

Status Update on Farmbudsman Program Activities for 2019

Solano County

Presented to the Solano County Board of Supervisors
February 25, 2020
County Administrator's Office

Program Background

- In 2007, the Board created a Farm Assistance Revitalization and Marketing (FARM) Coordinator position in the Solano County Ag Department.
- In 2013, in partnership with Yolo County, the Board created the Farmbudsman position which would be hosted by the Solano SBDC.
- In 2016, Yolo County decided to house the function within its Ag Dept.
- In 2017, the Solano County Farmbudsman position was filled, and Humbolt State University hosted SBDC until early 2019, when the Workforce Development Board became the new host for Solano SBDC, where the Farmbudsman now resides.



Managed/Supported by the Solano SBDC

The Mission of the Solano SBDC is to provide guidance and resources to support the growth of small businesses in Solano County

As of 2019, the Workforce Development Board became the host of the SBDC

Major focus on outreach and generating economic impact

Farmbudsman Expectations

- Preserve and enhance agriculture as a viable industry for its cultural, environmental and economic benefit.
- Provide support and expertise to Solano County based farmers, ranchers, and agriculture- related businesses
- Provide regulatory support and advice in complying with regulatory process
- Facilitate and expedite development of promising value-added agricultural projects
- Support the County in maintaining a strong understanding of the agricultural community.
- Generate economic impact



Additional Activities

Attend meetings with agricultural groups in the County

Follow industry news to keep up with various aspects of agriculture and emerging challenges

Direct farmers to agency resources they may not be aware of

Resource for farming/agricultural questions for both farmers and the general public

Working to enhance farmer's markets where opportunities are available



2019 Farmbudsman Economic Impacts on Agricultural Businesses

- Jobs created: 6 full time, 15 part time
- Loans/Equity/Owner investments: over \$821,000 by several clients
- Five agricultural business starts
- Sales increase \$93,000



Key Areas of Focus 2020

- Focus on farmer outreach to identify and serve 15-20 new clients in 2020
- Identifying opportunities for farmers to grow business and develop partnerships
- Facilitate possible use of the Solano Grown brand to help local farmers differentiate themselves and grow sales



Outreach Strategy 2020

- Plan and conduct three workshops at the SBDC office in Fairfield- which provides value to farmers, and attracts new clients.
 - Succession Planning- March 19, 2020
 - Financial management for agricultural business- May 2020
 - Access to Funding for farmers- late summer 2020
- Update and distribute flyers promoting Farmbudsman services
- Attend SBDC networking series events, including various Chamber of Commerce activities throughout county
- Utilize Workforce Development's access to data, reach out to new businesses
- Leverage SBDC relationships/networks with restaurants to discuss local opportunities to utilize in-county agricultural products
- Expand presence and use of the Solano Farmbudsman Facebook page in concert with SBDC, WDB, and Economic Development Center promotions
- Develop Quarterly newsletter to be sent to the 50 or so certified agricultural producers within Solano County.

Questions?

