

**Agricultural Council of California
American Farmland Trust
Bank of America
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
California Association of Winegrape Growers
California Cattlemen's Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
Community Alliance of Family Farmers
Defenders of Wildlife
Environmental Defense
Natural Resources Defense Council
Richard Rominger
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District
Sustainable Conservation
Western Growers Association
Western United Dairymen**

April 9, 2007

Robert C. Dynes, President
The Regents of the University of California
Office of the Secretary
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

Dear President Dynes:

As members of the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment, we are writing to share our hopes and recommendations for the leadership transition at the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Our organizations rely on UC's land grant mission and capacity every day to help California farmers survive in an increasingly competitive marketplace, while accommodating growing demand to play a more active role in protecting our natural resources, workers and communities. Continued advances in research and outreach by the University to advance agricultural prosperity, environmental stewardship and social responsibility are essential if California is to continue to be the agricultural leader that the rest of the world admires.

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The California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE)¹ is committed to supporting the University in this effort. We believe that stakeholders, through a united voice, can do more to help the University command greater public resources for its extension mission. At the same time, the University can do more to improve and strengthen the coordination, integration, and accessibility of the various programs and projects associated with ANR, including the Cooperative Extension Program (UCCE), and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES). More can be done to ensure efficient use of limited budgetary resources, continue the promotion of external partnerships, and make improvements in knowledge transfer from the University. We believe that the approaching leadership transition at ANR provides a critical juncture for examining and grasping these opportunities.

Our organizations have identified four priorities for the incoming Vice President, listed below, and described in detail in the attached document:

1. Foster more effective internal coordination and collaboration;
2. Enhance external partnerships;
3. Improve and accelerate knowledge transfer; and
4. Increase external funding opportunities

We hope you will consider these priorities in developing the job description and criteria for the position search. First and foremost, we urge you to place great emphasis on the leadership and management skills of the next Vice President. While we respect the University's interest in finding a leader with exemplary academic performance, we believe that, if pressed to choose, leadership and management strength is a more critical attribute for ANR's next leader. ANR will only attain its full potential to deliver excellence in research, teaching and public service when all facets of the organization operate in harmony with the land grant campuses, external stakeholders, funders and the public.

We also urge you to consider a leader with experience and expertise at the interface of agriculture, environment and social responsibility - the pillars of sustaining California agriculture in an increasingly urban state.

¹ The California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE) is an alliance of agricultural and environmental leaders seeking to promote an agriculture that is economically viable, environmentally enhancing and socially responsible. Roundtable participants strive to educate each other about agricultural and environmental issues, identify common interests and advocate in support of the group's common goals and principles.

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We hope that you will include the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment, or its representative(s), in your search process. We are delegates from many of the state's leading agricultural, environment and worker advocacy organizations, and we have a great stake in the future success of ANR. Several of our members have already had the pleasure of meeting with Rory Hume regarding this matter and we look forward to working with him as your search unfolds.

Finally, our organizations have a strong interest in seeing additional resources directed to ANR to expand its capacity to promote sustainable agriculture. We hope to work with you in establishing a \$5 million state budget augmentation for UC to create a funding pool for competitive grants, to be administered in collaboration with external stakeholders, for applied research and outreach projects to help California producers meet state regulatory and policy goals at the interface of agriculture, environment and social responsibility.

Your consideration of these requests is greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Donald G. Gordon Jr., President
Agricultural Council of California

Ed P. Thompson, Jr.
California State Director
American Farmland Trust

Corny Gallagher, Agribusiness Executive
Bank of America

Tacy Currey, Executive Director
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Karen Ross, President
California Association of Winegrape Growers

Bruce Hafenfeld, President
California Cattlemen's Association

Doug Mosebar, President
California Farm Bureau Federation

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Martha Guzman, Legislative Assistant
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

David Runsten, Executive Director
Community Alliance of Family Farmers

Kim Delfino
California Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

Kathryn Phillips, Manager
CA Clean Air for Life Campaign
Environmental Defense

Jonathan Kaplan, Director
Sustainable Agriculture Project
Natural Resources Defense Council

Richard Rominger

Molly Watkins, Vice President
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District

Allen Dusault
Program Director, Sustainable Agriculture
Sustainable Conservation

Hank Giclas, Vice-President
Strategic Planning Science and Technology
Western Growers Association

Paul Martin
Director of Environmental Services
Western United Dairymen

cc: Rory Hume
Rick Standiford

Priorities for the Next Vice President of ANR

Submitted by

The California Roundtable on Agriculture and Environment

1. Foster More Effective Internal Coordination and Collaboration

Goal: Improve system-wide collaboration, coordination and responsiveness amongst AES scientists, campus researchers, specialists and educators and county extension advisers. The new Agricultural Sustainability Institute is an excellent working example of this type of entity that works across UC disciplines.

