



August 23, 2010

Honorable Eric L. DuTemple, Presiding Judge
Department 1
41 West Yaney Avenue
Sonora, CA 95370

RE: Farm Advisor Department Response to the 2009-2010 Grand Jury Report

Dear Judge DuTemple,

I have reviewed the 2009-2010 Grand Jury Report as it pertains to the University of California Cooperative Extension / Farm Advisor Department in Tuolumne County. It was a pleasure to give the Grand Jury an insight to the programs and services that the University of California Cooperative Extension offers to the community. Below are my responses to the findings and recommendations included in the report.

FINDINGS

1. The function of the Cooperative Extension Office is to transfer information from the University of California to the citizens of Tuolumne County to meet problems in agriculture, natural resources, food and nutrition, food safety, and community development.

Response: Agree.

2. The Cooperative Extension Office is funded by a mix of federal, state, and county resources as well as grants and fund-raising. The fiscal year 2009-2010 budget was \$716,465, of which Tuolumne County contributed \$184,865.

Response: Agree.

3. The Farm Advisor/County Director is responsible for initiating research programs that meet the needs of Tuolumne County residents. Projects have included a trial Safflower planting which is good for poor soils; techniques for controlling Medusahead, a weed grass; as well as workshops for dealing with Yellow Starthistle.

Response: Agree.

4. The Director of Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences program stated the program aims at earlier intervention in the lives of school children and their parents to encourage better food choices.

Response: Agree.

5. The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program is actively reaching children whose families received food stamps by promoting nutritional food choice. The program served three (3) schools in 2009-2010. They expect to serve as many as six (6) schools within the next two (2) years, (2010-2012).

Response: Agree.

6. The Program Coordinator of the Master Gardener Program reported the Gardeners are working specifically on water reduction this year.

Response: Agree.

7. The Tuolumne County 4-H Program Manager stated the 4-H activities focus on Youth Development. There are youth-adult partnerships, opportunities to build life skills, and year-round participation.

Response: Agree.

8. Financial support from the county is the Cooperative Extension Office's biggest problem as this is not a state-mandated program.

Response: Partially Agree. Tuolumne County has been a strong supporter of our programs and even though we are a non-mandated program, the county continues to work with us to make sure adequate funding is available to provide programs in the county.

RECOMNENDATIONS

1. The Grand Jury has no specific recommendations for Findings 1 through 7.

2. For Finding 8, the Grand Jury has no specific recommendation. It should be noted and acknowledged that the amount of funding contributed by the County is minimal, but well-spent.

3. This recommendation does not relate to any specific finding. The Grand Jury recommends more publicizing of the material and services available to the County's citizens at little or not cost to the citizen via the Cooperative Extension Office.

Response: I agree that publicity is something the UC Cooperative Extension Office needs to work on. Ways the UC Cooperative Extension Office plan to publicize the programs in the future include increasing social networking on sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Also increasing program presence on local public television and increasing the amount of informational booths, especially targeting new residents, and businesses.

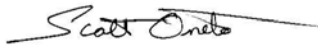
COMMENDATIONS

The members of the 2009-2010 Tuolumne County Grand Jury wish to commend all of the staff of the UC Cooperative Extension Office on their job performance. It was a pleasure to meet workers, who enjoyed what they were doing and doing it well, especially in today's business climate of "do more with less and in less time".

Response: Everyone enjoyed the visit and was very pleased with the Grand Jury Report.

Thank you again for visiting our department and learning about our numerous services and programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Oneto", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Oneto
County Director