

# 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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## Supervisor Felipe Hernandez, Addressed Farm Bureau Spoke at Past Presidents' Lunch and Board Retreat



Newly elected Santa Cruz County Supervisor, Felipe Hernandez, was the guest at the Past Presidents' Luncheon held on January 26, 2023 at Rancho Santa Maria. Past Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Presidents attending, pictured above, are: Back row (L-R) John Eiskamp, Thomas Broz, Clint Miller, Kirk Schmidt. Front row (L-R) Nita Gizdich, John Pisturino, current President Dennis Webb, County Supervisor Felipe Hernandez, Chris Enright and Brendan Miele.

## President's Message

### Impact of the Recent Storms



Dennis Webb, President

As of the moment I am writing this message, the sun is finally shining again! The storms of early January certainly wore on me and I suspect

many of the readers of this publication will agree. Every few days, another threatening atmospheric river arrived, and with it, another

round of flooding, mudslides, fallen trees and power outages. I lead a team of foresters and loggers who manage properties across the Central Coast. We could barely finish triaging damage from one storm by the time the next storm arrived. While these storms weren't unprecedented, they did a great deal of harm to our community.

Laken and some of the surrounding neighborhoods in the Pajaro Valley flooded as many as three times. Paradise Park in Santa Cruz, the Covered Bridge neighborhood in

President's Message continued on Page 8



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# ASK MARK

**Mark Bolda, County Director, Strawberry & Canberry Farm Advisor, UCCE**

## Moisture & Root Disease

**Q.** Mark, the last time you discussed that all this moisture would result in more root disease in the upcoming season. Would you care to elaborate on that more for the local berry growers?

**A.** Yes, I can elaborate on this situation, and I do think it will be a serious one for Central Coast berry growers this year.

Strawberries are sensitive, blackberries are fairly immune and raspberries are VERY sensitive to root diseases promoted by saturated soils such as we are experienced across our area right now.

In the main, in our area, the pathogens of concern are species of *Phytophthora*, which as water molds have spores which swim through the water filled pore spaces of the soil to reach the roots of the plant, infect them and over a not long period of time kill the roots and crown of the plant. What's more, with all the movement of water via flooding and running off, any field that is already infected with this pathogen will spread it to all others in the surrounding area.

There are several things growers can do to mitigate the damage that this crown and root rot causing pathogen can do to

their berries. While much of the damage from runoff and standing water has already been done, it still makes good sense to drain off excess water and aerate the soil when it is possible to do so. In-season, there are several fungicides, such as fosetyl-aluminum or mefenoxam, which have proven efficacy, but growers should be however be aware of the lengthy months-long preharvest intervals both these materials have when thinking about using them. Since a field once infected with *Phytophthora* can remain so for some time, good soil fumigation and the selection of tolerant varieties make a lot of sense when continuing on ground known to be infected, as does the leveling of a field to prevent water pooling and subsequently even more saturation.

The above a discussion of *Phytophthora* crown and root disease in berries and mentions the use of fungicides as a part of controlling them. Before using any pesticide, refer to the label for correct use, and consult with your local Agricultural Commissioner for specific information. For further questions on this subject and any others relating to berry culture on the Central Coast, contact Mark Bolda at (831) 763-8025 or [mpbolda@ucanr.edu](mailto:mpbolda@ucanr.edu). ■

Don't forget to make your reservations for the annual  
**National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon**

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds - Heritage Hall

Call (831) 724-1356 or visit [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)



# THE WATER NANNY

## Gambling or Clouds

*"How is it possible for a farmer to live with all the risks from weather, crop prices, regulations and yields? It is just like gambling."*

This was a well intentioned question from a *Focus Ag* participant, during a presentation on water. Farmers have always suffered this fate. In the past we were unsuspecting victims of weather, soil moisture was a finger in the ground and fertilizer and water were fleeting prior to chemical nitrate and electric water pumps. Now we have the nightly weather report, crop advisors and Ag school graduates running the place, and we still don't know the difference. Too much data, or just not what we can use.

Every winter, maybe not this one due to a bit more rain than usual, farmers plan how to use this wealth of information to benefit their spring crop, and bottom line. The Water Board has even mandated we use much less fertilizer, and water. Groundwater agencies will require many basins to reduce water consumption to meet their goals. Maybe the cloud, no the computer one, will aid our quest for enlightenment. Winter is the time to delve into these esoteric options.

