

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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Between The Furrows is a monthly publication of the SCOCFB. Members receive a subscription as part of their membership investment.

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2025 Friend of Agriculture

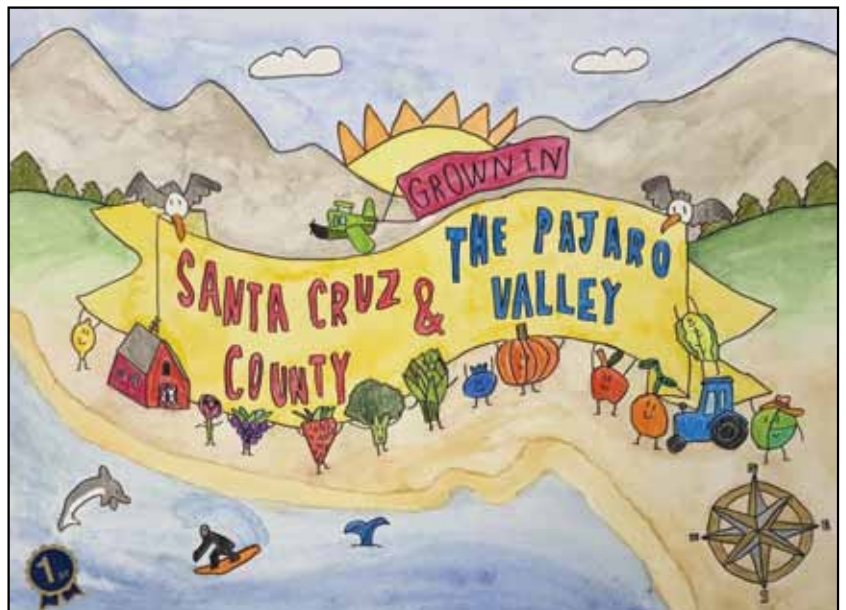
Mark Sambrailo Honored at the National Agriculture Day Luncheon



2025 Al Smith Friend of Agriculture recipient (R) Mark Sambrailo with retired SC county supervisor, (L) Zach Friend

Over 220 tickets were sold for the National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon held Wednesday, March 19, 2025, in the Heritage Hall at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Watsonville. The annual event is coordinated by the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau and the educational organization, Agri-Culture.

Continued on Page 5



National Agriculture Day Poster Contest First Place

Juan Carlos Calzetta IV, 5th grade, Santa Cruz Montessori School, Aptos, CA

President's Message

The Future of Carbon Markets and Carbon Management in Agriculture



Dennis Webb, President

As the world continues to focus on reducing carbon emissions, agriculture is emerging as a key player in the future of carbon markets and carbon management. Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners have a unique opportunity to contribute to carbon sequestration efforts, which can also provide new revenue streams through

the sale of carbon credits.

A recent study highlighted that older forests do not necessarily store more carbon than younger ones. This finding underscores the importance of effective forest management practices in maximizing carbon storage. Forest management, including selective harvesting and reforestation, can significantly enhance carbon sequestration. However, it's not just forests that play a crucial role; other forms of agriculture are equally important.

Carbon markets offer a promising tool for achieving net-zero emissions. By adopting practices that reduce emissions or sequester carbon, farmers can generate carbon credits. These credits can then be sold to companies looking to offset their greenhouse gas emissions. By participating in these programs, farmers can receive recognition and rewards for their sustainability Continued on Page 5



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**Congratulations to Mark Sambrailo,
the 2025 Friend of Agriculture!**

Down to Earth Women Luncheon

Thursday, May 15th

Get your tickets soon!

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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Director & Farm Advisor, UCCE,
Santa Cruz County

Biodegradable & Recyclable Plastic Mulches

Q- Can you tell us a bit about work that is being done locally with biodegradable and recyclable plastic mulches for beds in strawberry?

A- Regular Polyethylene (PE) mulch has been used in strawberry agriculture since the 1950s to improve weed management, reduce soil water loss, raise soil temperature, increase yield, improve crop quality, and shorten harvest time. The problem however lies with the disposal, and many local growers pay to dispose of this PE plastic as waste after using it for a season in a landfill or in some cases stockpile on their farms.

There are other types of plastic without the storage or disposal issues of PE worth looking at. Together with the multi-organizational team led by Dr. Lisa DeVetter from Washington State University, we local UCCE and other scientists have since 2020 been testing soil-biodegradable mulch (BDM) and lately some recyclable plastics to see how these could fit into the production systems, in particular those of strawberry, we have here on the Central Coast.

