

Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Planning Grant Pre-Proposal

Basic Information

Project Title: Developing local food system and ag education strategies to safeguard agriculture in Ventura County

Applicant Name: County of Ventura, California

Department / Office: Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures

Federal Employer ID Number: 461647047

Mailing Address: 815 E. Santa Barbara Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060

Project Funding

Location (County and/or City): Ventura County, California

State Assembly District: 38, 42

State Senate District: 19, 27

Priority Population Status: Y N [If yes, attach [Priority Population Benefits Table](#) with your application].

Grant Request Amount: 500,000

Matching Funds Pending: 50,000

Matching Funds Committed: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Total Estimated Project Cost: 550,000

Applicant Information

Contact Person: Alec Thille

Title: Environmental Resource Analyst III

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Has the applicant received Technical Assistance (TA) from a SALC-funded TA provider previously?: Y N

Executive Summary and Proposed Planning Project

Ventura County is one of the leading agricultural counties in the United States with \$2.1 billion in annual crop production value. Ranking tenth in California and in the nation, it is a major producer of specialty crops, such as fruits and vegetables for the fresh produce market. Agricultural land in the county comprises over 316,000 acres, of which 98,549 are irrigated. Ventura County farmland is considered at heightened risk of urban development due to its proximity to the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, its desirable coastal location and climate, and groundwater pumping restrictions reducing agricultural productivity of the land. A previous SALC Planning grant yielded the Resilient Agricultural Lands Initiative (RALI) for Ventura County, which identified four “cornerstones” with a menu of specific strategies for a successful agricultural land conservation program in Ventura County. Of these, we plan to further develop the following strategies under cornerstones 2 and 4:

- **Convene a quarterly Agricultural Roundtable** (Lead strategy 2). To implement and further develop the plan, a critical first step is to bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to build trust and collectively set priorities and determine a course of action to implement the RALI. The Roundtable will be led by a professional facilitator.
- **Develop an infrastructure plan to strengthen the local/regional food system** (Strategies 2C, 2D and 4E). This will include conducting a food systems analysis to understand the current structure of the food system in Ventura County, and determining the (soft) infrastructure and support needed to increase the amount of locally grown food reaching local/regional markets, including Los Angeles. Market and consumer analyses will study incentives for promoting the purchase of local agricultural products and development of a “Grown in Ventura County” brand to support recognition and awareness among consumers of the importance of agriculture and working lands. A comprehensive marketing strategy will be developed to promote the “Grown in Ventura County” brand.
- **Establish a Rural-Urban Connections Program** (Lead strategy 4). This strategy will focus on developing a plan for coordinating and streamlining agricultural education and awareness activities in Ventura County, in collaboration with the University of California Cooperative Extension. The first step will be to organize an “Ag Education Summit”, where local stakeholders like K-12 schools, 2- and 4-year colleges, and nonprofit organizations will come together to identify gaps and opportunities for collaboration in ag education and literacy programs in the county. In addition, a plan will be developed for devising agricultural career pathways from middle and high schools through college.

These strategies will help promote conservation of agricultural lands by increasing farm profitability tapping local markets. In addition, awareness and appreciation of the value of agriculture among the voting public will reduce the risk of transition of farmland to urban uses. Offering students local career opportunities will increase the availability of skilled labor in the county, allowing farms to persist and be profitable. Stakeholders will include Farm Bureau of Ventura County (FBVC), County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measure (AWM), County RMA, VC Resource Conservation District, UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE), CSUCI, VC Community Colleges, VC K-12 School Districts, The Nature Conservancy, CAFF, Food for Thought, Farm-to-School, retail chefs, food coops, market managers, growers and shippers, ag-related industries and consultants.

Preproposal Questions

1. Are you a county, city, local area formation commission, council of government, municipal planning organization, regional transportation planning agency, groundwater sustainability agency, or special district with land use or transportation planning authority, and federally recognized California Native American tribe or a nonfederally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission?

Yes – County of Ventura

2. Are you a Resource Conservation District, special districts with a mission related to agricultural preservation, academic institutions, land trusts and other agricultural non-profit organizations? Have you partnered with one or more of the organizations listed above? Will you be able to provide evidence, by the time of the application, that one or more of the organizations listed above will enter into a memorandum of understanding for the project demonstrating support for the project and SALC's purposes? Please provide information detailing the partners roles in the project and confirmation that the partners will consider adopting the plan resulting from the project.