Our local favorite is CropManage, created at the Salinas UCCE, with a great dataset of local crops. This has resulted in reductions of 20% - 40% in water and fertilizer with similar yields during crop control experiments on Stage Rd, and now



with new extensions for grain and orchard crops throughout the UCANR system. This is FREE, so don't let the fancy graphics on the *cropmanage.ucanr.edu* website scare you, it provides for irrigation and fertilizer recommendations. Clearly the cloud, not gambling, is at work here with farm site focus based on satellite

imagery, weather data, crop type, soils data and water table information, all brought to you through your computer or phone. If you haven't tried it, do so. It's free after all, so your bottom line will be fine and may realistically reduce you inputs.

On the global front, the "world's first intelligent Agriculture Cloud, *Cropin*" ([cropin.com](http://cropin.com)) is available through subscriptions.

It has all the bells and whistles, like: a complete farm ERP and CRM suite and data-driven decisions, "monitoring and managing farms was never this easy". For my money, stick with CropManage where you can at least call the Ag Ext staff with questions.



Some of us are iconoclasts, we march to a different drummer. If that is the case just do your research with chatGPT ([chat.openai.com](http://chat.openai.com)). The results are questionable, or unclear, but the speed of feedback is great. All you must do is enter a query. For example, your Nanny asked it (the personification of the cloud): "Why is fertilizer use changed with water and weather conditions?"

*"Fertilizer use may be changed with water and weather conditions to optimize crop growth and prevent over-fertilization, which can lead to nutrient imbalances and environmental problems such as water pollution. For example, during periods of heavy rainfall or high humidity, fertilizer applied to the soil may be washed away or not effectively absorbed by plants. In contrast, during dry or hot weather, plants may require more frequent fertilization to compensate for water stress. Additionally, certain types of fertilizers may be more appropriate for specific weather conditions. For example, slow-release fertilizers may be used during dry conditions to provide a steady supply of nutrients over a longer period of time."*

OK, so that could be a better solution for your child's slapdash homework, but not much for cultivation guidance. Maybe I'll just stick with an old technology, going to Vegas instead. As you may be aware Henry VII (1485-1509) invented the modern deck of cards featuring his beloved wife, Elizabeth of York, appearing eight times on every pack of cards. "You know horses are smarter than people. You never heard of a horse going broke betting on people." (Will Rogers)

■



# FAVORITE RECIPES

## Blueberry Pudding Cake

February being the month that we celebrate our past United States presidents, I searched for their favorite recipes. I had many options, but chose to use this one. A fruity blueberry pudding cake, which was the favorite of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 cup 2% milk  
3 tablespoons butter, melted

FOR THE TOPPING:  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 cup boiling water  
Whipped cream, optional



1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toss blueberries with cinnamon and lemon juice and pour into a greased 8-inch square baking dish. In a small bowl, combine flour, sugar and baking powder and stir in milk and butter. Spoon over the berries.
2. Combine sugar and cornstarch, sprinkle over batter. Slowly pour boiling water over all. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the cake portion comes out clean, 45-50 minutes.
3. Serve warm. If desired, top with whipped cream and additional blueberries.

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## Senate Bean Soup

**Food History of Senate Ham and Bean Soup:** According to the U.S. Senate, the history of Senate Navy Bean Soup is more legend and guesswork than verifiable fact. One story says that in the early 1900s, Idaho senator Fred Dubois actually passed a resolution that the soup remain on the menu every day. (In its early days, the Senate Bean Soup recipe included potatoes; it no longer does.) Another story says that in 1903, Minnesota senator Knute Nelson expressed his fondness for the soup. Either way, some form of Senate bean soup has been on the menu every single day for 110 years — with one exception. For one day during World War II, the bean soup was unavailable due to food rations. The House of Representatives has its own competing bean soup, which likewise remains on the House cafeteria menu every day.

1 pound dry navy beans  
3/4 pound smoked ham hock  
2 quarts water  
1 onion, diced

1 tablespoon butter  
kosher salt, to taste (about 2 teaspoons)  
fresh black pepper to taste

Rinse the navy beans and pick over. Place beans into large pot with two quarts of cold water and the ham hock. Bring just to a boil, then lower to a simmer and cook for approximately three hours in a partially-covered pot, stirring occasionally, until the beans have fully softened.

Remove ham hocks and set aside to cool. Meanwhile, lightly brown the onion in butter and add to the soup. Pull meat from the ham hocks and return to soup. Stir. Before serving, bring to a boil and season with salt and pepper.

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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.