Since it's not just about the type of BDM being evaluated, but also the climate

(temperature, moisture, solar radiation and wind) and production systems into which they are being deployed (soil conditions) are being evaluated continuously as we proceed on with our research.

In addition to our BDM work which, we have been also exploring new and improved end-of-life management strategies, in particular recycling, for non-degradable plastic mulches used in strawberry production to reduce mulch waste.

For a better look at this nationwide agricultural plastics project and what it is accomplishing, the website below offers a really in-depth of the work along with updates as research and extension unfolds: <https://smallfruits.wsu.edu/plastic-mulches/>

The above article was written by UCCE Farm Advisor Mark Bolda about his collaborative work with the Washington State University Small Fruit Horticulture Research and Extension Program. For more information on this subject or others concerning small fruit production on the Central Coast, please contact Mark Bolda, mpbolda@ucdavis.edu. ■

Coming Soon and You're Invited

17th Annual Down to Earth Women Luncheon

Thursday, May 15, 2025

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos - 11:30 to 1:30

For reservations, call Agri-Culture at (831) 722-6622, visit our website at www.agri-culture.us/events or go to eventbrite and search for the Down to Earth Women Luncheon

THE WATER NANNY

"Great TV"

There are several key elements for a great television drama; suspense, grief, stress, anxiety, financial disaster and even death. The slow dismemberment of the US Department of Agriculture should be right up there for the Emmys this year. Part of the problem of writing a film script about current fiction is, as always, a cogent plot narrative requires deviation to stir suspense and add mystery. The DOGE is nothing other than deviation from expectations.

Change is happening in staid old Washington, DC. The Department of Agriculture was founded by President Lincoln. The USDA headquarters was built on the Mall in 1867. In 1930's it was demolished for the new spectacular USDA building. Really state of the art, electricity and modern toilets. Now this ancient headquarters is for sale.



Sometimes drama flashbacks are helpful. During the New Deal the USDA was revitalized to help farmers overwhelmed by the Dust Bowl. In 1862, Land Grant Universities were established.

Every other square mile along newly built western railroads were used to fund these new institutions. UC Berkeley, UC Davis and others in California were beneficiaries. One of their primary goals was farming. Clearly not enough dirt farmers attended, so Agricultural Extensions became prolific after the 30's. 4-H was started in Ohio in 1902, but was institutionalized in the 30's. One of the clever objectives was for smart farm kids to learn "modern" farming, and go home and tell their fathers how to improve (not starve). This along with crop subsidies, rural electrification, and western irrigation, worked great.

(Wistful music) Over time the USDA has become a behemoth in Washington, and in the budget. Not only does it advise farmers, fund farm subsidies, but also manages the entire food welfare program from food stamps (SNAP) to food bank donations and many other nutrition functions. As any large federal department, some of what it does is bloated and inefficient. However, it funds significant world class on farm research and training, directly or through Ag extensions, and buys billions of produce, grain and meat for distribution, at home and abroad.

(Sudden clap of thunder) The sky was darkened by the great DOGE. Local produce farmers lost \$1B of sales to food banks and schools, people will have to do with less. A random well-fed Senator stated that "this is a return to long-term fiscally responsibility initiatives" which impact 12 million students. A scene change later, in March an additional \$500M in funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation for fresh produce and poultry distribution was frozen, Tiny Tim may not get the fat goose this year.



(Suspenseful music) Eyewatering drama is an important element for the Emmy voting members, just like the price we pay for a dozen eggs. To sustain this dramatic element the USDA has decreased research into bird flu, which will cause further pain, not only for eggs, but milk and butter (cows get bird flu). As this scene closes, FDA is also cutting research into bird flu in humans, as Covid was really only the flu anyway. (The announcer) "That is not all, you also get..." reduced research of food crops, like the possible closing and sale of the Salinas research facility, "But there is more" the Ag Marketing Service is closing in many terminal markets. As our TV season wears on, we have several episode finales, like a severe cut of billions of dollars in commodity crop subsidy, crop insurance and conservation set asides for our Midwestern brethren. For many family farms this is the only real income they receive. Just like in the 20's (1920's if you slept through history) our finale concludes with darkening cloud of prairie dust.

