

UCCE Master Gardener Program Colusa County



A Garden Runs Through It

March 2024

Whether it's a vegetable garden, houseplants or a landscape...

UCCE Master Gardener Program, Colusa County County Director, Franz Niederholzer

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Upcoming events

Listen to our Podcast



March

Landscape Tree Workshop March 9, 10 am Downtown Arbuckle

Plant Clinic at Griff's Feed and Seed March 23, 10—2 Colusa

April

Family Fair Saturday April 13, 10 to 2 pm Colusa County Fairgrounds

Advice to Grow by ... Ask Us!





Arbor Day Landscape Tree Workshop

UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County
Arbuckle Parks and Recreation

When: Saturday, March 9

10 am to noon

Where: La Vanche Park

Downtown Arbuckle



Schedule of talks

(every 20 minutes)

- The Value of a Tree Canopy
 - Strain > \$ Value
 - Benefits of Trees
- What Tree to Plant
 - Recommended Trees for Colusa County
 - Selectree

- Maintenance of Trees
 - Watering
 - Fertilizing
 - Pruning
- Is My Tree in Trouble?
 - Recognize Hazards
- Tree Planting and Staking
 - Tree PlantingDemonstration
 - Stake Removal



UCCE Master Gardener Program Colusa County



UC MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM OF COLUSA COUNTY

2024 **Spring Events**



Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

March 9, 10 am **Landscape Tree Workshop Downtown Arbuckle**

March 23, 10 am **Plant Clinic** Griff's Feed and Seed

April 13, 10 am **CCOE Family Fair Colusa County Fairgrounds**



University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources UCCE Master Gardener Program



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Activities at the Donna Critchfield Demonstration Garden

499 Margurite St., Williams

Vegetables

We have been harvesting the winter vegetable garden. So far, we have picked radishes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, sugar peas and broccolini. All the cauliflower and most of the cabbage has been harvested. The winter garden is winding down. The vegetables are harvested for the Ministerial Food Distribution and the Colusa County Office of Education Kitchen.

As you can see from the below picture, we have learned to not plant winter veggies in the last 2 rows.

We are planning the summer garden and will start planting in mid-March. We are looking to plant, in the raised beds, tomatoes, cucumbers, and green beans. In the ground, we want to plant peppers, eggplant and melons. We are so excited for spring!

Any other suggestions?

Landscape

We pruned the water-wise landscapes and they are looking good.

The blue Adirondack chairs are in the salvia area and they look awesome. A bench is in the landscape area, so you can enjoy the garden while sitting.

Weeds

The rain has been good for weeds. They are growing as fast as we pull them.
Weeds, weeds and weeds.

Raised beds

The new raised bed has been built! Soil has been ordered. Everything will be ready for spring vegetables.



Ornamental Plant of the Month

Growing Azaleas

Beloved for their delightfully bright and long-lasting flowers, azalea shrubs make a dazzling statement in the spring garden. But there are also varieties that flower in early summer and early fall. So, with a bit of planning, and a large enough garden, you can enjoy those delicious blooms for up to eight months!

Some are attractively fragrant, with a spicy or sweet, fruity aroma. And the foliage provides pretty fall colors as well. For the home gardener, what's important to remember is that they fall into two types: deciduous and evergreen.

Most evergreen varieties are native to Japan, with a few species each from China, Korea, and Taiwan.

The evergreens grown in home gardens are typically hybrids developed for improved qualities such as disease resistance, flowering time, and cold or heat tolerance.

The early bloomers typically flower from late winter through early spring. Midseason types flower in late spring, and the late group blossoms from early summer through fall.

Planting an assortment of different cultivars and species in your garden is an excellent way to enjoy their floral display for the entire growing season.

Shrubs are best planted in spring or fall. For a showy display, they require the right amount of light, and soil with an acidic pH that's moist and well-draining.

Here are the planting steps:

Before transplanting, water the plant thoroughly – it's very difficult for a dry root ball to absorb moisture once it's in the ground.

