook friend. Type Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems into your Facebook search engine and "Like" our page. And check out the CASFS website for updates, information, and resources: casfs.ucsc.edu.

You'll find additional resources and a number of "how to" videos on the CASFS YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/casfsvideo/videos. If you're not on our email list, drop a note to casfs@ucsc.edu and let us know you'd like to be added to receive regular updates on Farm and Garden and CASFS activities.

USDA grant (from page 5)

The USDA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) was written into the federal Farm Bill in 2008 with support from then-Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel). In 2012, CASFS, which runs the apprenticeship, received a \$665,000 BFRDP grant to train novice farmers. Collaborators on that grant included three local sustainable agriculture organizations: the Ecological Farming Association (EFA), the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), and California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF); one of the outcomes of that grant was the establishment of the Central Coast Farmer Education Network.

Perez notes that support for beginning farmers takes many shapes and forms. It is offered by university-based programs, extension programs, nonprofits like EFA, CAFF, and CCOF, and farms like Pie Ranch in Pescadero, which is operated by apprenticeship graduates Nancy Vail and Jered Lawson. Support ranges from individual classes to full-time programs like UCSC's six-month residential apprenticeship.

"There are hundreds of people all across the country doing this work," she said, noting that more than 700 organizations have applied to the BFRDP for funding since its inception in 2009.

Perez will partner with Jennifer Hashley, a CASFS apprenticeship graduate who is the director of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project at Tufts University, and Kim Niewolny, an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education at Virginia Tech, to implement the new grant. Daniel Press, executive director of CASFS and a professor of environmental studies, will provide project oversight as the principal investigator.

— Jennifer McNulty

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Early Supporters (from page 6)

environmental justice as people working on farms are often the first ones into the pesticide- and herbicide-soaked fields of conventional agriculture – and there are very few legal protections, as well as a lack of access to healthy and nutritious food, proper medical care, legal protection, a decent place to live, and the right to organize or make demands for themselves – a reality that is mostly unseen for those who live a more privileged life, which is many of us

Alas, this narrative has been repeated for hundreds, if not thousands, of years – and in the richest country on the planet, why do these unjust, dehumanizing, and barbaric labor practices still exist? The poorest and most vulnerable are denied access to safe and healthy food due to economic and distribution barriers – yet according to Miguel Altieri of UC Berkeley, “one third of all food is wasted.” Even university students are facing food insecurity. According to Tim Galarneau and the UC Global Food Initiative “data collected throughout the UC system shows that between 20% and 40% of students are skipping meals to save money,” which seems counter productive, and antithetical, to the aspirations of higher education.

This is why the farmer and the home gardener can be vital partners in the groundswell of change that needs to happen. Growing our own food, going to farmers’ markets, and being involved with a CSA all help create and support alternatives to the dominant food system. The new Food Justice Certification (www.agriculturaljusticeproject.org/en/about/) is working to make structural changes in the food system. Social justice needs to be the next act in the organic food movement, with equity for those who toil so hard to provide us with the food that nourishes us. Healthy and nourishing food is a right for everyone.

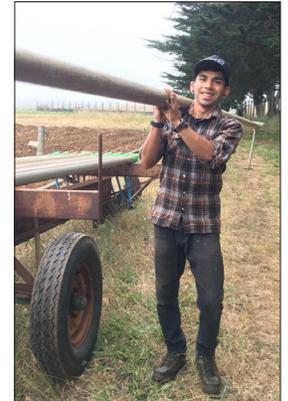
Planting a vegetable garden is one of many first steps to a better world for all.

Grant winners (from page 4)

career around food systems work. As a Mexican-American in California I have a complex relationship with the ag industry. Part of me is grateful that my family was able to migrate here as Braceros during the 1940s. They sought better opportunities for later generations and understood that the conditions they confronted and overcame were obstacles that I would be spared from. But I am also conflicted by the fact that they wanted to participate in a food system that imported labor.”

Robles, who earned his undergraduate degree at UCSC in the History of the Americas, started working at the UCSC Farm as an undergraduate and became a student farm manager, as well as working with students from the FoodWhat?! youth empowerment program. He sees youth as critical to changing the food system and hopes to model that change for them.

“The growth of organic food has inspired a generation of youth to plug in and help further our movement. It will be absolutely essential to carry the momentum that is gained from interested youths. We cannot build a movement that revolves around sustainability unless we sustain the transfer of knowledge and responsibility,” says Robles. “I have worked with young folks for many years now in an agricultural context and have served as a role model for them as I help push our movement forward. The next logical step is to continue policy work, run for office, develop educational programs, etc. so that as these youths grow, there will be role models to follow and opportunities to take.”



David Robles