

UCCE Colusa County Program Updates

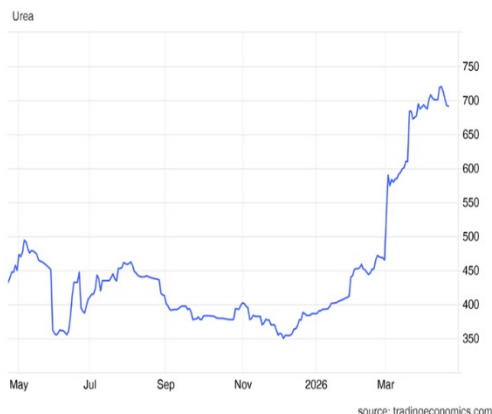
April 2026

Rice Report (Sarah Marsh Janish) UCCE Rice Advisor – Colusa & Yolo Counties

According to the USDA National Ag Statistics Service Crop Progress Report, as of April 19, 2026, 5% of rice has been planted in California, ahead of the 5-year average of 1% at this point in the season. This is due in part to the weather conditions in March; we saw a very warm March with no rain, which allowed some growers to get a head start on land preparation. In the northern Sacramento Valley, growers who are typically “early-planters” have been quoted as saying that they are 5-14 days ahead of a typical year’s schedule.

However, for growers who did not get land prep finished ahead of the rains that hit in mid-to-late April, hopes for an early planting have been dashed. The anticipated 50% plant date should remain at about mid-May, like in a typical year.

Right now, the intended rice acreage sits at slightly above normal levels, with estimates of approximately 520,000 acres planted in California this year (a 1% decrease from 2025). However, rice acreage across the mid-South is drastically reduced, especially in Mississippi, where they anticipate a 51% acreage decrease to a reduced total of 80,000 acres of rice planted. The drop in rice acreage has been attributed to high input prices, oversupply, and weak demand, especially for long-grain types that make up the majority of the mid-South acreage.



When looking at fertilizer prices, most growers have purchased their sources for the year, but everyone is still paying attention to the price of nitrogen in particular. Urea, although not the largest source of N fertilizer for rice production, tends to follow the trend of N prices. Looking at the price of urea over the past year shows the momentous growth in the cost of fertilizer, especially since February of this year.



4-H Program (Mary Zoller)

UCCE 4-H Regional Program Coordinator, Region 3 (Shasta, Trinity, Tehama, Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba) Based at UCCE Colusa Office

Youth in the 4-H program in Colusa County are making an impact at regional, state, and national levels.

Several members recently participated in regional presentation events, earning top honors and qualifying for California 4-H State Field Day on May 23rd. The event brings together outstanding youth from across the state to showcase their skills.

In addition, one Colusa County member attended the 4-H IGNITE Conference in Washington DC, gaining leadership experience, building connections, and collaborating with peers from across the country.

Locally, University of California Cooperative Extension is currently accepting applications for a Community Education Specialist position to support and expand youth programming. Colusa County 4-H continues to provide valuable opportunities for youth to grow, lead, and succeed.

Master Gardener and Community Outreach Coordinator

The Master Gardeners have been actively harvesting vegetables for CCOE, conducting garden maintenance, and preparing for the planting of new vegetables and flowers. In May, the program will welcome five new trainees, followed by a graduation and volunteer appreciation event in June.



Orchards Report (Franz Niederholzer)

UCCE Orchards Advisor, Colusa and Sutter/Yuba Counties

May 19: Nickels Soil Lab Annual Field Day: Green Bay Rd site, almonds, and walnut talks. Agenda is included.

Almonds:

This April, storms are measured in inches with chances of rain into early May based on National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center (<https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>). Disease risk is up in all nut crops.

Nonpareil nut set in fertilizer trials at the Nickels Soil Lab is about 20%, down from the excellent levels (around 40% set) measured in those same trees last year. This isn't a surprise given what I'm hearing in the area but helps confirm that the Nonpareil crop numbers look off from a year ago.

