

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.

Mary Walter, Editor
Jess Brown, Managing Editor

141 Monte Vista Avenue
Watsonville, California 95076.
(831) 724-1356
scfb@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.sccfb.com

President's Message



Dennis Webb, President

Would you believe it—in just a few short weeks it's going to be 2023? At the dawn of a new year, I would like to stop and consider the last. What a year this has been. At the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau, we're capping off the year by giving thanks for the passage of Measure Q this November. The voters overwhelmingly supported Measure Q, which has now extended Watsonville's Urban Limit Line through 2040! This means that the city will grow by taking advantage of its substantial opportunity for infill, instead of sprawling across the Pajaro Valley's farmland.

The Urban Limit Line (ULL) was originally passed in 2002, with a 60% majority of voters. The ULL was a historic compromise between farmers, conservationists, businesses, and Watsonville residents to direct growth within the city while protecting the prime farmland that surrounds it. This November, Watsonville

voters reaffirmed their commitment to the ULL with a resounding 67% supermajority. We couldn't be more thrilled to know that the community recognizes the vital importance of our local farmland. Pajaro Valley's farmers are in it for the long haul, and it's good to know that their neighbors are too.

So where do we go from here? We need to continue our focus on promoting growth only in the areas that are allowed to develop under Measure Q. The City of Watsonville can, should and will continue to develop more housing, commercial and industrial uses. By focusing on infill of vacant land within the ULL, we can be sure that new development will create jobs near housing and already existing infrastructure. We can help conserve the farmland that is our community's economic foundation. We can keep intact the agricultural character of our area, and maintain the open spaces that provide us so many environmental benefits. This is all possible because we came together as a community to pass Measure Q. ■

Scholarship Applications Available

Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship
Jeannie Witmer Memorial Scholarship
Laura Brown Memorial Scholarship
JJ Crosetti Memorial Scholarship

For more information, please visit agri-culture.us/scholarships or call (831) 722-6622. Applications are available online.

Application Deadline is Friday, January 27, 2023

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News & Information from RCD

Written by Dan Hermstad
Resource Conservation District, Santa Cruz County

Small Plants Need Little Water

Here on the Central Coast, this is the time of year in which plants are growing the slowest. Newly transplanted plants will remain small for several months as their root systems develop slowly underground. For recently planted strawberries this means that the plants will remain small for some time. During this period their water needs are very small. In fact, an analysis of strawberry crop water needs from November through February (assuming a planting date the second week of November) shows that the crop needs no more than 50 minutes a week TOTAL for any given week in that period. For the months of December and January a max of 25 minutes a week is needed.

This makes sense if you consider how many leaves the plant has. A plant transpires (loses water) through its leaves. It can't take up any more water than it can allow to leave the plant – with an allowance for a small amount being converted to plant tissue. So any water the plant takes in through its roots has to leave through its leaves. If you look at the surface area of leaves on your strawberry plant right now you'll see that it is not much.

Now there are other reasons to water. I mainly hear growers mention the need to maintain bed wetness and avoid excessive dry out in the soil that could lead to cracking or other poor soil qualities. That's a fair point. If you have a heavy soil or even a nicely loamy soil you'll need to consider watering sufficiently to maintain bed moisture. But if you're using the right drip tape, the bed is covered in plastic and the plant leaves are small – the bed should not need much additional water. The water in the bed won't be able to evaporate and if you are not putting on too much water it will not be pushed below the bed.

All this points to Winter and Spring being the times of year with the greatest opportunity to conserve water. We need the water later in the year when temperatures spike and plant canopies are fully developed. But right now it may not be necessary. Consider experimenting in your fields and dialing back your irrigation to just what the plant needs – especially if you are on a sandy soil. With all the forecasts predicting drought again the water you save now will be better used in the future. ■

Christmas Trivia

In total, how many gifts were given in
"The Twelve Days of Christmas"?

See the answer on page 4

THE WATER NANNY

Elves

Tis the Holiday Season and elves, sprites and fairies abound. We all know about Santa's helpers, in the past few years the Elf on a Shelf became a big item (although a spy in the room is an odd spin on elfdom), and there are legions of fairies flitting about everywhere in December. Most of this genre do good works and bring us joy.