Yes – Partnered with an Academic Institution (UC Cooperative Extension).

UCCE will play a coordinating role in establishing the Rural-Urban Connections program and ag education pathways, will be a partner in the Ag Roundtable, and will assist with specific research on local food systems, such as agritourism.

3. Describe the proposed planning project. Include details such as the anticipated outcomes and deliverables; agricultural land base, economy, regional food systems and infrastructure within the project area; and amount and quality of agricultural land that can be expected to receive protection through the proposed project. Include maps of important farmland, jurisdictional boundaries, and other pertinent data that would portray the project scope (as attachments to the application).

As noted in the prior SALC planning project that generated the Resilient Agricultural Lands Initiative (RALI), Ventura County is one of the leading agricultural counties in the United States. Its \$2.1 billion in annual crop production value ranks tenth in California and in the nation. It is a major producer of specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables for the fresh produce market. Top commodities include strawberries, raspberries, celery, lemons, tomatoes, peppers, and avocados. Altogether, farming and farm-dependent businesses provide an

estimated 43,000 jobs in Ventura County, more than any other sector of the local economy except services.

According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), Ventura County in 2016 contained 118,508 acres of "important farmland" and 197,859 acres of grazing land, for a total of 316,367 acres of agricultural land. According to the 2021 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report, the county currently has 98,549 acres of irrigated crop land, which accounts for most of the agricultural production value.

Ventura County agriculture faces several risk factors that increase the likelihood that farmland will be converted to urban use. Primarily, the county is adjacent to the second-largest population center in the U.S., the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, and its desirable coastal location means it faces enormous growth pressures. Several other threats to agricultural viability of Ventura County agricultural land exist, including:

- Implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is predicted to decrease allowable groundwater pumping — the source of more than 85% of the water used for agricultural irrigation in Ventura County — by as much as 40% over the next 20 years in basins that serve nearly half of the county's most productive farmland. A recent economic impact study conducted for the United Water Conservation District concluded that for every 10,000-acre-foot reduction in long-term water supplies for agricultural use on the Oxnard Plain, the estimated loss to the Ventura County economy is 1,500 jobs and \$91.1 million in income, based on an estimated fallowing of approximately 4,000 harvested crop acres.
- An invasive pest known as the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), which has been widely established in the county since 2013, is the vector for a virulent bacterial disease called Huanglongbing (HLB), which is untreatable, incurable, and inevitably fatal to all varieties of citrus. (In Florida, it has contributed to a 50% reduction in producing citrus acreage and an 80% reduction in total fruit volume since 2005.) Ventura County has about 24,000 acres planted in lemons, oranges, and mandarins.
- A persistent and worsening shortage of workers to tend and harvest the county's labor-intensive crops — coupled with state-mandated changes in the minimum wage and overtime rules — has driven production costs higher, causing grower profit margins to shrink and major operations to shift production to lower-cost regions outside Ventura County.
- The warming climate, as noted in the Ventura County Agricultural Risk Assessment, produced as part of the previous Ventura County SALC grant project climate change is the driving factor behind a host of agricultural stresses (water availability, seawater intrusion in coastal basins, and increased wildfire to name a few). To quote the Assessment: "the three stress models

show the County under considerable stress even under the mildest future.” Disconcertingly, The Washington Post reported on Dec 6, 2019 that “with an average temperature increase of 2.6 degrees Celsius (4.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since preindustrial times, *Ventura ranks as the fastest-warming county in the Lower 48 states.*”

The proposed planning project will address these conversion risks by building on the work of the previous project through Implementation of the RALI, as noted in the description above. The RALI, as a comprehensive document spanning many strategies, will be implemented in stages. This project will focus on the following deliverables:

1. Establishment of an Agricultural Roundtable that convenes quarterly to enhance trust and collaboration among the agricultural community, key stakeholders and County leadership and staff (RALI Lead Strategy 2).
2. A Food System Assessment to study the County’s current food marketing and distribution and determine infrastructure needs and projected economic impacts of increasing the purchase of locally produced agricultural products (RALI strategy 2C and County 2040 General Plan Policy AG-F);
3. A strategy for development of a “Grown in Ventura County” regional brand and associated marketing campaign (RALI strategies 4E & 2D, General Plan Policy AG-B);
4. Establish a Rural-Urban Connections (RUCS) program at UCCE to help bridge the urban - rural divide, create awareness and appreciation for agriculture, and strengthen educational and career pathways in agriculture (RALI Lead Strategy 4)