Like many Emmy nominees, this may become a multiyear drama (or horror) series with more twists, turns and sudden murders next year. Unlike TV, farming requires planting soon with the expectations of future profits this fall, only to become a possible victim of the pernicious DOGE stalker next season. "Civilization begins with order, grows with liberty and dies with chaos." (Will Durant) Or, maybe this isn't a drama, but a comedy. "Chaos in the midst of chaos isn't funny, but chaos in the midst of order is." (Steve Martin) ■



FAVORITE RECIPES

Strawberry Cream Cake Roll

I simply cannot believe that Easter is just around the corner. Easter brings families together to celebrate and enjoy great meals, leaving us with full tummys and with little room for dessert. Yes, I know! There is always room for dessert. I found this recipe that just might solve the problem because it's a nice, light, spring strawberry treat.

4 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup sifted cake flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

Confectioners' sugar

CREAM FILLING

1 cup heavy whipping cream

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries, cut up

Optional: Additional whole strawberries,
sweetened whipped cream



Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a 15x10x1 inch baking pan with parchment or waxed paper; grease paper and set aside. In a large bowl, beat eggs with vanilla on high speed with an electric mixer for 5 minutes or until lemon colored. Gradually add the sugar, beating until dissolved. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; fold gently into egg mixture just until combined. Pour into prepared pan, spread batter evenly. Bake until light brown, 10-12 minutes. Turn cake onto a kitchen towel dusted with confectioners' sugar. Gently peel off paper from cake; roll up cake in cloth jelly-roll style, starting with a short side. Cool completely on wire rack.

For filling, whip cream, sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. Unroll cake; spread filling evenly over cake to within 1/2 inch of edges. Sprinkle with strawberries. Roll up cake again with towel and chill 2 hours before serving. Just before serving dust cake with confectioners' sugar and, if desired, tip with additional strawberries and sweetened whipped cream.

President's Message Continued from Page 2

practices, further incentivizing carbon management efforts.

In conclusion, the integration of agriculture into carbon markets is a win-win scenario. It allows farmers to contribute to global carbon reduction goals while also benefiting financially. As we look to the future, it is clear that farms will play a pivotal role in carbon management and the broader effort to achieve carbon neutrality. The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau aims to explore opportunities for its members to engage in this initiative and support growers in adapting to this environment. ■

Friend of Agriculture Continued from Page 1

At the luncheon, the 2025 Al Smith Friend of Agriculture award was presented to Mark Sambrailo, President, Sambrailo Packaging for his strong support of local agriculture throughout the years. The award was announced and presented by Zach Friend, who received the award in 2024. This award is named after Al Smith who was the founder of Orchard Supply Hardware and donated 3,000 acres (Swanton Pacific Ranch) on our north coast to Cal Poly. The ranch has row crops, timber and even a one-third-scale railroad, which was Al's hobby. The award is on a piece of redwood with a train depicted on it. It is presented annually to an individual, business or organization not involved in production agriculture but has done much for the industry. ■

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Join the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau



The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is an important voice for the Santa Cruz County and Pajaro Valley agriculture industry. Everyone is eligible to be a member and receive the many benefits and services available. By joining the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau you help support agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

How to Join

Go to www.cfbf.com and click on the "JOIN" button. No need to log in on this page. Go to the bottom of the page and click on NEVER BEEN A MEMBER to set up a new account.

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I am a Farm Bureau member because...



"I am a Farm Bureau member because the Farm Bureau is always advocating to protect farms and ranches, and at the local level, they provide scholarships to young adults who want to be involved in agriculture and their community."

Zach Estrada, Estrada Ranch
New member of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau



Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

SCCFB 108th Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 19, 2025
TBD

32nd Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 11, 2025
Pajaro Valley Golf Club

California State Fair

Friday, July 11, 2025 to Sunday, July 27, 2025
Cal Expo, Sacramento

Santa Cruz County Fair

Wednesday, September 10 to Sunday, September 14, 2025
Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Annual Directors' Dinner

Thursday, November 6, 2025
Location to be determined

CFBF Annual Meeting

TBD

Agri-Culture

17th Annual Down to Earth Women Luncheon

Thursday, May 15, 2025
Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos

17th Annual Testicle Festival

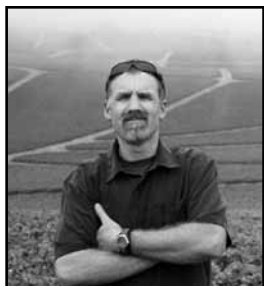
Saturday, August 23, 2025
Estrada Deer Camp

29th Annual Farm Dinner

Friday, October 10, 2025
Land Trust Little Bee Barn



The Farm Is The People Who Make It Succeed



David Sanford

Recently, I was talking with a grower who has been operating in Santa Cruz County for many years, and he made this observation when the conversation turned to the economics of farming: The farm is the people working here, he said. He went on to explain what he meant by that, which essentially was this: You can have the best site, the best soil, hardy and disease-resistant varieties of plants, access to water and the other inputs needed to cultivate your crop, and tractors to till the ground and prepare your fields each season... But without the people to show up and get the work done, the farm will not succeed.

This concept, when you think about it for a minute, seems absolutely basic, but is really the crux of the agricultural economy in Santa Cruz County. Berry production, for instance, is the major driver of our commercial ag industry here; strawberries have been the number one crop (in both

yields and value) for decades running, and the Watsonville area is the best place on earth to grow them. But you cannot mechanize the harvesting of strawberries in the field. Rather, berries are picked by people who have both the skills and understanding of the work, know the timing and what is required to successfully get the fruit out of the field, sorted and packed before it heads to the cooler and from there to markets in the U.S. and across the globe. And beyond harvesting, agricultural fieldworkers in our county take on multiple other job activities – planting, thinning, and weeding to name just a few – that help to achieve the high level and quality of production this region is known for.

As we head into spring and the season starts again throughout the Pajaro Valley and the other production areas of our county, I am thinking about all of those who work so hard in the field to drive the agricultural economy here in Santa Cruz County – the growers, farm managers and supervisors, and the fieldworkers – and hoping that 2025 is a good year for all of them as they work diligently to bring the best produce to the tables of families all over the world. ■

Strange But Impossibly True!

Kiwis were originally called Chinese Gooseberries.

After New Zealanders started growing and exporting the fruit, they changes the name in a marketing move. “Kiwi fruit” was more appealing to U. S. customers and it drove home the idea that it came from “Kiwis”, a nickname for New Zealanders.

Excerpts from the Readers Digest



“When you can’t control what’s happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond. That’s where your power is.”

Unknown



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HOW THE US SUPREME COURT HEARS CASES



The United States Supreme Court is, of course, the highest Federal court in the Land. Its decisions hold profoundly affect American law and society; its decisions are reported daily in the news. But it can only hear a relatively few cases each year. The process by which most cases get to the Court is known as granting “certiorari”, sometimes abbreviated as

“cert” and found in legal decisions, procedural rules, and the exercise of judicial discretion. But here are the main rules to help follow this topic.

1. Filing a “Petition for Certiorari”: The start is when a party to a lawsuit in which a court has made a decision files a “petition” asking the Court to review the lower court’s decision. Most cases reach the Supreme Court this way, usually after being decided by a U.S. Court of Appeals or a state supreme court. A United States Court of Appeal is an intermediate appellate court. The United States is divided into 13 circuit court of appeal districts. Eleven of these districts govern specific geographic regions. The twelfth is reserved for the District of Columbia Circuit, which mostly hears cases about federal agencies and national matters. And the thirteenth is the “Federal Circuit”, which covers specific limited subjects, like patent (invention) law and cases involving federal claims against the government. Petitions in the eleven geographic circuits often ask the Court to address disagreement among lower courts, US constitutional questions, or raise matters of significant public importance. A petition for certiorari contains a summary of the case, legal questions to be decided, and why the Court should grant certiorari. It also identifies prior rulings and legal precedents. An opposing party in the lawsuit may file a “brief in opposition”, explaining why it thinks the Court should decline to hear the petition and not hear the appeal.

2. The “Cert Pool”: Once a petition is filed, it enters the “cert pool” where the Supreme Court Justices and their clerks review the petitions. Each petition is assigned to a law clerk, who evaluates its merits, prepares a summary, and recommends whether the Court should grant or deny certiorari.

3. The “Rule of Four”: The decision to hear a case requires agreement from at least four of the nine Justices—a principle

known as the Rule of Four. This is so that less than a majority of Justices can bring a case for consideration before the full Court of nine Justices, if they believe it warrants full consideration. The nine Justices discuss petitions during conferences and vote whether to grant certiorari. These discussions are private, and no official record of them is made public.

4. Reasons Granting Certiorari. The Supreme Court selects cases to hear for several reasons. Among them are:

- Conflict in Lower Courts: Cases where federal appellate courts or state supreme courts have made conflicting decisions on the same legal issue are often selected. Resolving these conflicts helps ensure uniform application of the law.

- Constitutional Significance: Cases that raise core constitutional questions, such as free speech, equal protection, or federal powers, may be prioritized.

- National Importance: Cases with broad importance for society, such as major policy issues or high-profile disputes, are more likely to be heard.

