



PlacerGROWN's Master AGvocate Program

A Community Agricultural Leadership Program

Overview

AGvocate: *an informed community member who 1) advocates for local agriculture by supporting local farms, farm initiatives and events that promote local agriculture, 2) encourages "Buy Local" opportunities and 3) speaks to civic organizations and volunteers in support of local agriculture.*

Program Timeline: August 31 - November, 2011

Purpose

PlacerGROWN's Master AGvocate Program will educate community members about Placer County agriculture through a series of classroom and on-farm workshops and visits.

The Master AGvocate Program addresses two of PlacerGROWN's key objectives:

- ❖ Develop expanded demand for locally grown and processed foods
- ❖ Promote a sustainable local food system

Participants will learn about the history of agriculture in Placer County and the economic contribution that agriculture makes to our county, learn directly from farmers and ranchers about their businesses, and explore the diversity of products grown and raised in Placer County.

Program areas will be offered in eight classroom and field sessions. A 500-word essay and one community service project are a requirement for graduation.

Graduates will receive a Certificate of Achievement from PlacerGROWN and will be available to make presentations to civic organizations, volunteer at PlacerGROWN and other community events and to help create and enhance programs that promote the region's local food system.

Program registration will include PlacerGROWN Community Membership, course and reference materials.

Program Areas

- Introduction to Placer County Agriculture – Overview of agencies and organizations that support agriculture in Placer County.
- Foothill Farmers Market Association – visit to Farmers' Market, followed by market-fresh lunch and inside look at FFMA's certified farmers markets.
- Citrus Production- Mountain Mandarin Growers Association, history of the Placer County Citrus Colony, visit to a mandarin orchard, citrus production today.
- Vineyard & Wine Grape Production – Placer County Vintners Association, Placer County Wine and Grape Association, visit to commercial winery, vineyard tour, history of winemaking in the Sierra Foothills, wine grape production today.

- Livestock Production –visit to local ranch, Livestock production in Placer County, Opportunities & Challenges, Where to buy local meat.
- Produce , CSA & Fruit Orchards– visit to local farm/orchard; learn about raising fruit & vegetables and outlets for sale including Community Supported Agriculture, direct sales, wholesale options.
- The Placer County Food Shed & the “Eat Local” challenge. Typically, local residents source only 1-2% of their food locally. How can Master AGvocate graduates advocate to change that? Discussion to form the basis of required essay.
- One or more community service projects (group or individual) related to agriculture
- Graduation
- Ongoing liaison with PlacerGROWN to fulfill requests for speakers, volunteers and other opportunities in the community