Create a planting hole two to three times the width of the root ball and the same depth as the container it's currently growing in. Mix in plenty of organic material such as well-aged compost, leaf mold, or shredded pine bark until the soil mixture is one-third to one-half organic humus. Carefully remove plants from their pots and examine the roots. Gently loosen and separate them, to encourage new growth. If the plants are root bound with a dense mat of fibrous roots visible on the surface of the pot, use a clean, sterile knife to slash the mat in four to six spots. Cut about two inches deep and space the slashes evenly around the root ball. Place in the hole, and check to ensure that the soil is level with the ground. Avoid sinking the root ball below the ground level to prevent roots from standing in water. Backfill with amended soil and using water, rather than your feet or hands, gently firm the plant in place. Apply a generous three to four-inch layer of organic mulch – pine bark, pine needle straw, shredded leaves, or straw around the base of the plant. Water slowly and thoroughly, allowing the soil to absorb the moisture without runoff.

Providing the correct lighting is a key factor to consider when planting azaleas. Too much sun and they're going

to shrivel up and suffer, but too little light and you'll have a flowering shrub without any flowers on it! Dappled sunlight is the solution. Also, avoid locating them directly under trees. Trees do provide filtered shade, but they also compete for water and nutrients, so place your shrubs at the edge of tree root zones. Rich organic matter in the soil is necessary for plant health, and azaleas prefer acidic soils with a pH between 4.5 and 6.0. It's vital to avoid sites that are prone to standing water.



Submitted by Bernice Dommer

Edible Plant of the Month

Growing Tomatoes

Spring is finally here and that means that tomato season is around the corner. Don't get too excited, though. Even though seedlings will be showing up in nurseries, it's best to wait to plant them.

Tomatoes need warm air and soil, as well as a lot of sunlight, to grow strong and healthy. Planting too early can leave them spindly and weak. March is a typical time of the year to plant tomatoes. One way to check if the soil is warm enough, is to sit on the ground and if it is comfortable then plant.

Choosing a proper location for your tomato garden is important. The spot should get several hours of sunlight each day. You may have a prime spot but don't overuse it. Like other members of the nightshade family, tomatoes nurture the soil fungi Fusarium and Verticillium. The soil can become infected if tomatoes are planted in the same location too many years in a row. Rotating your tomato planting locations, or changing out the soil in a raised bed, will prevent the fungus from affecting your vegetables.

Plant tomatoes deeply. First, remove a few leaves above the roots. Place the seedling at a slight angle in the hole. The plant's buried stem will push fresh roots, giving the young plant increased access to water and nutrients. Tomatoes also need a good deal of room to grow, so plant them at least two feet apart.

After your seedlings are planted in their beds, they need some nurturing. If you are concerned about hungry animals or other threats, cover the tomatoes with the top half of a large soda bottle. Not only can this keep them from becoming a snack, but it provides them with a personal greenhouse to keep them warm.

Tomatoes thrive with water, especially in the early days. Make sure to give them enough that the water soaks deep into the soil. This will ensure the plants get enough water immediately but will also encourage their roots to follow the water deep into the soil, helping the plants stay hydrated later.

Avoid extreme fluctuations in soil moisture. These conditions increase blossom end rot (early) and cracking (late). Mulching will help with even soil moisture and discourage weeds.

As your plants grow, they will likely require support. Some tomatoes are "determinant" and grow into a shrub only a few feet tall. Many others are "indeterminate," however, and will continue to grow like a vine until cold weather arrives.

For these motivated climbers you will need a tomato cage or other device such as stakes and trellises. You can use a few stakes placed in a circle around the plant, with loose string or plant tape strung between them. This structure provides enough support while also allowing easy harvest.

Tomatoes are self-pollinated, so it's possible to get fruit while growing only one plant. The pollen still needs to move from one flower to the next, though. To be sure this happens, give your plants a light shake every morning.

Healthy, vigorous transplants should not require additional fertilizer until flowering and fruit set are under way. Excessive nitrogen fertilizer will result in too much vine growth, delay flowering and attract pests. As fruit appear, add nitrogen fertilizer every 4 to 6 weeks. Follow instructions on fertilizer bag.

