

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

JULY/AUGUST 2014

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

- p. 1 – Owls welcome
- p. 2 – What's Growing
- p. 4 – Recipe: Sam's Smoothie
- p. 5 – Heat Wave? What to do with the kids
- p. 7 – Sustainability Camp
- p. 8 – Winter Visitor Dates now available!

Find us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/UCfarmsmart

DREC gets burrowing owl habitat



Habitat at DREC



Adult burrowing owl

Burrowing owls have been making their home in burrows along canals at DREC for years. On July 29, participants were able to receive continuing education credits for observing and helping install a nesting box to encourage more owls to make their home at DREC. Crickets were placed around the entrances to entice the owls to move in.

HAVE A PHOTO TO SHARE? QUESTION?
ARTICLE IDEA? SEND THEM TO US!

FARM SMART is an educational outreach program of the Desert Research and Extension Center in Holtville, CA. It began in 2001 and continues to grow and educate visitors of all ages. Contact FARM SMART at 760-356-3067, surie@ucanr.edu, on the web at drec.ucanr.edu or facebook.com/UCfarmsmart or 1004 E Holton Rd Holtville, CA.

WHAT'S GROWIN' ON?

Today's
Temperature:

103° Fahrenheit

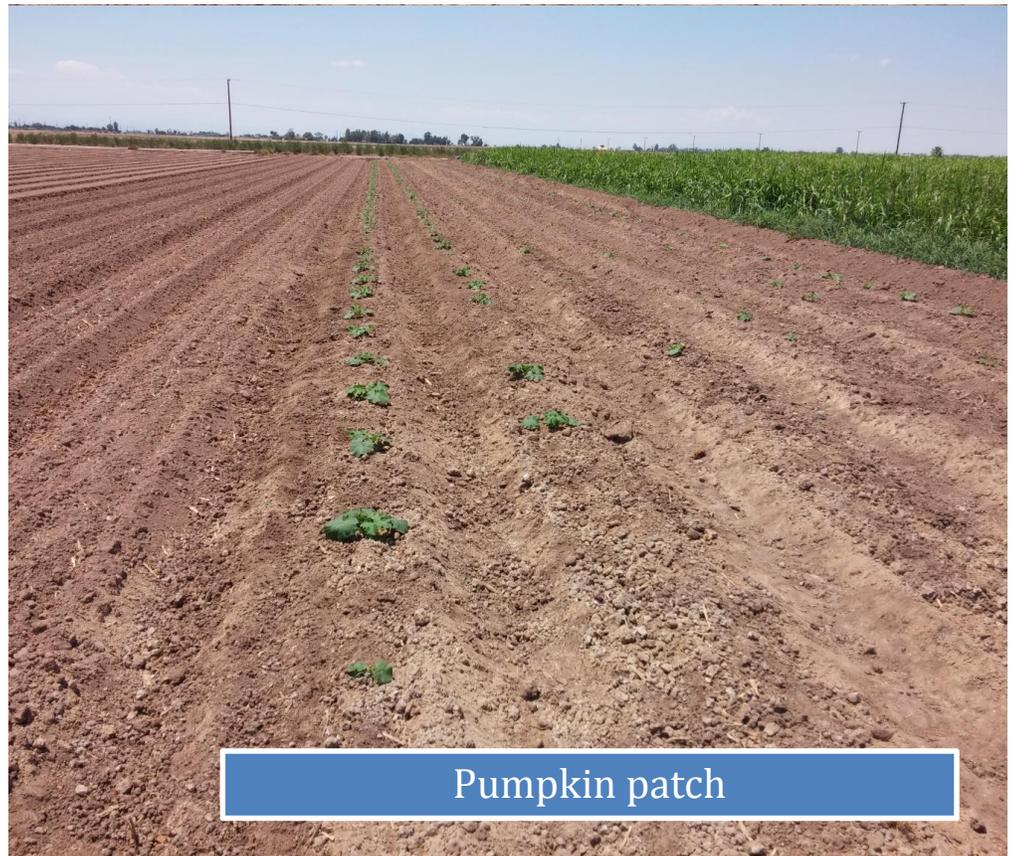
Current Crops:

Sudangrass, alfalfa,
melons, corn,
sorghum, cotton

The FARM SMART garden will become a lot more efficient this year. The beds have been shaped and covered in plastic to eliminate weed seed. All beds now have subsurface drip as well. Not only do we expect better yields, but no more muddy field to walk through! A big thank you to all the Center staff that made this possible!



Pumpkins have been planted for the fall!



Pumpkin patch

WHAT'S GROWIN' ON?