Deliverable 1. will establish a Roundtable as a dedicated group of key stakeholders to oversee, guide, and advocate for the project and adoption of these and further RALI strategies in future projects. The Roundtable will ensure that a committed and energized body of these key stakeholders provide critical input on the project through the Roundtable’s design. Through a “constitution” of the Roundtable, outlining quarterly meetings, defining specific roles for members, rules for conducting of meetings, designating alternates, and other formalization of Roundtable activities, the body will be able to select for motivated, engaged stakeholders with hard-hitting insights into the project and its impact to the County’s agriculture.

Deliverables 2. and 3. aim to address the conversion pressures on Ventura County farmland by increasing the economic vitality of the agricultural industry. Direct payment programs can provide agricultural operators with short-term relief, but ensuring that the industry remains vital in the face of these growing pressures will last for generations. Additional benefits of a robust local food system are reduced transportation costs (and therefore GHG emissions), the opportunity to grow high-

value specialty crops with better flavor and texture for local markets, better nutrition of local residents, less food waste agritourism opportunities, and increased awareness of and connection to local agriculture. This deliverable will include a Food System Assessment of the current food marketing and distribution system in place in Ventura County, and strategic plan for infrastructure and networking needs for increasing the purchase of locally produced agricultural products. This will include identifying barriers and challenges to developing an expanded local food system, as well as economic opportunities and ways to capitalize on increased demand, especially from the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Deliverable 4. aims to build local support for agriculture through the education of, outreach to, and fostering of connections with the urban portions of the County. These efforts will reduce conversion pressures by developing more amicable relations at the urban/rural boundaries, increasing awareness of agriculture's importance to the continued vitality of the urban spheres, and encouraging more local interest in agriculture amongst youth learners to increase their entry into the agricultural sector. An "Ag Education Summit" is planned to bring all institutions and nonprofit organizations involved in agricultural education together for the first time to develop a coordinated ag education and awareness strategy for youth and adults in the County. Developing and streamlining agricultural education pathways from K-12 through 2- and 4-year college programs will ensure a skilled and well-educated local labor force to support agricultural and allied industries in the County. This is especially timely as California State University Channel Islands has recently approved the establishment of a 4-year Sustainable Agriculture degree program which will be developed over the next 3 years. This now provides an avenue for extended education in the County beyond the Associate Degree in Agriculture offered by Ventura College.

4. Why and to what extent agricultural land is being converted to other uses within project area? To what extent those conversion risks are expected to continue? How will the proposed project address those conversion risks? Include an overview of anticipated data sets, tools, and policies to be reviewed, aligned with, or created during the course of the work plan.

Between 1992 and 2016, a total of 9,088 acres of Ventura County farmland were converted to urban development, which represents an average of 379 acres a year; and an additional 4,570 acres of grazing lands were developed between 1992 and 2016 (an average of 190 acres per year, according to the FMMP). The risks and pressures for conversion enumerated in the previous question have not born out as temporary or easily solved. Conversion of farmland is likely to continue without action, as demonstrated by the FMMP inventory of Ventura County which shows a

net loss of 240 acres of important farmland and 124 acres of grazing land in the 2016-2018 period.

In generating the study of infrastructure needs, the project will create an empirical dataset to address a critical weakness in the sustainability and economic vitality of Ventura County agriculture that makes it vulnerable to these conversion pressures: namely the need to increase local processing and purchase of agricultural products. Additionally, the “Grown in Ventura” brand and associated marketing plan will be an evergreen tool for continuously supporting agriculture against those conversion pressures, in concert with the above study and for future projects to come. The marketing plan and study are also both aligned with several policies from the Ventura County 2040 General Plan, most closely with those enumerated in the answer to question 6 below. Notably, the project will aid the County’s implementation of two general plan programs aimed at this same sustainability and economic vitality (also detailed in the answer to question 6).

5. How will the project avoid or reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Because Ventura County is part of the Los Angeles metro area, it is under constant pressure to develop its farmlands. The project’s primary strategy is to reduce the conversion potential of agricultural land by mitigating risks to economic viability, thereby avoiding future suburban sprawl and consequent increases in greenhouse gas emissions.