Experiment and find what practices work best in your garden. With hard work and little luck, you will be on the path to a bountiful harvest.



Submitted by Gerry Hernandez

Did you know? We have a Facebook page!

https://www.facebook.com/UcceMasterGardenersOfColusaCounty

We post pictures, gardening information, our events and lots of fun things about gardening!

Join Us!

Gardens I Have Visited

The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch®

I remember when travelling to southern California for the first time in 1954 seeing the amazing fields of flowers out the window of the car that appeared to go on for miles. Enormous fields in every imaginable color that went from the roadside to the hills. Most of those fields are now dedicated to houses these days but there is still a pocket or two you can visit that will still astonish you!

For over sixty years, Mother Nature has transformed the rolling hills of North San Diego County into one of the most spectacular and coordinated displays of natural color and beauty anywhere in the world. The 55-acres of Giant Tecolote Ranunculus flowers that make up The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch® in Carlsbad, California, are in bloom for approximately six to eight weeks each year – from early March through early May – literally bringing the famous fields back to life. This annual burst of color, which has become part of the area's local heritage, also is one of nature's official ways of announcing the arrival of spring here in Southern California. You will also find a Sweet Pea Maze, or take a tractor wagon ride through the fields. There is a cymbidium orchid greenhouse, the historical poinsettia display and an amazing fountain garden.

It's a bit of a trek from here but if you find yourself in the San Diego area it's a must see – you will remember it for a long time!!



Submitted by Cynthia White



SATURDAY APRIL 13TH 10AM TO 2PM

ACTIVITIES:

- Petting Zoo
- Face Painting
- Arts and Crafts
- And much more!

Located at Colusa County Fairgrounds

Main Exhibit Building:

1303 10th ST. Colusa, Ca 95932



530-458-0350

If interested in joining as a vender please contact Ashlyn Ferreira: aferreira@ccoe.net



SÁBADO 13DE ABRIL **10AM TO 2PM**

ACTIVIDADES:

- · Animales de granja
- Pinta caras
- Proyectos de arte
- · ¡Y mucho más!

En los terrenos de la feria de Colusa **Edificio Principal de Exposiciones:** 1303 10th ST. Colusa, Ca 95932



530-458-0350

Si está interesado en unirse como vendedor, comuníquese con Ashlyn Ferreira: aferreira@ccoe.net

Recipe of the Month

Whole Orange Snack Cake -- NY Times

6 tablespoons unsalted butter

- 1 medium navel orange
 - 1 tsp of zest removed and set aside for glaze
 - 4 tablespoons of juice squeezed and set aside for glaze ends then trimmed, the orange cut into large chunks, and seeds removed, if any
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 3/4 cup confectioners sugar
- 1 tsp orange zest
- 3-4 tsp orange juice

Set oven at 350

Prepare an 8" square pan

Line with parchment leaving ends hanging over the sides and butter the parchment

Process orange chunks and milk in a food processor or blender to the consistency of applesauce. You want a cup and a quarter (or a little more) of the orange mixture.

Beat butter and sugar together in a mixer until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.

Add eggs one at a time and beat well.

Mix dry ingredients together in a separate bowl or large cup.

Add to butter mixture half at a time, alternating with the orange sauce mixture.

Mix just to blend, do not overbeat!

Spread batter in the pan and bake until a toothpick comes out with moist crumbs, about 35 min.

Cool on a rack, then use the parchment paper to lift the cake from the pan.

Continue on the next page...

Continued from the previous page

Make the glaze by whisking together sugar and zest with juice.

Use less juice if you want it more like frosting.

or add more juice if you want a thin glaze that will soak into the cake.

Spread over the cake and serve.

TIP: Use binder clips to hold the parchment paper in place over the sides of the pan.

NOTES: Other types of oranges or even a tangelo should work, just watch for seeds.

I think this could also be done as a lemon cake with two "regular" lemons and some extra sugar.

If you had Meyer lemons, with their thin skins and lots of juice, you might need to add a little extra flour.