Out at our County Fairgrounds elves have been working overtime. Holiday Lights are so bright and creative this year they can be seen from outer space, or at least planes landing in Watsonville. This is an amazing event, born during the COVID lockdown and still drawing crowds this month. The companion event at our Fairgrounds is the annual Holiday Fair with more vendors, more food venues and even Santa.

Both events raise money for the Fairgrounds Foundation, and all proceeds benefit the Fairgrounds. The Foundation is only able to bring us two spectacular Christmas events with their faithful volunteers. This year that is remarkable given the unfortunate management changes at the State owned Fairgrounds. However there was a fundamental realization that if we, the locals, the volunteers, and Santa don't step up now, our State will be happy to watch our fairgrounds wither away under their tutelage.



Not all magical spirits are well known, nor beneficial, there is the little known family of *state bureaucratic* sprites. They are seldom observed outside Sacramento or Washington, but can occasionally sneak out, while fearful of how local peasants may react they bring armed Highway Patrol officers, to pronounce their unique edicts.

The Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds is really the 14th District Agricultural Association. It has a board of local citizens, appointed by the Governor. They are part of the California Department of Food & Agriculture, and fall under the branch of Fairs and Expositions. Each fairground, District Ag Association, board may be composed of farmers and town folk unschooled in state procedures so CDFA gives extensive guidance. The CDFA website lists the Fairs and Expositions "Role and Responsibilities" as:

- Create a framework for administration of the network of California fairs, allowing for maximum autonomy and local decision making authority.
- Guiding and providing incentives to fairs to seek matching funds and generate new revenue from a variety of sources.
- Support continuous improvement of fair programs to ensure California fairs remain highly relevant community institutions.
- Ensure annual fiscal audits and periodic compliance audits are performed.



Like all good State agencies they have rules and procedures. Of particular interest CDFA provides a checklist for fair boards to use if they want to fire (terminate) a fairgrounds manager. Twelve days prior to a scheduled fair board review of a general manager the board must ask the manager if he/she/they want the review to be public or in closed session. 24 hours prior to posting the agenda, days before the meeting, the manager is required to respond, open or closed. None of that happened here. Now, the bureaucratic sprites did prepare, besides armed police, by bringing an attorney, primarily to impress the locals, but they failed to follow this procedure. Their demands were simple, either fire the manager or all of the board members would be summarily dismissed. The wonderful part of fantasy is that it is all made up, as was the CDFA process in this instance. It is also in contravention of the mandate that fairgrounds be managed by local citizens to benefit their county.

Elves brought you Holiday Lights and the Holiday Fair. Ghouls seek to bring down our Fairgrounds. While ghouls are mythical, state bureaucrats are subject to procedure and due process. Over time their untoward actions will be reviewed and revoked. Hopefully our Christmas elves will continue to hold the fairgrounds together while CDFA gets its act in line with its own procedures. Elves always come out on top, as they are holiday spirits. ■



FAVORITE RECIPES

The Ultimate Apple Pie

Apple pie is obviously a favorite of the Prevedelli family. They have made the iconic comfort food even better with a combination of sweet and tart apples, plus their technique for a perfectly domed crust every time. This recipe is from Sam Lathrop and perfect for anytime, but especially the holidays. They have shared their award winning apple pie recipe for many years. Thank you, Sam, for agreeing to share it with our readers. Happy Holidays!



3 cups all purpose flour
1 1/4 cups butter flavored shortening
1 teaspoon salt
4 Tablespoons cold water
1 egg
1 teaspoon vinegar

Preheat your oven to 450°F.

To make crust, mix flour, shortening and salt together. Mix water, egg and vinegar together; add to dry ingredients. Gather into a ball, wrap in plastic and chill for one hour.

