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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Students in Farms Leadership Program Help Moon Mountain Vineyard with Natural Pest Control**

Sonoma Valley — Two-dozen high school students from around Sonoma County participating in the Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District's Farms Leadership Program recently spent a day creating a native plant insectary at Moon Mountain Vineyard.

“Over 500 native plants were planted in the insectary to create a habitat for beneficial insects, whose presence in the vineyard can help to reduce the need for pesticides. As conscientious farmers, we try to keep nature in balance through natural means,” said Rob Schultz, a vineyard manager with Enterprise Vineyards, which manages Moon Mountain Vineyards.

Schultz credits the Farms Leadership Program with making it possible for the insectary to be planted this year. “There may not have been money in the budget,” he said.

Jason Sweeney, SSCRCDD's Farms Leadership Program Coordinator, said, “The Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District was able to use funding from a CalFed grant to help purchase the plants.”

The students received a lesson in integrated pest management and an opportunity to work with vineyard professionals. The Farms Leadership Program introduces high school students to Sonoma County agriculture through hands-on, outside the classroom experiences. Students learn about sustainable farming and resource management, develop leadership skills, and meet working professionals from a variety of disciplines. For more information visit [www.sonomamarinrcds.org/district-ssc/resources/Programs/FARMS.html](http://www.sonomamarinrcds.org/district-ssc/resources/Programs/FARMS.html), or call 794-7902 x5.

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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Students Randall Packard, Jonathon Uresti, and Dulce Gutierrez, participants in Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District's Farms Leadership Program, help plant an insectary at Moon Mountain Vineyard. The insectary will attract beneficial insects, which eat the insects that attack grapevines.