Submitted by Penny Walgenbach

Gardening Guide

UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County

Zones 8 and 9

	March	April	Мау
P L A N T I N G	 You can plant canna, gladiolus, and crocosmia for summer blooms. Early in the month you can still plant bare-root trees and shrubs. Don't be tempted by the plants in the garden centers unless you have a way to warm up the soil. It is still early for tomatoes, eggplant and peppers (although you could try late in the month if it is still warm.) Nights should be above 55°. 	 In a shady spot early in the month you can still plant pansies, violas, and primroses. You can plant dahlia tubers and transplant most perennials. As temperatures warm you can transplant tomatoes, eggplants and peppers. You can still plant seeds of cilantro, radishes, beets and chard. 	 Direct seed in the garden cucumbers, melons, summer squash, beans, corn, and annual herbs. Plant sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos, marigolds and aster in the flower garden.
M A I N T E N A N C	 Check your irrigation system and do necessary maintenance. Fertilize roses, annuals flowers, and berries with slow-release fertilizer when spring growth begins. Fertilize citrus and deciduous fruit trees. Prune and fertilize spring-flowering shrubs and trees after they finish blooming. 	 Fertilize shrubs and trees once this spring. Watch azaleas and camellias for yellowing between the veins in the leaves. If the leaf is yellowish, apply chelated iron to the plants. Trim the dead flowers but not the leaves from spring bulbs. The leaves restore the bulb; so wait to remove them until they turn yellow. Fertilize the bulbs after the bloom is finished with bone meal. 	 base of the plants. Trim the dead flowers but not the leaves from spring bulbs. Fertilize the bulbs after the bloom is finished with bone meal. Prune spring flowering shrubs
P R E V E N T I O N	 Watch for aphids on new growth on the roses; spray with a strong spray of water to remove them, or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil spray. Keep on the weed patrol; pull them while they are small. Use iron phosphate bait for slugs and snails 	Apply organic mulch to all beds to keep the soil cool and enrich the soil.	 Continue the battle against slugs and snails. Deadhead (cut off spent flowers) to get continuing bloom on annuals and perennials. Thin peaches, plums and nectarines so there is 6" between fruits.



MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM THINKING SAFE AND GREEN

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

#7

SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES

Information given here is intended for use by program representatives, master gardeners, and those they train.



Data available from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicates 4,215 traffic fatalities occurred in California during 2003. Of this total, 36% of the fatalities were speed related and 42% of the victims were not using seat belt restraints. NHTSA estimates the economic cost of California motor vehicle traffic crashes was approximately \$20.7 billion during 2000. Many motor vehicle accidents (and injuries) are preventable if drivers maintain a high level of alertness while

driving and follow safe driving practices, including wearing seat belt restraints. *Videos on safe driving practices are available for loan from the ANR Environmental Health & Safety Library at http://safety.ucanr.org.*

Safe Driving Practices

- Before changing lanes, turn your head to check mirror blind spots for other traffic. Always signal before passing other vehicles.
- Maintain a three to four second distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you.
- Always look in both directions when entering intersections, crosswalks, or railroad crossings.
- Do not rely on traffic signals to stop cross traffic. Always scan controlled intersections for oncoming cross traffic.
- Allow adequate room in front of you to stop. It takes about 400 feet to react and bring a car to a stop from a speed of 55 mph. Likewise at 35 mph, it takes about 210 feet.
- Reduce your speed when driving at night. Be prepared to stop within the distance lighted by your headlights.
- Use your high beams where appropriate. Dim your high beams when necessary.
- Reduce your driving speed to accommodate adverse weather conditions (i.e., heavy rain, snow, or fog).
- When driving in fog use your low beams, increase your following distance, and be prepared to stop within the distance you can see ahead.
- If the fog becomes too thick to sufficiently see ahead, stop driving, turn off your lights, and pull completely off the road. Continue driving when the fog thins and allows adequate road vision.
- When entering a freeway, merge at the speed of the freeway traffic. When exiting a freeway, signal your intention to exit for about five seconds.
- Always change freeway lanes one at a time. Signal your intention to change freeway lanes.
- Allow an adequate distance to oncoming traffic when attempting to pass another vehicle on a two-lane road. At 55 mph, you will need a distance of about one-third of a mile (1,750 feet) from oncoming traffic to pass safely.
- Always allow pedestrians, including bicyclists, the right-of-way in crosswalks.
- It is a good safety practice to avoid using a cellular telephone while operating a motor vehicle.

