

Securing Ventura County's Agricultural Future

*Draft Strategies for
Community
Resilience*

*Community Workshops
November 16th and 17th, 2022*





Meeting Objective

Solicit input on:

Four Lead Draft Strategies

- *Are these strategies appropriate for Ventura County?*
- *Are these strategies ones you would be willing to champion?*
- *What are we missing?*
- *What should be changed?*

Agenda

- *Introduce Four Cornerstones*
- *Introduce Draft Lead Strategies*
- *Solicit input on each Lead Strategy*
- *Review next steps & schedule*



Four Cornerstones

CATALYZE COMMUNITY CO-STEWARDSHIP OF AGRICULTURE

- Craft a multifaceted Rural-Urban Connections strategy that fosters co-stewardship of a vibrant agriculture sector as a foundation for health, well-being resilience, and a diverse economy.

SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF A ROBUST AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

- Support, sustain and diversify the agricultural economy of Ventura County.
- Lay out specific tools, strategies and actions for investment in the regional food system
- Identify and secure funding and financing strategies from local community organizations, County, State and Federal governments.

SECURE A RESILIENT FUTURE FOR AGRICULTURE

- Facilitate sustainable and regenerative farming and ranching practices.
- Explore strategic land repurposing, restoration of habitats, and protection and enhancement of water resources to meet regional economic, environmental, and social needs.

ENSURE A VIABLE AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE

- Identify a blend of incentives, policies, land use tools, and an organizational framework that supports investment and the security of the agricultural land base.
- Streamline permitting and encourage the use of sustainable agricultural practices.



Cornerstone 1

Secure a Resilient Future for Agriculture

What we heard...

What's been done in the past might not be possible in the future in terms of cost and availability of water.

Lead Strategy:

Develop a land repurposing plan and program

Why this strategy?

Develop a program that provides incentive payments to landowners to support them in gradually shifting income streams from crops that no longer thrive to payments for avoided water use, such as: Transitioning to lower water use ag production. recharging of the groundwater basin, floodplain restoration etc.



Cornerstone 2

Support the Growth of a Robust Agricultural Economy

What we heard...

-The economics of farming has to be at the forefront of solutions.

-Promote the economic viability of agricultural lands by assisting agricultural producers and establishing zoning policies that support long term investments in agriculture.

Lead Strategy:

Establish an Ag Enterprise Overlay.

Why this strategy?

To accommodate and support the business development of ag operations in selected foundational areas through targeted streamlining, financial incentives, and specialized marketing efforts.



Cornerstone 3

Ensure a Viable Agricultural Land Base

What we heard...

-Conservation easements are an additional tool, especially for farmers looking ahead...

-Generational business succession is a major challenge.

Lead Strategy:

Create a “Resiliency District” focused on acquisition of lands that are critical.

Why this strategy?

Develop the administrative and fiscal structure to:

- 1) Support a long-range comprehensive plan to prioritize investment and land conservation.
- 2) Establish a long term funding stream to facilitate incentives and investments in ag lands.



Cornerstone 4

Catalyze Community Co-Stewardship of Agriculture

What we heard...

-There is a need to balance public perception and the needs of intensive farming operations, and develop solutions for the public and the farming community.

-There is a need for real local partnering - with farmers, agencies, nonprofits, city planning, etc. to identify mutual benefit opportunities.

Lead Strategy:

Establish a Rural-Urban Connectivity Program at University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE)

Why this strategy?

To create an operational structure and secure the resources necessary to provide a collaborative framework for coordinating, supporting and enhancing existing public education and awareness.





Questions

- *Are these strategies appropriate for Ventura County?*
- *Are these strategies ones you would be willing to champion?*
- *What are we missing?*
- *What should be changed?*

Next Steps



REFINE STRATEGIES BASED ON STAKEHOLDER INPUTS



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS FOR INPUT ON STRATEGIES

November 16

Non-Ag
Community
10:00-11:30

November 17

Ag Community
10:00-11:30



DRAFT STRATEGY DOCUMENT

December 2022

Refining strategies, crafting incentives to address priority areas