**County Of Sonoma**  
**Agenda Item**  
**Summary Report**

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>UC Cooperative Extension &amp; County Administrator’s Office</th>
<th>4/5 Vote Not Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name and Phone Number:</td>
<td>Stephanie Larson - (707) 565-2621 &amp; Jennifer Rogers – (707) 565-3783</td>
<td>Board Date: 12/13/2011</td>
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<td>Deadline for Board Action:</td>
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**AGENDA SHORT TITLE:** Receipt of Grant Funds for Regional Food Network (R.F.N.) project and execute agreements to complete the project.

**REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:**
Authorize the Chair to execute an agreement between the County and North Coast Opportunities (N.C.O.), through July 6, 2012, receiving $47,000 in grant funds for the Regional Food Network project to develop and increase connections between farmers and consumers to increase local food access and identify viable economic development strategies within the North Bay region. Authorize the Chair to execute an agreement between the County and Cliff Paulin ($32,000) to perform services under the Regional Food Network Project utilizing said grant funds, effective through July 6, 2012.

**CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT** - None.

**Explanation (if required):** $47,000 in anticipated grant funds were appropriated in the University of California Cooperative Extension (U.C.C.E.) budget in the October 2011 consolidated budget adjustments. Any necessary adjustments of the $47,000 in grant funds upon receipt will be conducted through the mid-year consolidated budget adjustments.

**Prior Board Action:** Receipt of funding in October 2011 consolidated budget adjustments.

**Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval:** The project will not be finished in a timely fashion if this action is not approved by the Board.
**Background:** The demand for local foods is growing rapidly in retail, institutional, and commercial foodservice markets. Food hubs are designed to support the work of both mid-size operators, who are too large to rely on direct marketing, and smaller operators who want to scale up their operations. With coordinated effort and in-depth understanding of existing resources and needs, local farms and food producers will be able to satisfy local food needs and begin to generate surplus for marketing to the greater San Francisco Bay Area. A fully developed local food system in the five-county North Coast area, including Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake, Napa, and Marin, will strengthen communities, assure food security, support local economic development, and create new jobs in the local farm sector.

In 2010, USDA Rural Development awarded a Rural Business Opportunity Grant (R.B.O.G.) to North Coast Opportunities (N.C.O.) in the amount of $60,000. N.C.O. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit California corporation. North Coast Opportunities staff are participating members of the Regional Food Network (R.F.N.) steering committee along with Sonoma County. The total to be received by Sonoma County is $47,000. Initially, the County Administrator’s Office (C.A.O.) will manage and oversee the grant agreement as well as the resulting sub contractor agreements, and monitor progression and goal attainment. The C.A.O. will communicate with Dr. Stephanie Larson of the University of California Cooperative Extension (U.C.C.E.), as a participating R.F.N. steering committee member, on the status of the project and goals. The objective of the grant is to develop the R.F.N. in the five county area, strengthening the production and distribution of locally-produced foods through the development of regional collaborative county groups. As part of this project, North Coast stakeholder committees will be developed, including researchers, educators, financial communities, and food system professionals to detail effective strategies and practices.

The County of Sonoma will hire a project consultant to coordinate the goals of the R.F.N. The consultant will provide services to provide a better understanding of rural realities, change dynamics, demographic and geographic diversity, and effective development strategies to benefit communities in the proposed project area while developing replicable models for consideration by other regions and states. The scope of work for the project consultant, Cliff Paulin, is outlined in the agreement (on file with the Clerk) for $32,000, through July 6, 2012. The consultant was selected through a regional competitive process involving U.C.C.E. and N.C.O. staff. The consultant, working closely with the Steering Committee, will build a knowledge base to aid in the development of value chains, and identify opportunities for innovative entrepreneurial ventures, vibrant business and micro-enterprise networks, and public and private sector investments.

The remaining $15,000 in grant funds are designated jointly to the counties of Napa, Marin, and Sonoma and these three counties will make a joint decision on the use of these funds for a single, common purpose, with the goal to further the R.F.N. project goals.

The project time frame is anticipated to be completed in July 2012.

This item requests the Board to approve the grant agreement with N.C.O. to receive the grant funds, and to approve the agreement with Cliff Paulin as the R.F.N. project coordinator. Staff plans to make a formal presentation to the Board on January 24, 2012, regarding the status of this project and provide further details on the Regional Food Network.
**Attachments:** None.

**On File With Clerk:** N.C.O. grant agreement. Cliff Paulin agreement.

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**CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY**

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