Always wear seat belt restraints and obey posted speed limits.

Seasonal Landscape IPM Checklist

March

- Abiotic Disorders Prevent or manage damage, such as that caused by aeration deficit, frost, hail, herbicides, wind, and too much or little water.
- <u>Anthracnose</u> e.g., on ash and sycamore Fungicides are generally not options for large trees other than ash.
- <u>Ants</u> Manage around landscape and building foundations, such as using insecticide baits and trunk barriers.
- <u>Aphids</u> On small plants, spray a strong stream of water or apply insecticidal oils and soaps. Look for and conserve <u>natural enemies</u> such as predaceous bugs, lacewings, lady beetles, and syrphids.
- <u>Asian citrus psyllid</u> Look for it and if found where not known to occur report it and other new or exotic pests to your local county agricultural commissioner.
- <u>Carpenter bees</u> Paint or varnish and seal wood in which they nest. If intolerable, treat tunnels during fall or early spring.
- <u>Carpenterworm</u> Protect trees from injury and provide proper cultural care, especially appropriate irrigation.
- <u>Citrus</u> Monitor for damage and pests such as caterpillars and scales.
- <u>Codling moth</u> of apple and pear Bag fruit. Promptly remove infested and dropped fruit. Apply insecticides only if precisely timed.
- <u>Compost</u> Turn and keep it moist. Cover during rainy weather if needed to avoid sogginess.
- Deter borers in fruit and nut trees e.g., <u>paint trunk and scaffolds with white</u> interior latex paint diluted with an equal amount of water.
- <u>Fertilize</u> caneberries, citrus, deciduous fruit trees, palms, and heavily-flowering shrubs with slow-release product.
- <u>Fire blight</u> Look for oozing and dead limbs on pome plants such as apple, crabapple, pear, and pyracantha. If a problem in the past, apply blossom sprays to prevent new infections.
- Frost Protect sensitive plants from cold injury when freezing or frost are predicted.
- Implement <u>disease and insect control</u> for apple, pear, stone fruits, nut trees, and deciduous landscape trees and shrubs such as roses.
- <u>Irrigation</u> Adjust watering schedules according to the weather and plants' changing need for water. Check systems for leaks and broken emitters and perform maintenance as needed. Consider upgrading the irrigation system to improve its water efficiency.
- <u>Mosquitoes</u> Eliminate standing water e.g., in gutters, drain pipes, and flowerpots. Place *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis* in birdbaths and ponds to selectively kill mosquito larvae.
- Mulch Apply organic mulch where thin or soil is bare beneath trees and shrubs.
- Oak pit scale Spray terminals with oil or apply another insecticide if scales are causing tree decline.
- Olive knot and oleander gall, or knot Avoid pruning olive and oleander during wet weather if stem galls are a problem.

- Olive psyllid Take action now if it was intolerable last year.
- <u>Peach leaf curl</u> Apply preventive spray once or more during late fall through bud break if leaf curl has been a problem on nectarine or peach.
- <u>Petal blight of azalea, rhododendron</u>, and <u>camellia</u> Remove and discard old flowers. Apply fresh organic mulch beneath plants.
- <u>Powdery mildew</u> Check for signs of disease on apple, crape myrtle, grape, rose, and stone fruits.
- Root rot Favored by excessive water and poor drainage. Avoid overirrigation and waterlogged soil.
- Rose pests Manage or take preventive actions, such as for aphids, black spot, Botrytis blight, downy mildew, hoplia beetle, powdery mildew, thrips, and rust.
- <u>Scab</u> of apple, crabapple, and pear Avoid sprinkler wetting of leaves. Compost or dispose of dropped leaves. Grow resistant cultivars or apply preventive fungicides.
- <u>Stone fruit pests</u> Monitor for pests such as aphids, borers, brown rot, caterpillars, powdery mildew, and scale insects.
- <u>Weeds</u> Manage weeds using nonchemical methods such as <u>cultivation</u>, handweeding, or mowing.
- Yellowjackets Place out and maintain lure traps or water traps.