Olives



Cotton



Cotton



Melons



Sudangrass



FARM SMART garden

FARM SMART RECIPES

Sam's Summer Smoothie

This is my own recipe, and includes plenty of fiber. All measurements are approximate! Make sure your blender can handle all of the stress!

Ingredients:

- 1 large handful of kale
- 1 banana
- Two large handfuls of berries (frozen berries work well)
- 1 carrot
- 1/2 of a lemon
- 1/2 cup yogurt (I like to use greek plain or vanilla)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup 100% apple juice
- Ground ginger to taste
- Cinnamon to taste

Directions:

Blend for a few minutes or until large chunks are (mostly) gone. Frozen berries make the finished product more refreshing. Feel free to substitute according to what you have on hand. Kiwifruit is a nice addition. I've substituted spinach and/or broccoli with good results. Apple juice can be left out if you don't want all the sugar. If your kale was especially bitter, add a little honey. I generally end up with two large glasses full.



Bring the Outside In

Stephanie Collins, FARM SMART Staff

The kids are out of school, and most likely the summer heat has not zapped the energy and excitement that is naturally present in the summer. It might persuade them not to go outside much though. This means that parents may have no choice but to come up with something fun and entertaining to do indoors. Need some ideas? In fact, wouldn't it be nice if the kids could actually do something a little educational while they are being entertained indoors. Even more, what if the kids could learn about agriculture and where their food comes from... while being educational... while being fun...while being indoors. Whew, that's a lot to accomplish right? Well...listed below is just that: fun, indoor, agricultural, learning activities to do with children indoors.

• **Eggshell Gardening**

Next time you make eggs for breakfast, take a needle and poke a hole through the big end of the shell. This serves as a drainage hole. Then break the shells so the bottom 2/3 of the shell is intact. Save the egg carton but remove the lid. Have the child soak seeds in water for 24 hours before planting. It helps the seeds germinate faster. Place the egg shells back in the carton. Fill with wet but not soggy new potting soil. Have the child plant the seeds ¼ to ½ inch deep in the soil. Cover the egg carton and planted shells with plastic wrap. Place in a sunny window. When the seeds sprout remove the plastic wrap. You can transplant into a larger container egg shell and all.

Try planting herbs or sprouting alfalfa. These are plants that grow quickly, can be harvested easily indoors and used right away in delicious summer recipes. Check out "Alfalfa Sushi Rolls", a FARM SMART favorite on our Facebook page.

• **Root Garden**

Cut the top inch off of root vegetables such as carrots, beets, turnips, and sweet potatoes. Place in flat bottom glass dishes on top of a layer of marbles. The marbles keep the cutting off the bottom and give the roots a chance to grow. More than one root cutting may be placed in the same dish. Fill the dish with water up to the crown of the cutting. The water should not submerge the cutting. Place in a sunny window and in a few days the tops will start to sprout new leaves.

It doesn't take a gardening expert to 'get growing indoors.' Indoor gardening can be a fulfilling and rewarding experience for your children, and there are so many activities from which to choose. So whether you decide to start some plants from seed, start an herb garden, or decorate some containers, just remember to 'Let it Grow, Let it Grow!'

- **Grow seeds of knowledge**

Children who read throughout the summer gain skills, can start the new school year with a better understanding of language and the world around them, and discover the joy of reading. Almost everything we do presents an opportunity to read. When you're eating breakfast, read the cereal box; if you're in a restaurant, read the menu. Have you ever wondered how plants grow or what it's like to drive a tractor? There are a number of excellent books with accurate information about agriculture to satisfy your curiosity and also entertain. A few FARM SMART favorites:



How Did That Get In My Lunch Box?



And The Good Brown Earth



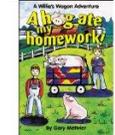
Planting A Rainbow



The Wheat Doll



Watermelon Day



A Hog Ate My Homework

- **Virtual Ag**

Today's kids are whizzes with computers and all things virtual/digital, so with parental monitoring, the Internet is a great source of "funucational" learning games on hundreds of subjects including agriculture and food processing. These games correspond to various aspects of agriculture: mathematical, scientific, and social. Children can play these games and learn about the concepts addressed in them while having fun. Some recommended websites are: myamericanfarm.com or kidsfarm.com or farmsfoodfun.com

Summer is one of a child's most fun and memorable seasons. But when it's just too hot to be outside, bring the outside inside with these suggestions for discovering our foods incredible journey from planting of the seed to the time we eat it.

