University Farm
Paul L. Byrne Memorial
Agricultural Teaching & Research Center

Welcome to the University Farm!
The Paul L. Byrne Memorial Agricultural Teaching and Research Center is the living laboratory for agricultural classes, applied research, and student projects. We also host dozens of events for the community each year, including educational field days, industry trainings, Farm City Celebration, and youth competitions.

Quick Facts:
- 800 acres on Hegan Lane
- 240 acres of rangeland north of Chico
- Numerous orchard and field crops
- Nursery & greenhouses
- Sheep and goats, swine, dairy, and beef cattle
- USDA-inspected meats laboratory
- 100 student employees every year
- 16 full-time staff members

For the College of Agriculture and upcoming events: http://www.csuchico.edu/ag

Self-Guided Tour

1. Agricultural Machinery
Machinery found on the University Farm includes a wide range of tractors, harvesters, and other implements. Machinery is manufactured by international companies such as John Deere and Case IH as well as local machinery manufacturers, including Weiss-McNair and Thomas Manufacturing. Some manufacturers and dealers have generously donated the use of their equipment to the University Farm on a seasonal basis to assist with planting, harvesting, and other student work.

2. Swine Unit
The Chico State Swine Unit specializes in producing hogs for 4-H and FFA projects each year. The unit is managed by a team of students who attend to the health, nutrition, breeding, and well-being of the animals. Primary breeds are Yorkshire and Yorkshire-crossbreds.

3. Beef Unit
The Chico State beef unit includes approximately 50 purebred Angus and Red Angus cows, a small Angus-based crossbred commercial herd, a small Hereford herd, a feeding facility for approximately 150 head, 100 acres of irrigated pasture located at the farm, and winter range located north of Chico. Students responsible for many of the day-to-day management decisions, and are actively involved in long-term strategic planning.

4. Dairy Unit
Chico State has the first University-based grass-fed organic dairy in the Western United States, and one of only two nationwide. Our students learn about sustainable milk production practices and manage the herd as members of our dairy management team. The milk is sold to the Organic Valley Family of Farms Cooperative.

5. Irrigated Pasture
Pasture is an important source of forage for beef cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and dairy cattle, and is often grown on soils and terrains that are not suitable for other types of agriculture. Properly managed pastures can improve soil quality, expand biodiversity, and minimize the invasion of non-native plant species. At Chico State, irrigated pastures support our organic dairy unit, beef unit, and sheep unit with year-round grazing.

6. Nursery/Greenhouses
The greenhouses and nursery provide students the opportunity to grow plants in various controlled environments. A variety of classes use the greenhouses for hands-on experience, including the agricultural experimental research (AGRI 490) class. In addition to laboratory and research activities, we also grow native plants for local restoration projects in the northern Sacramento Valley.

7. Organic Vegetable Project
The one-acre Organic Vegetable Project seasonally provides produce for the CSU, Chico Associated Students Food Services. The project received original funding from the Earl Foor Foundation, CSU, Chico Institute for Sustainable Development, the CSU Agricultural Research Initiative, and the AS Sustainability Fund.
8. Orchards
The University Farm orchard crops include almonds, walnuts, pecans, peaches, and olives. Students receive hands-on instruction in orchard production and management. The nuts are sold to local processors and marketers. The U-Pick Peach Orchard is open seasonally, usually in early August, and is a summertime tradition for many local families. Our newest enterprise, a 10-acre high density olive orchard, was developed with the assistance of the North State olive oil industry.

9. Field Crops
The University Farm annually produces a wide variety of field crops ranging from wheat to safflower seeds. These crops are grown to feed our livestock (corn, alfalfa, grain hay for silage) or under contract with seed companies. Students are provided with beneficial experience through varying methods of production including conventional, low input, and organic.

10. Irrigation Training Facility
The Irrigation Training Facility is used to train irrigation district personnel, growers, and students to measure water and control its flow. The facility was built using funds from Bureau of Reclamation grants and the California Public Utilities Commission. Courses designed to promote water conservation are held regularly on the University Farm. The two canals are used to demonstrate flow measurement and canal level control. The system is fed by a series of pumps that can deliver up to 2,500 GPM or water that is re-circulated from a cistern beneath the facility. A variety of flow measurement devices are built into the system, including simple weirs to Doppler (sound) flow meters. The pumps can be monitored for flow and power consumption to demonstrate pumping efficiency under different conditions. The entire system is monitored by a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system that is housed in a remote building. SCADA facilities are located at various pumping stations across the University Farm and can be used to control water deliveries on irrigation districts and on the farm.

11. Meats Lab
Chico State’s meats laboratory is a USDA inspected facility that provides students with hands-on experience in meat processing and food safety, and is closely integrated into many animal science and food safety courses in the College of Agriculture. The meats lab works with Sierra Nevada Restaurant & Taproom on a niche market, natural beef product. This project provides students with a unique opportunity to see how to develop and market a value-added product. Meat is available for sale on Thursdays and Fridays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

12. Sheep and Goat Unit
The Chico State Sheep & Goat Unit provides students with access to learning all aspects of small ruminant management, economics, and marketing while developing interpersonal and leadership skills. The primary production goal is to produce quality youth project animals for a reasonable price. We raise Suffolk and Hampshire lambs and Boer goats.