To make filling, mix together sugar, cinnamon and 1/3 cup flour. Combine apples with sugar mixture in a bowl (a bowl that fits over pie crust pan). Make sure that apples fill the bowl to allow for heaping pie. Roll out half of dough and place in pie pan. Take crust/pie pan and place upside down

8-10 large Prevedelli apples---half Jona-gold & half Mutsu apples peeled, sliced and combined

3/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup all purpose flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
3/4 cup brown sugar

over bowl making sure that crust mixture is next to apple mixture. Taking bowl of apples with crust, turn right side up. Take upside down bowl off leaving a mound of apples in the pie crust pan. Sprinkle additional sugar mixture over top. Roll out remaining dough for top mixture and place over mound of apples. Brush with milk and sprinkle with white sugar over top. Crimp edges together. Bake at 450°F for 15 minutes then turn down to 350°F and bake additional 60-70 minutes. ■



"Agriculture, the Original Green"

Agri-Culture's 26th Annual Farm Dinner

"World Premiere of 'The Perfect Pie'" was a success!

The educational organization, Agri-Culture, recently held its 26th Annual Farm Dinner, a Fall tradition to celebrate the harvest. This year it was held at Hortifrut Genetics Ltd. on the Nakano Family Ranch. The theme was "World Premiere of 'The Perfect Pie'". A local songwriter, Suzanne Cornelius, wrote a song about Nita Gizdich, and the Wildcat Mountain Ramblers band decided this event would be perfect for the world premiere, before they took it on the road. The event is always limited to 100 guests. At the end of the evening, guests were given a box of local produce from local companies to take home and enjoy.

The event benefits the many educational and scholarship programs of Agri-Culture, Inc., and raised almost \$40,000 in profit. The purpose of Agri-Culture is to educate the public about local agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

Some of the guests included: Tom Am Rhein, Nakano Family Representative; Doug Fischer, Santa Cruz County Bank; Lucas Flowers, Driscoll's, Inc.; Guy George, 2022 "Farmer of the Year"; Robert & Karen Kitayama, Kitayama Brothers; Dick & Marisela Peixoto, Lakeside Organic Gardens; Clint, Karen & CJ Miller, Royal Oaks Farms; Randy Repass & Sally-Christine Rodgers, R Bar R Ranch; Jessica Vaughan, Mary Maselli, Michelle Montalvo, Focus Agriculture Class 31 Graduates. ■

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The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is a vital part of our community, providing an important voice for the Santa Cruz County and Pajaro Valley agriculture industry. Everyone is eligible to apply for Farm Bureau membership 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.

Questions? Contact the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau
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"We are Farm Bureau members because... 'we stand together as farmers--no farms, no food.'"

Samuel Lathrop,
Prevedelli Farms

Save the Date

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

30th Annual Golf Tournament Friday, July 14, 2023 Pajaro Valley Golf Club

If you would like to pay your sponsorship for 2023 before the end of the year, please visit [www.sccfb.com/upcoming events](http://www.sccfb.com/upcoming%20events) or eventbrite and search 30th Annual Golf Tournament or call (831) 724-1356 for more information.



Benefits And Risks Of Adding Agritourism To Your Farm Or Ranch

*The following information is provided by Nationwide®, the #1 farm and ranch insurer in the U.S.**

Agritourism is a great way to capitalize on the natural draw of your landscape, connect non-farm families to agriculture and create new revenue streams for your operation. But these benefits are not without risk.

Finding the right agritourism for operation

Adding a new agritourism venture to your operation starts by answering a simple question: What will work best? Consider the following:

- Your land, what you raise and any other resources that could contribute to a new attraction
- The time and money you can invest in an agritourism venture
- Potential hazards to visitors, the liability they create for you and how you'll mitigate the risks and keep people safe

"It doesn't always have to be a large venture that requires a lot of resources," said Barb Neal, Cornell Cooperative Extension Agriculture Agent and Horticulture Educator in Tioga County, New York. "Everybody has a specialty, so it's just a matter of finding what will require the right amount of time and investment."