Potassium and phosphorus fertilizer trials are continuing at the Nickels Soil Lab, along with the long-term projects in tree spacing, whole orchard recycling, pollinizer options for Nonpareil, and 'Independence' vs Nonpareil and pollinizers production. We continue to work towards a new planting in the fall of this year or spring of 2027.

Walnuts: Increased rain in April increases disease risk. Earlier bloom may move nitrogen fertilizer timing into April.

Pistachio: Hot (+90°F) bloom weather in the San Joaquin Valley appears to have reduced nut set in that important nut crop. I haven't heard reports of similar impacts in this area.

Please call (530) 218-2359 or email (fjniederholzer@ucanr.edu) with any questions or comments.

Check out sacvalleyorchards.com for latest meeting calendar, newsletter articles, and ET values.



NICKELS SOIL LAB ANNUAL FIELD DAY

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

6521 Green Bay Ave, Arbuckle, CA

2 hours (O) PCA CE credit hours requested 2 hours CCA CE hours **approved** (0.5 hour Nutrient Man, 0.5 hour Crop Man, 1.0 hour IPM).

8:30 am — Registration

Coffee and Donuts provided by **Farm Credit Services of Colusa-Glenn, ACA**

Cycle I: 9:20-10:45 am

- 1) **11 years of yield comparison: Independence & Nonpareil/pollinizers**
Franz Niederholzer, Orchards Advisor, UCCE Colusa and Sutter/Yuba Counties
- 2) **Advances in table olive harvesting**
Becky Wheeler-Dykes, UCCE Orchards Advisor, Glenn, Colusa, and Tehama Counties
- 3) **Protecting young trees from herbicide-induced trunk injury: recent research**
Ryan Hill, UCCE Agronomy and Weeds Advisor, Tehama, Glenn, and Shasta Counties
- 4) **Updates on almond Red Leaf Blotch epidemiology and management**
Renaud Travadon, Project Scientist, Department of Plant Pathology, UC Davis

Cycle II: 10:45 am -12:10 pm

- 5) **Understanding orchard variability: Making the most per acre**
Patrick Brown, Distinguished Professor, Plant Sciences Department, UC Davis
- 6) **Root Cause Analytics - A practical tool for managing orchard variability and maximizing ROI**
Dan Rooney, CEO LandScan, LLC
- 7) **Leaffooted plant bug monitoring tools**
Sudan Gyawaly, UC IPM Advisor, Sacramento Valley
- 8) **Walnut rootstock update and availability of test plants**
Andreas Westphal, Professor, Nematology Department, UC Riverside

12:15 pm – **BBQ Tri-Tip Lunch** (Pierce H.S. FFA fundraiser) by reservation.

Please call 530-458-0570 by May 12 (Tuesday) to reserve your lunch

If you wish to pay ahead, please send a check (\$20/lunch) made out to
“Pierce High School” to: UCCE Colusa County

P.O. Box 180
Colusa, CA 95932

Agronomy Report (Sarah Light)
UCCE Agronomy Advisor, Sutter/Yuba, and Colusa Counties

UC Davis Small Grains and Alfalfa/Forages Field Day will be held on May 7th at the UC Davis Field Facility. Continuing Education Units are available and lunch is provided. The agenda and registration link can be found at the UC Davis Small Grains website. Early registration is not required for attendance, though it helps plan for lunch.

The University of California Bulk Density and Soil Carbon Calculator is now live:
<https://californiabulkdensitycalculator.com/>

Bulk density is the relationship between the weight of soil and a known volume of soil. Bulk density can change with field management and bulk density is important for understanding changes to soil chemical properties. This website can be used to estimate soil bulk density based on saturation percentage and soil organic matter. Saturation percentage and soil organic matter can be measured in commercial soil labs and values inputted into the calculator to determine bulk density of the field.

Contact Sarah Light selight@ucanr.edu with any questions.

Irrigation and Water Resources Program (Curt Pierce)
UCCE Area Irrigation & Water Resources Advisor

Nothing to report

Dairy Report (Betsy Karle)
UCCE Dairy Advisor, based in Glenn County

Nothing to report
