 CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

California Counties Show Their Innovation
CSAC Announces Recipients of 2014 Challenge Awards
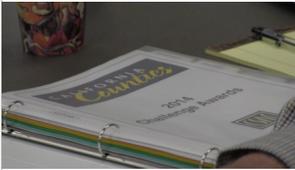
Twelve county programs have been selected to be recipients of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) 2014 Challenge Awards, which recognize the most innovative and cost-effective programs developed by California's 58 counties. Another 29 programs will be recognized with Merit Awards.

"The CSAC Challenge Awards program exemplifies the very best of county government." CSAC Executive Director Matt Cate said. "The programs highlighted each year demonstrate how California's 58 counties are striving to continuously serve their constituents more efficiently and cost-effectively. Innovation is alive and well in California Counties."

A unique and successful Alameda County program titled "Dig Deep Farms & Produce" was chosen by an independent panel of county experts to receive the California Counties Innovation Award – the top honor presented in the annual awards. Operated by the Alameda County Sheriff's Department, Dig Deep Farms is located in a region of the county that faces significant challenges, including high crime and mortality rates. The program is dedicated to growing healthy jobs around healthy food. Using an economically and ecologically sustainable model, Dig Deep is community driven and employs local residents to grow fresh, organic produce to meet the needs of the community.

Beyond Alameda County, other counties to be honored with Challenge Awards are: Humboldt, Lassen, Los Angeles, Nevada, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, Sonoma, Stanislaus and Ventura. CSAC will be presenting the awards in these counties at upcoming Board of Supervisors meetings.

Overall, a total of 41 programs from 18 counties will receive one of the three levels of awards: Innovation, Challenge and Merit. The top counties in the 2014 awards are Alameda County – California Counties Innovation Award, one Challenge & two Merit Awards; San Diego County – one Challenge and six Merit Awards; and Orange County – six Merit Awards.