Agritourism examples to consider

- **Pumpkin patches and corn mazes.** Fairly common around the country, they're popular but can require a lot of time and labor.
- **Farm tours and hayrack rides.** Also fairly common, opening your farm to the public for tours and offering services like hayrack rides provide up-close farm experience. They often vary widely on cost, supervision and risk exposure.
- **Bed & breakfasts.** An unoccupied farm house or even a repurposed barn or other farm building offer farm guests distinctive overnight stays. Time and labor required are normally fairly high.

- **Experiences.** Ranging from "U-Pick" farms and Christmas tree farms to barn rentals for events like weddings, these also can range widely in cost, supervision and risk exposure.
- **Classes.** Weekly or monthly classes on things like jam- or bread-making can be an easy, low-cost option.

Minimizing the risks of agritourism

Before adding agritourism to your farm or ranch, think about the specific risks you and your visitors will face and how you'll mitigate them. This includes simple things like trip and fall hazards all the way to specific risks around livestock, farm equipment and food safety. Conduct a thorough audit of these types of risks and start by taking steps to minimize the hazards they represent.

"Check with your state for any agritourism protective measures and talk to your insurance agent for guidance on mitigation measures and how you can expand your insurance coverage," said Neal.

Talk with your insurance agent

Farmers who offer agritourism activities need to discuss their specific types of businesses with their insurance agent. Usually, the policy that provides liability for the farm business does not extend to liability from other profit-making activities, such as agritourism.

Your local Nationwide Farm Certified agent can help you identify risks, implement safe practices and confirm you have the right agritourism insurance in place. Nationwide offers liability coverages that can be written as a package, in conjunction with a farm policy, to cover your agritourism ventures.

Visit [AgInsightCenter.com](https://www.aginsightcenter.com) to see the latest articles, videos and podcasts. While you're there, sign up to receive our bimonthly AIC email newsletter. ■

THE AG COMMISSIONER

Juan Hidalgo, Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES



Over the last two decades, the State of California has been aggressively focusing on initiatives that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change. In 2005, Executive Order S-3-05 began to pave the way toward emission reduction by establishing that greenhouse gas emissions should

be reduced to 2000 levels by 2010, 1990 levels by 2020 and below 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050. In 2006, Assembly Bill 32 mandated the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to report and verify statewide greenhouse gas emissions and to set regulations that would achieve emission reductions by 2020 to 1990 levels. More recent initiatives include Senate Bill 100 signed in 2018 requiring that electricity be produced from zero-carbon sources by 2045 and Executive Order B-55-18 which sets the goal for California to be carbon neutral no later than 2045. Local governments are tasked with creating plans to move in the direction of achieving these efforts in their own jurisdictions.

In mid-November, CARB released their “2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality¹.” The plan lays out ambitious and targeted goals for our state to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. In addition to tracking and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in industry, energy, and transportation, this plan also highlights the importance of decarbonizing and carbon sequestration in other important parts of the California economy, including agriculture. CARB’s scoping plan includes the following actions for croplands: implementing climate-smart practices on 80,000 acres of farmland annually, increasing land easement and conservation on 5,500 acres annually, and increasing organic farming to 20% of all cultivated land by 2045. Reaching the ambitious greenhouse gas emission goals set before us means evaluating current practices for opportunities that can contribute to the State’s goals. Fortunately, there is help available for agriculture. The California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) is responsible for coordinating and awarding grants to growers for sustainable projects on farms. Some of their programs include the State Water Efficiency

Enhancement Program (SWEEP) which provides grants for improving irrigation systems on farms that save water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through pump retrofits, and the Healthy Soils Program which provides financial assistance for the implementation of conservation practices on farms that help sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gases such as cover cropping, no-tilling, composting, and mulching. In the past two years, California has made significant investments to these sustainable programs by increasing the amount of funding available so that more growers are able to participate. For example, in 2021 the SWEEP program received \$60 million, and this amount increased to \$110 million in 2022.

If you are interested in learning more about the available sustainable programs and applying for grant funding for project on your farm you can visit OEFI’s website for more information: <https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/oefi/>

To stay informed of upcoming grant application deadlines consider signing up on OEFI’s website to receive email notifications.

