RCDMC Conservation Field Day with Victor Cortes

March 4, 2026

On March 4, 2026, the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC) held a Conservation Field Day with farmer Victor Cortes at La Granjita Organica in Hollister, CA. The event was designed to showcase our collaborative work with Victor, who grows 2 acres of mixed vegetables on a 10-acre parcel that he purchased a few years ago. Victor shared about his journey to land ownership and all of the conservation practices and technical and financial assistance programs that support his farm, including: a loan from the Farm Service Agency; a contract with the California Department of Food Agriculture's State Water Efficiency & Enhancement Program to install solar panels and an electric pump; a contract with the Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement high tunnels, irrigation system upgrades, owl boxes and raptor perches, compost, and more; a partnership with researchers from UC Santa Cruz to study the effects of winter cover cropping on his soil health; and close collaboration with staff from our team to navigate these practices and programs.



Figure 1. Spanish-language flyer for the Field Day.

We conducted outreach for the event through our network of 100+ small-scale, Spanish-speaking producers in the tri-county area. 54 individuals participated in the event including 39 farmers from 32 unique farm businesses, 7 researchers from the University of California, and 7 staff from local Resource Conservation Districts (5 from RCDMC, 1 from San Benito RCD, and 1 from RCD of Santa Cruz County), and 1 interpreter who provided interpretation into English for a handful of non-Spanish speakers.





Figure 2 (left). Participants gather in a circle for introductions and a facilitated discussion about cover crops.
Figure 3 (right). Victor shows off his winter rye cover crop, which is part of an experiment conducted with UC Santa Cruz researchers to better understand how cover crops can be integrated into regional water quality regulations.