Challenge: Many stakeholders perceive that there is not currently full collaboration between campus researchers and county extensionists, resulting in redundancy of UC's research mission and inadequate outreach resources.

Possible solutions:

- Maintain strong representation of CE and AES programs within the office of the President.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current administration of AES and CE. While we are not prepared to offer specific proposals for restructuring, we believe that underlying obstacles to better AES/CE coordination may result from ANR's organizational structure (see enclosed organizational chart). The objectives of the recommended assessment should be to:
 1. Improve, coordinate and streamline the management responsibilities that are currently shared between ANR and the campuses. Specifically, all of the day-to-day operations associated with AES research and Cooperative Extension outreach, including all ANR special programs and county advisors should be evaluated. If necessary, the system-wide administrative structure should be re-organized to ensure that it fosters better integration, coordination and collaboration.
 2. Ensure that the limited resources currently allocated throughout the system are efficiently managed and leveraged to reduce costly duplication, and maximize system-wide performance.
 3. Include input from stakeholders and other campuses in reviewing the performance of each AES/CE-funded campus.
- Evaluate, and modify as warranted, existing incentives to promote greater strides in research, publication and transfer of information by AES faculty to agricultural producers, advisers and consultants.
- Increase funding for collaborative research between UCCE, growers, advisers and consultants.
- Implement a consistent, statewide merit and promotion system within UCCE that equally emphasizes academic performance, multi-disciplinary research and

outreach activities, including on-the-farm research in cooperation with agricultural producers.

- Convene stakeholders to help develop and support a package of initiatives that embrace the CE and AES missions.

2. Enhance External Partnerships

Goal: Enhance external partnerships to identify research, education and training priorities and leverage resources.

Challenge: By increased participation of its supporters such as CRAE early in its planning, the University will increase its ability to improve its leverage through a powerful agricultural-environmental constituency. Such alliances could identify additional opportunities for external support.

Possible solutions:

- Convene stakeholders to get buy-in on a package of initiatives to support the CE and AES missions in the area of sustainability that might be funded from state and federal sources.
- Provide external stakeholders opportunities to work with university representatives to identify and prioritize issues, including research agendas and program content.
- Formalize a process that provides advance notice to and consideration of input from external stakeholders regarding programmatic decision-making at ANR.
- Provide an opportunity for university representatives to communicate with stakeholders on progress within various programs and receive feedback.
- Coordinate with all relevant state and federal agencies to identify, and to the greatest extent feasible, agree research, education, training and demonstration priorities that can assist those agencies to address their statutory and regulatory priorities.
- Identify opportunities to mutually leverage resources to maximize results.

3. Improve and Accelerate Knowledge Transfer

Goal: Improve the information delivery system to more efficiently and effectively transfer new research, technology and practices information

Challenge: While progress has been made in areas, such as the UC IPM Program's excellent website, the vast wealth of knowledge of more sustainable farming systems developed by UC researchers remains decentralized and is often not available in non-technical format.

Possible solutions:

- Maintain an electronic infrastructure to ensure the transfer of research results, and training and educational information amongst the various university programs (ANR, UCCE, and AES), and the agricultural producers, advisers and consultants in a timely, effective and user-friendly format.
- Provide user-friendly one-stop shopping on the internet for producers, advisers, and consultants seeking information about sustainable agricultural practices. Prioritize communications staff support to “re-package” and consolidate technical information to make more relevant to end-users in the field.
- As a part of knowledge transfer efforts, ensure that there is adequate opportunity exists to demonstrate, as appropriate, on-the-ground practices resulting from applied research.
- Ensure that research findings are presented in a manner that is meaningful to agricultural producers, advisers and consultants.
- Improve collaboration between research and outreach organizational units as described above.

4. Increase External Funding Opportunities

Goal: Aggressively pursue all federal, state and private funding opportunities to support research and extension opportunities. An excellent example is the Kellogg Foundation support for the Agricultural Sustainability Institute leadership position.

Challenge: Reduced state budgets and increased demands for applied research, training and outreach obligates the University to develop and implement strategies to aggressively pursue external funding to achieve program goals and objectives.

Possible Solutions:

- Work with internal and external stakeholders to develop a priority research agenda in the area of sustainability, identifying key research gaps and budget needs. Identify specific funding opportunities, including reauthorization of the farm bill.
- The entire leadership team including the campus Dean’s and the VP-ANR should have relative goals in fund raising and the VP-ANR should be tasked to assure that ANR programs are not subject to undue funding cuts in future UC budgets.