To learn more about CARB’s carbon neutrality plan visit:

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan/2022-scoping-plan-documents>

¹ California Air Resources Board, November 16, 2022, 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality. ■



A gingerbread man went to the doctor’s complaining of a sore knee. The doctor asked him, “Have you tried icing it?”

Equitable Easements



California courts have litigated and reported equitable easements during the last two decades, but few states recognize them. The theory evolved from a court doctrine called “balancing hardships” which in turn evolved from principles of equity. California

and a few other states use “equitable easements” to decide civil boundary disputes for encroachments or for injunctions prohibiting trespass.

By way of comparison, Illinois courts consider if the cost of removing the encroachment is great, the benefit to the adjoining landowner is small, and damages that might be available. If all three are true, an Illinois court will likely refuse to require the removal of an accidental encroachment. See *Terwelp v. Sass* (1982) 111 Ill.App.3d 133, 138, 443 N.E.2d 804.

California applies a similar balancing test, but California also allows a court in its discretion to decree an equitable easement in a cause of action for declaratory relief. See *Warsaw v. Chicago Metallic Ceilings, Inc.* (1984) 35 Cal.3d 564, 575; *Hirshfield v. Schwartz* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 749, 765. Recently, California courts have allowed the equitable easement doctrine to sue another party for a judgment declaring that an equitable easement exists. California courts do not require payment of money in all cases to the owner burdened by the easement.

The equitable easement remedy is a different theory from prescriptive easements. Equitable easements involve innocent encroachment or trespass while a prescriptive easement requires adversity, *i.e.*, use that is clearly hostile to the true owner and made under a claim of right for a period of 5 years.

Here are some recent cases of equitable easements successfully obtained by encroaching or trespassing parties:

- *Hinrichs v. Melton* (2017) 11 Cal.App.5th 516, 523 (landlocked landowner may gain access to parcel from road by way of equitable easement over neighboring property even if owner does not show any history of use over neighboring property).

- *Tashakori v. Lakis* (2011) 196 Cal.App.4th 1003, 1008 (owner of landlocked parcel gets equitable easement to use driveway already used by two other nearby single-family-residence parcels).
- *Linthicum v. Butterfield* (2009) 175 Cal.App.4th 259 (equitable easement found but remanded to trial court for width reduction because 66-foot-wide roadway was wider than needed).

In contrast, one California court of appeal (*Ranch at the Falls LLC v. O’Neal* (2019) 38 Cal.App.5th 155) reversed a trial court decree of an equitable easement, because the trial court didn’t properly consider a critical factor, whether the ranch owner’s conduct “was innocent, rather than willful or negligent.” 38 Cal.App.5th at 185.

Equitable easements are a flexible remedy suitable for many disputes between adjacent property uses by neighboring owners. When a property owner acting in good faith seeks to establish a right to use another’s real property, but the elements necessary to obtain a prescriptive easement are not there, discuss with your attorney whether they think an equitable easement cause of action might succeed. ■



The three stages of man:

- He believes in Santa Claus.
- He doesn’t believe in Santa Claus.
- He is Santa Claus.

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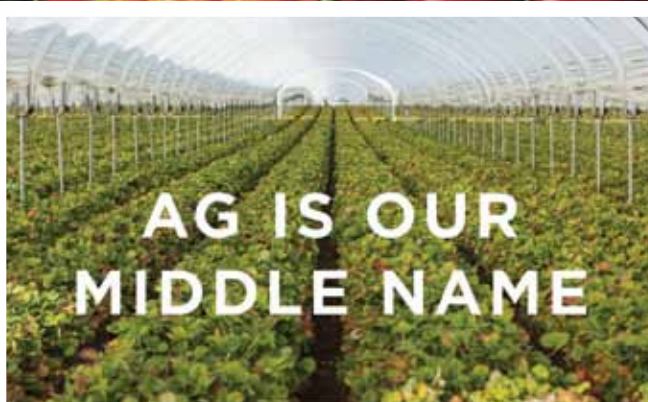
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THROUGH WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 7**

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Monterey, CA**

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