- This article originally appeared in the Imperial Valley Press and is also available on the DREC blog at <http://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=14815>

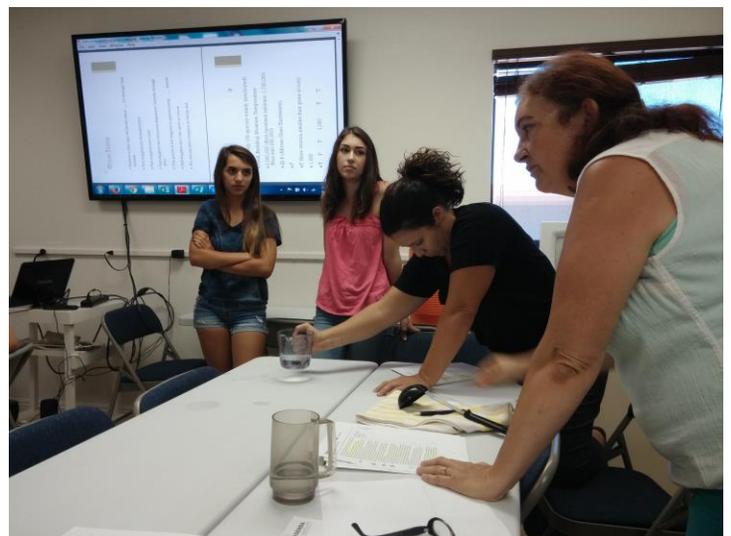
4-H, FARM SMART, and CalFresh Team Up to Plan Sustainability Camp

Staff at DREC and Imperial County Cooperative Extension are teaming up to deliver "Sustainable You!", a five-day summer camp designed by Dr. Roslynn Brain of Utah State University. Each day of the camp has a theme: Land, Air, Energy, Water, and Food. DREC staff attended a train-the-trainer workshop put on by Dr. Brain earlier this year at Hansen REC in Ventura County, CA. (For more information about Hansen REC's recent camp, [click here](#))

On July 1st, 4-H members, their parents, and DREC and UCCE staff met to brainstorm ideas, discuss fundraising, and pass on the vision for the camp to the 4-H senior (high school) members who will become the camp counselors and directors through guidance from DREC and UCCE staff.

With contributions from all participants, the camp has a tentative launch date of June 15-19 of 2015 with DREC as the host site. Ideas such as trips to local recycling centers, the Salton Sea, geothermal plants, and many others were discussed as a way of incorporating local Valley resources into the camp. The 4-H youth are excited; one high school senior just finished a course on sustainability and is motivated to pass on his knowledge to the camp's target audience of 4th-6th graders. 4-H, CalFresh, and FARM SMART/DREC staff reconvened August 5th to further discuss next summer's camp. 4-H members elected officers to take on responsibilities of the camp and further their leadership skills. Participants delved deeper into the curriculum and tried out an activity called "The Importance of Water". Participants discovered just how little precious freshwater is available for use. The next meeting will be held September 10th.

Find out more about sustainability efforts [HERE](#).





FARM TOURS

2015 FARM SMART Program

FARM SMART tours feature a research field tour, “u-pick” fresh vegetables, lunch, program about Yuma/Imperial Valley agriculture, entertainment, prizes, and ice cream!



THE REVIEWS ARE IN!!!

Trip Advisor: “Unexpected delight!” 5/5
 “Interesting, informative, fun day trip!” 5/5 “Good time, great produce”



Cost: \$20 cash only

SCHEDULE:

Registration: 9:00 AM Pacific Time

Program: 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM PT

Please note PT is one hour behind Yuma.

LOCATION:

1004 E Holton Rd

Holtville, CA 92250

Located 8 miles east of El Centro, CA

RESERVATIONS

Three easy ways to register:

- Online: drec.ucanr.edu
- Email: Date and number of attendees to surie@ucanr.edu
- Call/text: 760-791-0261



PROGRAM DATES

JANUARY

Jan. 15	Thursday
Jan. 16	Friday
Jan. 21	Wednesday
Jan. 22	Thursday
Jan. 23	Friday
Jan. 27	Tuesday
Jan. 28	Wednesday
Jan. 29	Thursday
Jan. 30	Friday

FEBRUARY

Feb. 2	Monday
Feb. 3	Tuesday
Feb. 4	Wednesday
Feb. 5	Thursday
Feb. 9	Monday
Feb. 10	Tuesday
Feb. 11	Wednesday
Feb. 12	Thursday
Feb. 13	Friday
Feb. 18	Wednesday
Feb. 19	Thursday
Feb. 20	Friday
Feb. 23	Monday
Feb. 24	Tuesday
Feb. 25	Wednesday
Feb. 26	Thursday

****Space is limited, please make reservations****

- Dates subject to weather -

UC Desert Research and Extension Center

Phone: 760-356-3067 • Web: drec.ucanr.edu, [facebook.com/UCfarmsmart](https://www.facebook.com/UCfarmsmart)

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources