

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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

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Help provide opportunities for the public to learn about Local Agriculture

Hello Friends of Agri-Culture,

We continually feel gratitude for your support and kindness which allows our community opportunities to learn about local agriculture.

For Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley, Agri-Culture is the centerpiece for people from all walks of life to participate in programs and activities that allow them to learn about the complexities of farming.

To everyone who has supported Agri-Culture at any level since it first started, we extend our heartfelt gratitude.



As Agri-Culture begins its fourth decade of bringing agricultural education to local leaders, students, and the community at large, we invite you to make a tax-deductible donation to Agri-Culture's Annual Fund Campaign.

Please know that your gift to Agri-Culture, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, makes a huge difference. Your support will make it possible to:

- Welcome our 30th class of Focus Agriculture, which has almost 600 local leaders as graduates.
- Administer our 14 endowed funds to provide support for a variety of educational purposes, ranging from scholarships to farmworker housing.
- Provide young students materials to learn about agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

A contribution card has been enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your generous support!

Steve Bontadelli, President, Agri-Culture, Inc.



Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship Applications Available

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Applications are available on our website

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.SCCFB.COM

President's Message

BRENDAN MIELE, PRESIDENT



"No matter how challenging a year they may have had in 2018, most farmers are laying out their plans for 2019. Whatever external factors may have conspired against them, most are optimistically preparing for their next season."

Optimism, Pessimism And Realism

Imagine you are a fly on the wall listening to a group of farmers talking over coffee.

As we come to the end of 2018 and the farmers talk about their year, what would they say?

Much of what you might hear could be construed as pessimism. It was too hot this year for the apples and it was too cold for the tomatoes. There wasn't enough labor for the strawberries...prices were terrible. Regulations are getting too burdensome, our representatives aren't responsive to our industry's needs. The rhetoric from Washington is ridiculous. While the comments may seem negative, they are part of the reality of the farming world. Experience drives belief. People often tend to focus on their problems or what is going wrong because those are the things that need our effort to get fixed. However, in doing so we can often overlook what is going well.

No matter how challenging a year they may have had in 2018, most farmers are laying out their plans for 2019. Whatever external factors may have conspired against them, most are optimistically preparing for their

next season. They learn and adapt from what they experienced the prior season. Perhaps changing a varietal, adjusting a planting date, looking into new equipment to account for a lack of labor, or supporting critical legislation. The farmers continue to work at refining their craft and meet each challenge with a sense of optimism. Optimism is what allows a farmer to start each year anew with the hope of a prosperous season. Without optimism, no farmer would risk sowing a seed to reap the bounty of an uncertain future harvest.

We should all make time to reflect on

[President's Message - Continued on Page 6](#)

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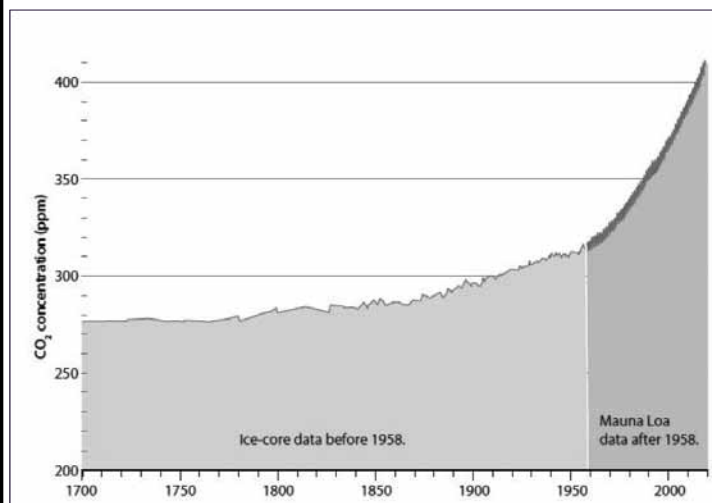
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Carbon Dioxide Enrichment in Our Atmosphere and Greenhouses



Carbon dioxide (CO₂) in our atmosphere is dramatically on the rise, and I have experienced it first-hand. An article really struck me that I found in the recently published edition of California Agriculture, "Possible Impacts of Rising CO₂ on Crop Water Use Efficiency and Food Security". There in "figure 1" is a graph depicting the carbon dioxide concentration measured from the year 1700 to the present. It was the dramatic acceleration of atmospheric CO₂ concentration that occurred during my life time that intrigued me (see the figure). According to the "State of the Climate" report in 2017, global atmospheric carbon dioxide was 405.0 ± 0.1 ppm in 2017, a new record high.

CO₂ is an essential input for plant photosynthesis, a plant's primary food-making process. I measured CO₂ in greenhouses and in the atmosphere from about 1985 to 1990 when we evaluated the effectiveness of CO₂ enrichment on cut rose productivity and quality in central coast greenhouses. I still have slides (remember them) that indicate the atmospheric CO₂ concentration was 340 ppm!

So what did our CO₂ enrichment

evaluation indicate? What is the evidence for or against CO₂ enrichment in greenhouses?

In our first experiment (1985-86) the conventional enrichment method was tested: the greenhouse atmosphere was enriched to 1000 ppm only in the morning and evening when the sun was shining and greenhouse vents were shut. The data followed:

CO₂ enrichment did not improve production or quality of 'Bridal White' cut roses. But some interesting observations directed us to try a different CO₂ enrichment method.

CO₂ monitors within the rose plant canopy demonstrated that CO₂ levels were being depleted to levels as low as 225 ppm during the day, even though vents were opened. Apparently, CO₂ was being absorbed quickly by the leaves and greenhouse air was not moving sufficiently into the plant leaf canopy to replenish the CO₂ to normal levels (at the time, 340 ppm).

A second experiment was set up (1986-87) to determine if "all day" carbon dioxide enrichment could improve flower production and quality. This time, carbon dioxide was distributed in drip irrigation tubing running along the ground of each production bed. Liquid CO₂ was released as a gas under pressure into the drip tubes when needed. The greenhouse ambient CO₂ level was maintained at about 1000 ppm at sunrise until vents were opened and then again if the vents were closed, up to 2 hours before sunset (as in the 1985-86 experiment). In addition, this

Ask Laura - Continued on Page 9

THE WATER NANNY

Godzilla

Your Nanny was writing a Christmas article for the December *Between the Furrows*. It had joyful thoughts, a couple of Christmas spirits, complete with a Scrooge bah humbug illustration. So seasonal, and then I saw in the *Sentinel*, on line of course, that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission was planning on adopting a \$635 million plan for rail service in the county. Meanwhile, only \$264 M will go to highway 1, for such things as merging lanes, ramp metering lights and bus shoulders, county roads, substantially less. Shades of last month, apparently BOZEOs do exist.

First the back story, the RTC is the perfect insular bureaucracy. It is independent from the voters, with board members appointed from a variety governments, the county, cities, etc. It runs our buses. It does have taxing powers, which it exercised with Measure D, approved by the voters in 2016.



Measure D Executive Director George Dondero came to the Santa Cruz Farm Bureau legislative committee to ask for support of Measure D. Everyone else in the room thought funding should go 100% to Highway 1 and city and county roads. No we

were told, as the powerful Santa Cruz bicyclists would pull support and the vote would fail. Therefore, the plan was to enact a 30 year 1/2¢ sales tax to raise funds which would be divided up 30% to neighborhood projects, 25% to highway corridors, 20% to senior transit, 17% to active transportation (bikes) and 8% to the rail corridor. This 8% is dedicated to "infrastructure preservation and analysis of options." There is no money in Measure D to build a modern rail system at all. It is now clear from the Unified Corridor Investment Study that county roads and highways will continue to be underfunded forever so we can support a slow train to nowhere.

Trains I like trains. Trains used to haul sugar beets to Spreckels for processing. The Del Monte Express used to pass through Watsonville Junction (Pajaro) twice a day, complete with a club car, connecting the City to Monterey.

BART and CalTrain move 100s of thousands daily throughout the Bay Area. I particularly like trains when they are privately owned. Southern/Union Pacific was responsible for track maintenance, and turning a profit, without recourse to local residents. Union Pacific sold the branch line from Pajaro to Davenport to the RTC in 2010 for \$14.2 Million. The RTC trumpeted that they got the line for free, as it was funded with a state grant, which stipulated that it is for "rail projects within Santa Cruz County that facilitate recreational, commuter, intercity and intercounty travel." Talk about a gift horse...



Reality The RTC committed Santa Cruz County taxpayers to decades of future outlays. After all, people *are* waiting in line to commute from Watsonville north at 10 mph to potential employment hot spots as La Selva Beach, Depot Hill and the Boardwalk, with potential extensions to Davenport. Even a short intercounty rail, from say Park Avenue, the Cabrillo station and the Boardwalk, would provide convenient service to surfers at Pleasure Point and a stop at the Seabright Brewery.

Customer service A private business would allocate its scarce resources to projects that most benefit its customers. When the county rapid rail line is completed (say 2035, as they haven't even cleaned it up from the February, 2017 storms) it is projected to carry 3,500 people per day, while Highway 1 handles, slowly, over 100,000 per day today. County roads are also over loaded today lacking funding for maintenance, without considering improvements.

Godzilla only ate Tokyo, which was rebuilt; the RTC will impoverish us for much longer. The hearing to adopt this plan was continued to January, so there is still time to comment. "*RAILROAD, n. The chief of many mechanical devices enabling us to get away from where we are to where we are no better off. For this purpose the railroad is held in highest favor by the optimist, for it permits him to make the transit with great expedition.*" — Ambrose Bierce

May you, your family and farm, all enjoy a wonderful holiday season and merry Christmas.



FAVORITE RECIPES

Portabella Cap Fries

This recipe comes from Lindsay Roberts at Monterey Mushrooms. She writes, "We are so proud of the team who make it possible to provide fresh, locally grown mushrooms to grocery stores and restaurants year-round, from 10 farms located across North America." The blog she writes is full of great recipes. Be sure you visit their website at <https://www.montereymushrooms.com/mushroom-recipes>.

8 ounces Monterey Mushrooms® Portabella Caps

1/2 cup flour

1 egg, lightly beaten

3/4 cup Panko bread crumbs

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

1/2 tsp Fresh thyme leaves, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS: Prepare three plates: One with flour, salt and pepper; a second with egg, seasoned with salt and pepper; a third with breadcrumbs, cheese, thyme, salt and pepper. Slice mushrooms into even pieces. Coat slices in flour mixture, then dip each side in egg mixture and last in breadcrumbs.

To bake: Place mushroom slices on a wire rack and bake in a preheated 425°F oven until golden brown, about 8 to 12 minutes.

To fry: Fry in enough oil to cover the mushroom slices, about 3 to 4 minutes at 350°F.

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President's Message - Continued from Page 2

2018. Think about our individual challenges and successes and consider our collective struggles and accomplishments. In 2019 there will be no shortage of issues facing agriculture in Santa Cruz County. We are those farmers talking over coffee and it will be up to us to choose how we face our individual and collective challenges. The value of our industry is not in

question; how effectively we can work together will decide our fate. I am excited to start my new role as President of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. I look forward to talking with our members and learning about their challenges to see where we can collectively work together through the Farm Bureau to greet 2019 with a continued sense of optimism.

Congratulations Focus Agriculture Class XXIX



Focus Agriculture Class XXIX - 2018

(L-R)

Top Row: Matt Gianelli, Judy Gittelsohn, Christopher Van Zanen, Kirstin Yogg, Woutje Swets, Kelly Damewood, Suzanne Skerness, Murray Fontes

Middle Row: Allen Aldridge, Kathleen Mitani, Audries Blake, Hanna Mengo, Paulina Correia, Katy Griffin, Susan True

Front Row: Jess Brown, Executive Director, Cita Rasul, Jocelyn Drake, Julie Conway, Oana Alexan

Agri-Culture is now accepting applications for **Class 30**, which will begin in March 2019. Applications are available online on their website at www.agri-culture.us. For more information, call the Agri-Culture office at **(831) 722-6622** or email at agri-culture@sbcglobal.net.

Strategic Planning



In June, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the County's first ever Strategic Plan. The purpose of the plan is to set a long-term vision for the County and to aim at attaining that vision through goals and objectives in specific focus areas. The six-year strategic plan was crafted with input from members of the community, county employees, and various county stakeholders. Five key elements are identified in the plan:

- **"Vision** – reflects the collective understanding of the ideal situation"
- **"Mission** – identifies the County's role in pursuing the community's vision"
- **"Values** – provide the foundation on which the strategic plan is constructed"
- **"Focus Areas** – represents strategic initiatives, which organize the goals of an organization into a limited number of categories or themes"
- **"Goals** – provide generalized statements of what the community wants to achieve consistent with its vision"

The strategic plan identifies six focus areas: Comprehensive Health & Safety, Reliable Transportation, Dynamic Economy, Attainable Housing, Sustainable Environment and County Operational Excellence. Each focus area has four goals for a total of 24 goals that will be achieved in the upcoming years as the plan is implemented. To successfully implement the strategic plan, the county is in the process of developing a two-year operational plan. The operational plan will identify objectives and key steps and will be used as a guide to achieve each of the 24 goals.

This process will be overseen by an Operational Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) composed of leaders from the various county departments. The OPSC will be supported by six subcommittees (one for each focus area) made up of representatives from each of the county's agencies knowledgeable in the subject matter of each focus area.

Over the next few months the subcommittees will be tasked with evaluating the county's current work and will assist to identify objectives and the key steps required to achieve the goals of the strategic plan.

During this process, the subcommittees will continue to engage stakeholders as objectives are developed. Each subcommittee will propose objectives and key steps that will meet the county's goals. These will be presented to the OPSC who will be tasked with evaluating and making further refinements in the development of an operational plan. It is expected that an operational plan will be presented to the BOS by June of 2019 for review and approval. For additional information regarding the County's Strategic Plan, please visit <http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/VisionSantaCruz.aspx>

I'm a Farm Bureau Member because...

"They represent the different types of farmers in our valley from row crops, berries, flowers, cattle and timber. It is because of the Farm Bureau we feel we have an organization that cares about the farmers



and growers no matter what the issue is. The Farm Bureau protects all aspects of the farmers and growers of the Pajaro Valley and the entire Santa Cruz County."

Frank (SCCFB Director) & Loretta Estrada,
Cattle and Timber

Not So Fast To Cash That “Payment In Full” Check



When disputes arise over an amount due, a debtor sometimes tenders a check for less than the amount due and marks the check “payment in full” or some similar language, hoping the creditor will accept it as payment in full. Read further to see whether this procedure works.

In 1987, the California Legislature enacted Civil Code Section 1526. Section 1526 says that in a dispute between a creditor and a debtor, if the debtor tenders a check for less than the amount due and marks it “payment in full” or similar language, a creditor can line out those words and cash the check. The creditor can then sue the debtor for the difference. Courts have held this law valid.

A federal court enforcing California law held in 1995 that when a check with such payment in full language was deposited in a lock box and the creditor promptly notified the debtor it did not consent to payment in full language, the creditor was not bound by the language. *Red Alarm, Inc. v. Waycrosse, Inc.* 47 F. 3d 999. Similarly, in a 1996 case, a bankruptcy court held that a creditor properly protected its rights when it sent a letter stating that it was accepting the check only as partial payment. *In re Van Buren Plaza LLC*. 200 B. R. 384.

Contrary to Section 1526 is the Uniform Commercial Code (which is adopted in California as the California Commercial Code). Section 3311 was adopted in 1992. Section 3311 says when a debtor (a) in good faith offered an instrument to a creditor in full satisfaction of the claim, (b) the amount of the claim was uncertain or subject to a bona fide dispute, and (c) the claimant obtained payment on the instrument, the claim is discharged if the person against whom the claim is asserted proves that the instrument or an accompanying written communication contains a conspicuous statement indicating the instrument was tendered as payment in full.

A federal court considered these conflicting statutes in 1998. In this case, a debtor tendered a check for less than the amount due and marked it payment in full. The creditor

crossed out the language before cashing the check and sent the debtor a letter stating that the check was not a full payment. The court recognized the two statutes could not be reconciled. It then relied on a rule of statutory interpretation which says that when two statutes conflict, the statute enacted later in time should prevail. Since Section 3311 was enacted after Section 1526, the court held that the check was an “accord and satisfaction” and prevented the creditor from recovering the balance due. *Directors Guild of America v. Harmony Pictures, Inc.* 32 F. Supp. 2d 1184.

The issue came before a California state court in 2002. The San Bernardino County Appellate Department in *Woolridge v. J.F.L. Electric, Inc.* (2002) 96 Cal.App.4th Supp.52 (2002), adopted the *Director’s Guild* reasoning and conclusion. This means that a creditor who cashes a check marked “payment-in-full” or similar words will have effectively waived his or her claim to further payment. Although the *Woolridge* case is only binding in San Bernardino County, the reasoning may persuade courts in other jurisdictions that Commercial Code section 3311 should prevail over Civil Code section 1526. So, cashing this type of check anywhere in California is risky if you have additional claims against the debtor.

The only safe action under California law is to destroy or return the check uncashed. If you have already cashed the check, California law gives you 90 days to return the funds without settling the claim.

*From all of us to all of you
We wish you a very
Merry Christmas
&*

A Happy New Year

Healthy Soils Grants Available to Farmers and Ranchers

Have you been wanting to try some innovative farming practices but feel nervous about losing money? Santa Cruz County Farmers and Ranchers are eligible to apply for more than \$8 million in Incentive Grants through the Healthy Soils Program coordinated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Healthy Soils grants provide money for farmers to adopt new management practices that improve soil microbial diversity and water-holding capacity, reduce run-off, and capture carbon. These practices include compost application, reduced tillage, cover crops, mulching, hedgerows, forage and biomass planting, and many more.

The call for proposals will be posted on the CDFA website in early November 2018 with a deadline in mid-January 2019. Offered in conjunction with the Air Resources Board and utilizing funds from California's carbon-market cap and

trade program, the objectives of the Healthy Soils Program are to build soil organic carbon and reduce atmospheric greenhouse gasses (GHG's).

Questions about the grant can be directed to our local Resource Conservation District office for Santa Cruz County (RCD). Assistance with filling out the grant application is also available. You can go to the following website to read descriptions of successful grants from last year. Updated details for the next round of funding will be posted on the CDFA website soon: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/IncentivesProgram.html>

Contact Sacha Lozano, Program Manager for agricultural lands, at slozano@rcdsantacruz.org. Phone numbers: Office: 831-464-2950, ext. 11 or Cell: 831-224-0293.

Ask Laura - Continued from Page 3

time when the vents opened, the CO₂ level within the plant leaf canopy was maintained around 350 to 360 ppm. This technique eliminated any reduction of CO₂ under 350 ppm in the leaf canopy, but did not waste much CO₂ since the fresh air around the plant was around 340 ppm and therefore there was no strong diffusion gradient of CO₂ away from the plant. Essentially, the carbon dioxide was only being put where it was being used (near the leaves) and applied only when it was needed.

With this method, from summer to the following late spring, CO₂ enriched rose production increased by 12% over that of the untreated roses. The rose stem length increased about 1-inch above that of untreated roses. These stems had more girth and appeared robust. Flower bud dry weight was greater, so the flowers may have contained more petals or the petal size was larger. At the time, the CO₂ cost was about 18 cents for each extra bud produced. In the heyday of the cut rose business the extra cost may have been worth it,

especially during the super profitable Valentine and Mother's Day markets.

The benefit of CO₂ enrichment in climates such as along coastal California is limited because it is difficult to achieve higher than ambient CO₂ concentrations for significant periods of time when the sun is shining. Under conditions of high solar radiation, the necessary prolonged periods of ventilation will limit the potential for CO₂ enrichment. CO₂ application methods and crop species will have an impact on the CO₂ enrichment benefits also. CO₂ delivered directly in and around the leaf canopy has some technical challenges but may have benefits in some crops.

Steve Tjosvold, Farm Advisor Emeritus, UCCE Santa Cruz County, 831 763-8013
Blog: <http://ucanr.edu/blogs/NurseryFlower/>

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Albert Einstein



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~ C&N Tractor, Julie Oliver

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Between the Furrows

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CALENDAR

MONDAY - DECEMBER 10
Public Relations & Information
Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 12
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

MON - WED - DECEMBER 24-26
Christmas Observed
Office Closed

TUESDAY - DEC. 31 - JAN. 1
New Year's Day Observed
Office Closed

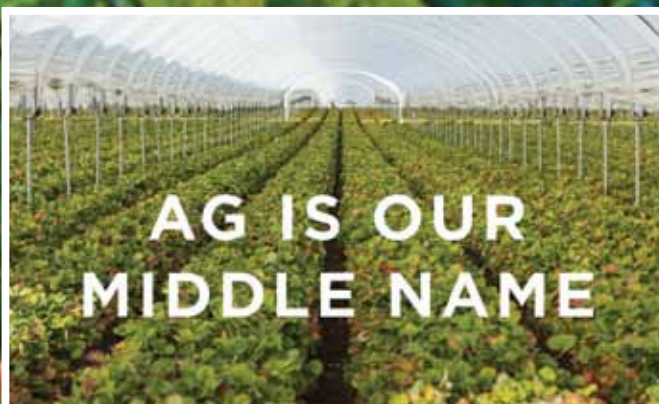
WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 2
• Legislative Committee
meeting
• Executive Committee
meeting
• Membership Committee
meeting

WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 8
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

MONDAY - JANUARY 14
Public Relations & Information
Committee mtg.

MONDAY - JANUARY 21
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Office Closed

THURSDAY - JANUARY 31
Board Retreat



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