- A rough estimate of the number of housing units that could replace Ventura’s approximately 100,000 acres of irrigated agricultural land is 400,000 homes (100,000 acres at four units per acre). Ventura averages 22.4 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person and 3 persons per unit, so development of the county’s agricultural land base could result in up to an additional 26.9 million VMT per year.
- Maintaining land in production enhances its ability to sequester carbon in the soil. Furthermore, specific crops and cultural practices can be used to sequester additional carbon.
- Continued food production adjacent to the Los Angeles metro area shortens the “food miles” traveled between production source and consumers there, reducing truck traffic and vehicle emissions across the region. These food miles would be further reduced by the project’s efforts to increase the local sale of agricultural products not just in Los Angeles, but regionally in Ventura, Kern and Santa Barbara Counties as well.

6. How will the proposed project implement an adopted or draft Sustainable Communities Strategy or, if a Sustainable Communities Strategy is not required for a region by law, a regional plan that includes policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Provide

references to the specific goals, objectives, or policies that the project supports.

The County of Ventura 2040 General Plan includes the following policies, which support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed project will help the county implement these planning objectives by conserving the farmland that forms greenbelts separating local communities, directing growth pressure away from agricultural areas and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through innovative agricultural practices, policies and programs.

- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-1.1:** Agricultural Land Protection and Preservation - The County shall continue to protect and preserve agricultural land by directing growth away from productive agricultural lands into cities, unincorporated urban areas, or existing communities and by supporting the acquisition or voluntary dedication of agriculture conservation easements.
- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-1.5:** Facilities and Programs to Support Local Agriculture - The County shall encourage the continuation and development of facilities and programs that support agricultural production and enhance the marketing of county grown agricultural products.
- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-1.6:** Support Economic Viability of Agriculture - The County shall improve the economic viability of agriculture through policies that support agriculture as an integral business to the County.
- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-1.7:** Encourage Purchase of Local Agricultural Products - The County shall encourage opportunities for Ventura County residents to buy local agricultural products
- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-B:** Regionally-Grown Products Sales Incentives - The County shall develop a program that encourages sales and distribution of regionally-grown (in Ventura County or neighboring counties of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, or Kern) produce to local retailers, restaurants, and markets, and encourage chain stores to develop local distribution centers. The program will encourage residents to select locally grown food products for freshness, local economic development benefits, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Agriculture Element/Climate Action Plan Policy AG-F:** Encourage and Facilitate Carbon Farming - The County shall develop a program to encourage and facilitate carbon farming projects, including development of demonstration projects and site-specific carbon farm plans, to guide implementation of carbon farming practices throughout the county, when feasible.

7. How is the proposed plan consistent with California's Planning Priorities?

According to the governor's 2015 Environmental Goals and Policy Report, the state has five top planning priorities:

- Prioritize and support infill development to build healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities.
- Build a resilient and sustainable water system.
- Steward and protect natural and working landscapes.
- Incorporate climate change adaptation into all planning and investment.
- Lead by example to make the state a model for long-term sustainability.

This project's selected strategies would focus on the third and fifth of the above priorities. As noted previously, the RUCS program will protect working landscapes from the pressure of urban disinterest and disconnect. Ensuring a more robust regional food system will reduce the food miles both of Ventura County's agricultural products and the products purchased in the region. In short, a successful project will position Ventura County as a statewide leader in agricultural sustainability.

The project also will support the implementation of the County of Ventura Draft 2040 General Plan, which includes the following Guiding Principles for the goals, policies and programs within the plan.

- **Climate Change and Resilience:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve all adopted targets, proactively anticipate and mitigate the impacts of climate change, promote employment opportunities in renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gases, and increase resilience to the effects of climate change.
- **Conservation and Open Space:** Conserve and manage the county's open spaces and natural resources, including soils, water, air quality, minerals, biological resources, scenic resources, as well as historic and cultural resources.
- **Hazards and Safety:** Minimize health and safety impacts to residents, businesses and visitors from human-caused hazards such as hazardous materials, noise, air, sea level rise, and water pollution, as well as managing lands to reduce the impacts of natural hazards such as flooding, wildland fires, and geologic events.
- **Healthy Communities:** Promote economic, social, and physical health and wellness by investing in infrastructure that promotes physical activity, access to healthy foods, supporting the arts and integrating Health in All Policies into the built environment.

8. What economic, environmental, public health, cultural or other co-benefits that would arise from the project? How will those co-benefits be measured?

