
Position description

Director of Agricultural Programs

Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County

11769 Waterhill Rd., Lakeside, CA 92040

Phone: [\(619\) 562-0096](tel:(619)562-0096) Fax: (619) 562-4799

Website: www.rcdsandiego.org

Full-time, \$42.84 - \$50.55 per hour, depending on experience

This position is posted at Level I of the Department Director classification of the RCD's salary scale

Reports to: Executive Director

The Resource Conservation District (RCD) of Greater San Diego County connects people to resources that strengthen the land, wildlife, and communities. We work across the majority of San Diego County on a variety of program areas, including wildfire resilience, climate-smart agriculture, education, pollinator habitat, and community garden management.

Through its Agriculture Department, the RCD supports farmers and ranchers to implement climate-smart agricultural practices, monitor the benefits of conservation practices, and connect with resources and educational opportunities. The Agriculture Department provides technical assistance, conservation planning, and application support to San Diego agricultural producers with funding from the CA Department of Conservation, CA Department of Food and Agriculture, CA Wildlife Conservation Board, United States Natural Resources Conservation Service and others.

The Director of Agricultural Programs is an integral member of the Executive Director's team whose primary responsibilities are to oversee the Agriculture Department's funding and programming and to oversee the field team in their support of agricultural producers in the district to adopt conservation practices on working lands. Toward that end, the Agriculture Department delivers the following key services:

- Soil Sampling
- Farm Planning
- Irrigation Evaluations
- Community Garden Support
- On-Farm Habitat Design
- Practice Demonstration Monitoring
- Practice Incentive Application Assistance

The Agriculture Department is also supported by the Southern California Soil and Water Hub Coordinator in regional advocacy efforts on behalf of agricultural producers and directly collaborates with the RCD's Education Department to deliver educational workshops for professionals and career education for aspiring farmers.

Conserving Our Natural Resources

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Responsibilities

Program Development and Implementation

- Develop and implement Agriculture Department programs that align with the RCD mission and strategic plan in collaboration with RCD staff and partners.
- Track and report on department activities and metrics in alignment with the RCD strategic plan, ensuring timely completion of deliverables and grant reporting.
- Strategically identify funding opportunities with the Executive Director and Director of Finance and prepare grant proposals for agricultural programs with input from team members, based on funding needs for existing team members and public demand for services.
- Oversee management of department databases, including internal producer contacts, program partners, funding opportunities, program metrics, and qualified vendors.
- Communicate with the public about department activities by overseeing the generation of media and outreach materials.
- Develop partnerships that strengthen the access to and delivery of RCD Agriculture programs with team member support, in collaboration with the Hub Coordinator for regional partnerships.
- Represent the RCD and advocate on behalf of agricultural producers in coordination with team members at meetings, advisory councils, and workshops in San Diego County, coordinating with the Executive Director and Hub Coordinator for regional or statewide representation and advocacy.
- Stay informed on current developments in regenerative agriculture and related sectors.
- Ensure program operations, activities, and contracts adhere to legal guidelines and internal policies, and are compliant with the laws, policies, and standards of special districts and government codes, with oversight from the Executive Director and Finance Director, receiving training where appropriate.

Team Leadership

- Work with team members to set and achieve program goals and metrics tied to grant deliverables and the RCD strategic plan in service of farmers and ranchers.
- Manage Agriculture Department team members' activities and workload for successful implementation of departmental programs and grant deliverable timelines, using team meetings and program meetings to encourage collaboration.
- Review technical reports produced by team members directly or by delegation; contract technical reporting to qualified vendors when capacity is limited, while ensuring accountability.
- Guide team members to cultivate relationships with individual agricultural producers and practice demonstration leaders and build trust with the agricultural community.
- Support team member professional development by conducting annual reviews, regular check-ins, and strategically assigning individual training for team function.
- Maintain accurate job descriptions, facilitate department hiring and support Human Resources procedures, receiving training where appropriate.

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- Support the communication of information between RCD Board of Directors, staff leadership, and Department team members by preparing monthly reports of Department activities toward the RCD strategic plan and attending RCD board meetings.

Organizational Support

- Participate in the RCD Management Team to ensure consistency of program implementation by the Agriculture Department within the RCD as a whole and update team of current organizational activities and policies.
- Coordinate with RCD Directors and Managers to foster exchange of ideas and provide cross-team learning opportunities, inter-departmental communication, and the allocation of tasks and resources as needed.
- Review organizational budget and provide input on Agriculture Department activities, anticipated grant funds, and anticipated needs.
- Provide input to RCD Management Team with hiring and terminations, employee placement, training, development, and communication of payroll compensations and benefit packages.
- Support the implementation of the RCD Strategic Plan and general strategic direction.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or higher in agriculture, natural resource management, environmental science, or a related conservation field.
- At least three years of professional experience in program management in agriculture or a related field.
- Knowledge of environmental science, regenerative farming systems, and land management practices that conserve natural resources.
- Experience with grant proposal development and program management.
- Experience supervising employees and supporting professional development.
- Experience working collaboratively and maintaining relationships with a range of partners, including landowners, researchers, and public agencies.
- Experience working with farmers, ranchers, and growers in San Diego County or elsewhere, including outreach to historically underserved agricultural producers.
- Experience writing conservation plans, carbon farm plans, or similar planning documents.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team – in the office and in the field.
- Highly motivated, organized, and self-directing with the ability to prioritize workloads to meet deadlines and goals to fulfill grant obligations.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong computer skills, including Microsoft Suite, mapping tools and farm planning models.
- Commitment to the Resource Conservation District's mission to protect, conserve, and restore natural resources.

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- Creativity, sense of humor, “can do” spirit, collegiality, flexibility, strong desire to learn.
- Valid CA driver’s license and current auto insurance.

Desired qualifications

- Bilingual in English and Spanish.
- Experience working in a governmental setting.
- Experience working on a commercial farm.

Compensation and Benefits

The RCD offers a competitive salary and benefits package:

- Full Time (40 hours)
- After successful completion of a 90-day orientation period:
 - Participation in the RCD’s health insurance plan.
 - Participation in RCD 457b retirement plan.
 - Phone stipend of \$50 per month.
 - Thirteen paid holidays, two floating holidays, and thirteen days of paid time off (PTO) in your first year of service, rising to eighteen days of PTO after the first year.

Schedule and Location

Schedule and Location: Working hours are generally flexible within normal business hours (between 8AM – 5PM), with occasional events outside of normal working hours. Work is primarily office-based, with occasional field work. Work format is hybrid, with at least three days per week reporting to the RCD office in Lakeside. Partner meetings and field visits occur throughout San Diego County.

To apply

To apply: Submit a resume and cover letter explaining your interest in the position and why you are a good fit by Monday September 28, 2026. Application may be emailed to ann.baldridge@rcdsandiego.org. Please call [619-562-0096](tel:619-562-0096) with any questions.

The RCD is an equal opportunity employer. We consider qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, disability, marital status, or protected veteran.

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