- Errors in Lower Courts: The Court may also review cases where it believes a lower court made a significant error in interpreting the law.

5. Denial of Certiorari: Almost all—approximately 98-99%—of petitions for certiorari are denied. A denial does not mean the Court agrees or disagrees with the lower court’s decision; it just means the Justices believed the case did not meet the criteria for review. When certiorari is denied, the decision of the lower court stands.

6. Acceptance and Briefing: If the Court grants certiorari, It issues a “writ of certiorari”, agreeing to hear oral argument of the case. The parties then submit focused but comprehensive legal briefs, and interested non-parties, called “friends of the court” may also ask to be allowed to provide input. Oral argument is then scheduled, during which attorneys are present in Court to argue their case and the Justices may ask questions of the attorneys or challenge their arguments. The Court usually issues its written decision within a few months, often at the end of the Court’s term each year in June or July.

The Supreme Court’s process for deciding which cases to hear is procedural and selective. It seeks to balance judicial efficiency and deciding the nation’s most important legal questions. ■

Written by Cameron McDonald, Agriculture Program Specialist
Resource Conservation District, Santa Cruz County

Conserve Water, Apply Compost!



The RCDSCC has compost available for any interested growers! With the busy spring season and full production just around the corner, it is a good time to remind folks that adding compost now can have soil health benefits for the rest of the year. We can offer cost-share and technical assistance to support compost application on your farm. We are happy to work with each applicant in advance (if needed) to determine project costs for the farmer and go over project design and implementation. More resources and programs are becoming available to incentivize getting compost onto our area farm fields, so reach out if you are interested.

SB (Senate Bill) 1383 is a law that requires that every city, town, and county in California purchase and distribute a certain amount of "recovered organic waste" in the form of compost, mulch, or renewable natural gas annually. Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) on the central coast, including the RCD of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC) are developing funding partnerships with local government jurisdictions, helping them to meet their compost procurement targets while supporting compost cost-share for farmers through programs offered by local RCDs in this region. Current funding is available through June 30th, 2025, but will likely

be renewed for up to 3 more years. Cost-share to growers will be allocated on a first come first served basis until the available budget is fully spent.

Compost has a litany of benefits, including (but not limited to) building soil organic matter, which acts like a sponge, absorbing and retaining water. Compost helps improve soil structure which can reduce soil crusting, something we commonly see in clay soils in our area. Increased microbial activity from compost additions improves soil fertility, nutrient cycling, and availability which all lead to increased plant health. In 2017, our partners at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), released an estimate that 1% organic matter in the top 6 inches of soil holds about 27,000 gallons of water/acre. Please visualize just how many water tanks would be needed to match that water holding capacity!

To learn more and connect with RCD programs and services contact: Cameron McDonald (cmcdonald@rcdsantacruz.org), Dan Hermstad at (dhermstad@rcdsantacruz.org), or Sacha Lozano at (slozano@rcdsantacruz.org). The RCD also has programs related to forest health, fire prevention and environmental restoration. You can learn more about all our work at www.rcdsantacruz.org. All RCD services and programs are voluntary and non-regulatory. ¡Hablamos Español! ■



National Agriculture Day Poster Contest - 1st Place
Agustin Guzman, 12th grade, Renaissance High School,
La Selva Beach, CA

The Pajaro Valley

In a small town with big hearts and big fields,
Where farmers and farm workers tend to the yields,
Fresh strawberries picked with early mornings' grace,
Big smiles on faces, a warm, welcoming place.
Through strong winds and rainy days, they persist,
Great people united, their spirits uplift.
Big waves crash nearby, redwoods stand tall,
Big mountains surround, embracing it all.
The harvest is bountiful, the community tight,
In this small town, everything feels right.
With big hearts and big dreams, they thrive and they grow,
In this place of wonder, where love always shows

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Easter



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CALENDAR

THURSDAY - APRIL 3
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

FRIDAY - APRIL 11
Focus Agriculture
Session 2

WEDNESDAY - APRIL 16
Agri-Culture Board of
Directors meeting &
Annual Meeting

THURSDAY - APRIL 30
Board of Directors' meeting

THURSDAY - MAY 1
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

FRIDAY - MAY 9
Focus Agriculture
Session 3

SATURDAY - MAY 10
PITCH IN All Santa Cruz
County

THURSDAY - MAY 15
17 Annual Down to Earth
Women Luncheon

MONDAY - MAY 26
Memorial Day Observed
Office Closed

THURSDAY - MAY 29
Board of Directors' meeting

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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