The anticipated co-benefits include:

- Protection of open space and viewsheds by reducing conversion of agricultural lands (measure by conversion data)
- Improved education and retention of local workforce (measure by number of graduates and post-graduate employment; grower satisfaction with workforce skills)
- Entrepreneurial opportunities for local specialty foods (measure by number of new cottage industries and farm-to-table restaurants)
- Access to affordable, nutritious foods by increasing local, fresh foods with higher nutritional value due to reduced storage and shipping time (measure by studying marketing channels and produce freshness/days from harvest)
- Reductions in food waste by increasing freshness by reducing shipping duration and storage (measure by amount of food waste from facilities like restaurants and schools)
- Reduction in the risk of wildfire by keeping irrigated land in production, which forms a natural barrier to spreading fire (measure by number of wildfires and area burned)
- Facilitation of collaboration among multiple entities (measure by the number of collaborative meetings and projects)
- Educational opportunities for students or new farmers as part of the ag education pathways (measure by the number of courses or programs provided by local schools)

9. How will the project benefit priority populations; beginning or Veteran farmers and ranchers; residents of disadvantaged or low-income communities; or federally recognized California Native American tribe or a nonfederally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission and/or a priority population?

The project will benefit small farmers, including beginning/low-income farmers, veterans, woman, Hispanic and other underrepresented groups, growing specialty vegetables and fruits for local markets. These could be special varieties for local consumption and ethnic crops, often grown organically. Since small farmers tend to have more difficulty accessing main marketing channels, e.g., supplying large supermarket chains, this project will provide additional market opportunities by increasing local demand for their products.

10. How will the proposal complement other efforts in the region, including comprehensive planning efforts (e.g., Greenprints, general or special plan objectives or goals), and agricultural land use policies (e.g., Williamson Act)? How would the project leverage other permanently protected lands to promote location and resource-efficient development?

By conserving agricultural land and inhibiting continued urban expansion, the proposal will advance the objectives of numerous local planning and land-use ordinances and policies, including the following:

- The County of Ventura Draft 2040 General Plan includes an Agricultural Element with goals, policies and programs addressing agricultural land preservation, agricultural and urban area compatibility, innovative specialty agriculture, food security, sustainable farming and ranching, and agricultural resilience. This project will aid the County in implementing programs for that section; specifically, GPPs AG-B and AG-F, as noted above.
- The Guidelines for Orderly Development, adopted in 1969 by the Ventura County, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and each of the cities in the county, established a formal policy that urban development should occur, whenever and wherever practical, within incorporated cities.
- The countywide greenbelt system, first proposed by LAFCO in 1965, is the product of nonbinding agreements between two or more government entities. It consists of areas where cities have agreed not to annex land or extend urban services, and the county has agreed to prohibit urban land uses. Seven were established between 1967 and 2000: Ventura-Santa Paula, Santa Paula-Fillmore, Camarillo-Oxnard, Tierra Rejada (Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley), Santa Rosa Valley (Camarillo and County of Ventura), Ventura-Oxnard, and Fillmore-Piru.
- Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR), a series of ordinances adopted primarily by popular vote in eight cities and the county between 1995 and 2001, in general, establish urban growth boundaries around cities, and require a public vote before cities can extend services beyond them and for any development of farmland and open space outside the lines.
- The Land Conservation Act (LCA), also known as the Williamson Act, which was adopted by the Legislature in 1965, authorizing counties to enter into 10- or 20-year contracts with agricultural landowners. The contract commits the landowner to maintaining the land in agricultural production; in exchange, the county agrees to tax the property based on the value of its agricultural production, not its market value. Ventura County adopted the program in 1969, and local landowners are enthusiastic participants, enrolling more than 128,000 acres.
- The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, which manages critical groundwater basins and encompasses half the irrigated farmland in the county, established a pilot Water Market in 2016. The market allows well owners to trade annual water allocations to other groundwater users, providing a financial incentive to conserve, and increasing growers' flexibility in complying with SGMA and adapting to drought.
- The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is developing a Regional Greenprint, which is a web-based conservation tool that provides the best available scientific data to help cities, counties and transportation agencies make better land-use and transportation infrastructure decisions, and conserve

natural areas and farmland. Our SALC plan will inform the SCAG development process, and will help facilitate discussion on the opportunities for agricultural land conservation in the Greenprint.

11. What is the applicant's experience in developing and implementing similar projects? What are the internal resources and capacity to complete the proposed work or will consultants or contractors be required? Are there professional staff qualified to develop and successfully implement the proposal? If not, please describe how will the applicant acquire this expertise.