Master Gardener activities!



In today's fast paced, social media way of life, fake news has become normal.

This includes fake gardening advice.

UC Master Gardeners use cutting edge, research-based information to help you garden better.

We are practical, connected and trusted.

Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

Tomorrow's activities are created by today's dreamers—you can make sure that the UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County is still working to help future generations through your support.

Click here to support us.

Science Word of the Month

Soil—The natural medium on the surface of the earth composed of minerals, organic mater, water, air, and various organisms, in which plants typically grow.

If you attended one of your workshops, you will receive an email from mgevaluation@ucanr.edu. Your input gives us the tools we need to grow and improve our program. *Thank you!*



Ants

Although ants are annoying when they come indoors, they can be beneficial by feeding on fleas, termites, and other pests in the garden.



Argentine ants trailing on pavement.

Spraying them with pesticides will not prevent more ants from entering. Most ants live outdoors, so focus on keeping ants from entering buildings. Combine several methods such as caulking entryways, cleaning up food sources, and baiting with pesticides when necessary. Avoid spraying pyrethroids (like bifenthrin and cypermethrin), especially on hard surfaces such as driveways or sidewalks or around the foundation of buildings. These products pollute waterways.

Make your home less attractive to ants.

- · Caulk cracks and openings that provide entry into buildings.
- · Store food in clean, sealed containers.
- Clean up crumbs, grease, and spills.
- Fix leaky faucets since they can attract thirsty ants.
- Take out the garbage and clean trash cans regularly.
- · Remove or manage sweet food sources next to your house such as aphid-infested bushes and ripened fruit
- Keep plants, grass, and mulch at least a foot away from the foundation of buildings to reduce ant foraging and nesting.

When ants invade your home.

- · Sponge up invading ants with soapy water as soon as they enter to remove the scent trail.
- · Identify where they are coming in from and plug up with
- Take infested potted plants outdoors and submerge pots in a solution of insecticidal soap and water.
- Outdoors, use baits to control the ant colony. Pesticide sprays only provide temporary control and may not be safe to use indoors.
- If you hire a pest control company, ask them to use baits and spot treatments rather than perimeter treatments or monthly sprays.

How ant baits work:

Pesticide baits work by attracting worker ants who then take the product back to the nest where the entire colony, including queens, can be killed. The pesticide must be slow acting so workers won't be killed before they get back to the nest.



Ant bait stations.

How to use baits:

- · Place baits near ant trails and nest openings.
- Prepackaged or refillable bait stations or stakes are the safest and easiest to use. Active ingredients in baits may include boric acid/borate, fipronil, avermectin, or hydramethylnon.
- Liquid borate (0.5-1% borate in sugar water solution) baits in refillable bait stations are best for severe Argentine ant infestations.
- Replace baits when empty. If ants aren't taking the bait, reposition the bait stations, or try a different bait product. It can take 5 to 10 days to see fewer ants.

What you do in your home and landscape affects our water and health.

- Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways and harm human health.
- Use nonchemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible.
- Read product labels carefully and follow instructions on proper use, storage, and disposal.











Garden Club of Colusa County activities

March 25, 6:30 St. Stephens Church Colusa

Did a friend send you this newsletter?

 You can get your own newsletter sent directly to your inbox by <u>clicking here</u>.



Additional Links

Integrated Pest Management <u>ipm.ucanr.edu</u>

UC Davis Arboretum <u>arboretum.ucdavis.edu</u>

Invasive Plants <u>www.cal-ipc.org</u>

Plant Right <u>www.plantright.org</u>

Save Our Water <u>saveourwater.com</u>

California Garden Web cagardenweb.ucanr.edu

McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens turtlebay.org

UCANR Colusa County cecolusa.ucanr.edu

UC Master Gardener Program (statewide) mg.ucanr.edu

California Backyard Orchard homeorchard.ucanr.edu

ANR publications anreatalog.ucanr.edu

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Website: http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/.

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