The County of Ventura has successfully guided a previous SALC planning grant project, the *Ventura County Agricultural Land Conservation Planning Grant*, to completion. Existing partnerships with critical stakeholders, the Department of Conservation, and the agricultural industry of the County are robust and fresh. Additionally, given the close concordance with the County's General Plan and intended implementation of programs from it, staff time and General Fund moneys are both available to contribute to the execution of the project and required match funding. However, to ensure the best implementation of deliverables, as previously noted the study of infrastructure needs and development of a marketing campaign for "Grown in Ventura County" products may need to be completed by a consultant or consultant team. These will be selected through a competitive Request for Proposals process. Additionally, and not least, by partnering with the UCCE on the application and re-invigorating stakeholders familiar with the work from the previous project, the project will have access to a broad and talented range of staff for development of the proposal; at the UCCE, multiple County agencies, the Farm Bureau of Ventura County, and other stakeholders as noted in the question below.

12. Which stakeholders will participate in the proposed project? How will these stakeholders participate?

In addition to the Roundtable, further stakeholder engagement will be achieved through a regular stakeholder engagement process aimed at broad participation to set up long-term interest for both this and future RALI projects. This approach fosters trust and collaboration with stakeholders, including farmers, local communities, environmental organizations, farmworkers, and regulatory agencies. Current expected stakeholders, as project partners from the RALI project, include:

- Farmers and ranchers
- Farm Bureau of Ventura County
- Ventura Coalition of Agriculture, Labor and Business
- Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner
- The Nature Conservancy
- Ventura Land Trust

- Santa Clara River Conservancy
- University of California Cooperative Extension
- Ventura County Civic Alliance
- Ventura County Community Foundation
- Food Share
- Ventura County Resource Management Agency
- Ventura County Public Health
- Labor and social justice advocates

Additional Stakeholders who will be invited to participate in development of deliverables for this planning grant will include:

- Ventura County Unified School District
- K-12 Schools
- Ventura College
- CSU Channel Islands
- SEEAG
- Center for Land-based Learning
- Ventura Farm to School
- Food for Thought
- Ventura Food Coop
- Market managers
- Retail chefs
- Restaurant owners
- UC ANR Agritourism coordinator
- CAFF

Stakeholders will participate through employment of a variety of engagement methods to solicit input, feedback, and ideas from stakeholders. This may include public meetings, workshops, focus groups, surveys, online platforms, and one-on-one consultations. An important element of these engagements will be facilitation of a collaborative decision-making processes that allow stakeholders to contribute. This may involve consensus-building exercises, deliberative dialogues, or structured decision-making frameworks. Not least will be the development of a plan to maintain ongoing stakeholder engagement beyond the planning grant to ensure that stakeholders remain involved in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of not only this but further and future RALI projects. The plan should include regular assessments and refinements of the stakeholder engagement process based on lessons learned and changing stakeholder dynamics.

Map(s) of the Project area

Please provide a map or image depicting the area to be covered by the proposed project. The map should generally depict the area, including the extent of its agricultural resources, urban and/or rural land uses, and any ancillary map data to support the need for the proposal. Examples of maps include [Important Farmland Maps](#), Spheres of Influence, priority planning areas, and other protected lands. Protected lands databases can be found at the following locations:

[National Conservation Easement Database](#)

[California Protected Area Database](#)

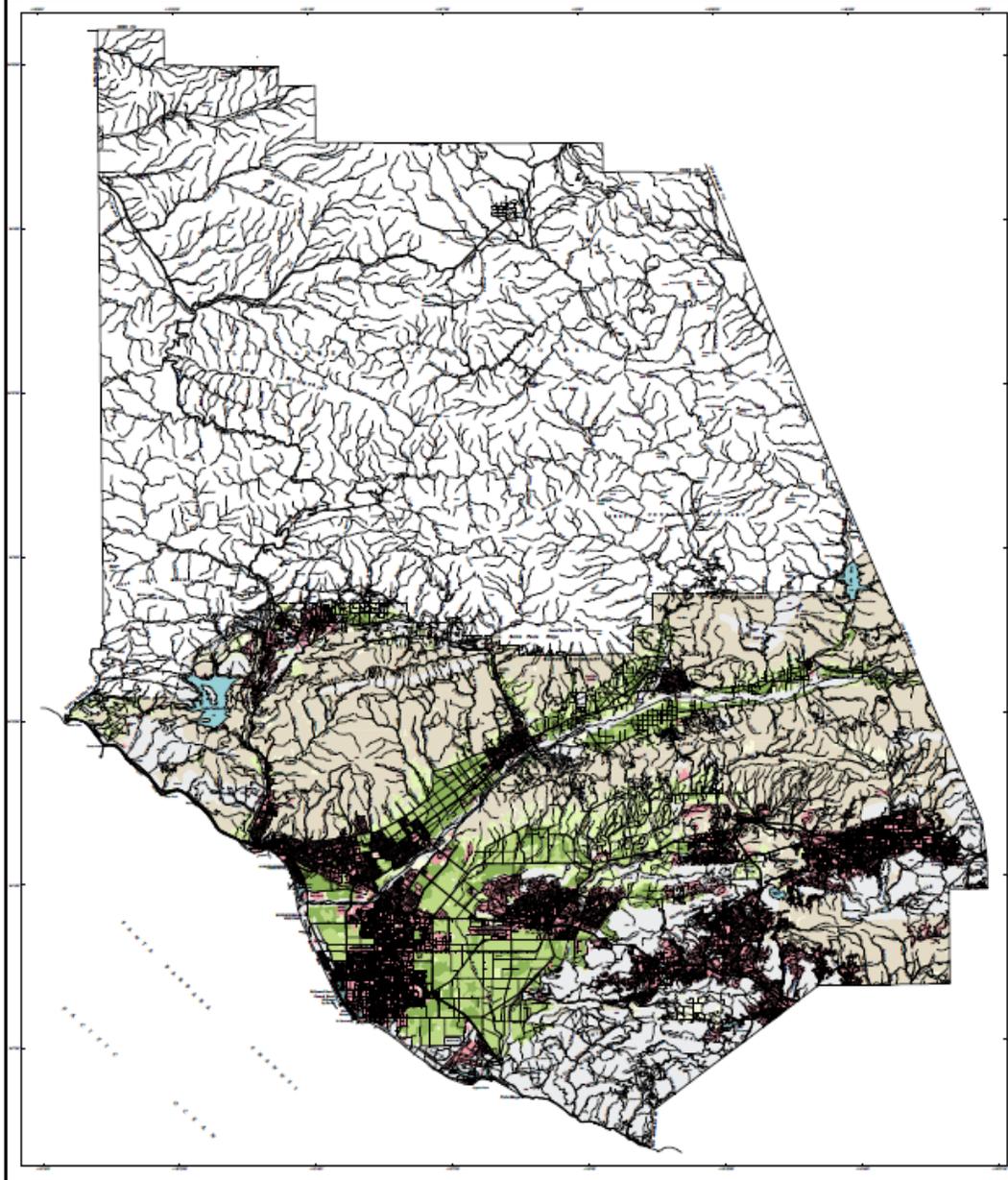
[California Conservation Easement Database](#)

Maps or images must print into an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper.

Geographic information system (GIS) data may be submitted along with digital map products.

See below: Ventura County Farmland maps

VENTURA COUNTY IMPORTANT FARMLAND 2018



PRIME FARMLAND
 PRIME FARMLAND has the highest capability of producing agricultural products and is the most limited resource. It is the most productive and most fertile soil, with the best water and drainage characteristics. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE
 FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE is land that is highly productive and fertile, but is not prime farmland. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

UNIQUE FARMLAND
 UNIQUE FARMLAND is land that has unique characteristics, such as soil, topography, or climate, that make it highly valuable for agriculture. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE
 FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE is land that is highly productive and fertile, but is not prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

GRAZING LAND
 GRAZING LAND is land that is used for grazing livestock. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

URBAN AND BUILT-UP LAND
 URBAN AND BUILT-UP LAND is land that is used for urban and built-up purposes. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

OTHER LAND
 OTHER LAND is land that is not used for agriculture. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

WATER
 WATER is land that is used for water purposes. It is the most valuable farmland resource and should be protected from conversion to non-farm uses.

SCALE: 1:50,000

LEGEND

Map Information:
 Prepared by: [Name]
 Date: [Date]
 Project: [Project Name]

Map Information:
 Prepared by: [Name]
 Date: [Date]
 Project: [Project Name]

Map Information:
 Prepared by: [Name]
 Date: [Date]
 Project: [Project Name]