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Questions? Contact the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau  
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Israel Zepeda, Retired  
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(Picture not available)

## Save the Date

### Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

#### **National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon**

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Heritage Hall, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

#### **SCCFB 105th Annual Meeting**

Thursday, June 22, 2023

Rodgers House, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

#### **30th Annual Golf Tournament**

Friday, July 14, 2023

Pajaro Valley Golf Club

#### **California State Fair**

Friday, July 14, 2023 to Sunday, July 30, 2023

Cal Expo, Sacramento

#### **Santa Cruz County Fair**

Wednesday, September 13 to Sunday, September 17, 2023

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

#### **Annual Directors' Dinner**

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Location to be determined

#### **CFBF Annual Meeting**

Saturday, December 2 to Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Reno, NV

### Agri-Culture

#### **15th Annual Down to Earth Women Luncheon**

Thursday, May 11, 2023

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos

#### **14 Annual Testicle Festival**

Saturday, August 26, 2023

Estrada Deer Camp

#### **27th Annual Farm Dinner**

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Location to be determined

## Helping Farmers Protect Themselves From Chemical Application Liability

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

**M**id-sized and large farmers are increasingly buying sprayers and applying their own herbicides, pesticides and fungicides. With the substantial investment a self-propelled sprayer requires, it can be tempting to look for additional acres. So when a neighbor has a field that needs spraying, it can be seen as an easy opportunity to put the equipment to work and earn some extra income.

Unfortunately, this “neighborly thing to do” isn’t without risk. Unlike other custom field operations like tillage and seeding, spraying has unique, potentially costly liabilities. A crop application accident, such a misapplication or chemical drift, [can cause crop damage, degrade surface water quality, harm human health and more — exposing the chemical applicator to potentially massive liability.](#)

### Effective communication is key

One of the best ways to protect yourself and your neighbors is by thoroughly documenting the details before, during and after the application is to be made. If you’re planning to spray another farmer’s fields, effective communication between you and the other farmer is key in helping prevent misapplications. Be sure to take good notes and ask for specific details and expectations from the farmer. Such documentation can help prevent miscommunication in the case of a misapplication and may contribute to a quicker resolution.

“Create written documentation on the field, crop and chemical being applied,” said Nationwide Staff Underwriting Consultant Michael Johnson. “When the wrong product is applied and crop is damaged as a result, it can quickly turn into a shouting match if there’s no written record. Documentation is important and likely required by law.”

### Proper insurance is a must

Before even turning a wheel in your sprayer, make sure you’ve got the right farm insurance protection in place. “Spraying losses are typically not covered under a standard farm insurance policy. It’s especially important to have the proper endorsements added with the right limits in place suitable to the applications you’re conducting,” Johnson said. “You should also check with your state’s department of agri-

culture, as recordkeeping and license requirements vary by state.”

“It’s also a good idea for your agent to know when you’re applying chemical to your own fields or if you’re spraying on a custom basis,” Johnson said. “Compared to spraying on your own farm, you have more exposure with custom applications because you’re going into an area with which you’re not as familiar.”

### If a spray accident or incident occurs

If you suspect a chemical misapplication or other crop application accident, contact your farm agent as soon as possible to enable him or her to work with agronomists to confirm any potential claims and expedite a resolution.

Visit [AgInsightCenter.com](https://www.aginsightcenter.com) for expert tips and information from Nationwide for your farm or ranch. ■



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# THE AG COMMISSIONER

Juan Hidalgo, Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner

## Only A Stone's Throw Away



**Y**ou may have heard the news by now that I have accepted to serve as Monterey County's next Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer of Weights and Measures. I did not make this decision lightly and thought about it for a long time since former Monterey

County Agricultural Commissioner

Henry Gonzales announced his plans to retire at the end of 2022. I have very much enjoyed serving you and our community in Santa Cruz County for the past 18 years, and I am humbled to have had the opportunity to serve as Agricultural Commissioner for the past seven years. It has been an honor to have had the opportunity to get to know and work with many of you during my time with the County. I am very appreciative of our collaborations to protect

agriculture and keep our farmworkers safe, especially in the past three years when a series of what I hope are once in a lifetime, disasters have impacted all of us from the pandemic, wildfires, drought, and more recently floods. During my tenure with Santa Cruz County we have also navigated much regulatory change impacting agriculture from the phasing out of methyl bromide to the hardships created by the light brown apple moth. Each year brings its own set of challenges; but what is remarkable is your ability to innovate, be resilient, and your drive to continue to make agriculture in Santa Cruz County so successful. I will miss working with you, but I am also comforted by the thought that some of you also farm in Monterey County and I look forward to our continued collaborations. This is not a goodbye, but a see you on the other side of the river. I wish you all the best and continued success. ■

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### President's Message continued from Page 1

Felton, and downtown Soquel all flooded several times. Businesses in Capitola were destroyed by storm surge. People's homes and cars were inundated with water, causing sometimes irreparable damage. Fields flooded, damaging crops, equipment and farming infrastructure. Cattle ranches and timber properties had mudslides block many roads. One experienced local forester estimated that there is at least a million board feet of wind-fallen redwood timber across Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

As of today, the County of Santa Cruz is estimating around \$80 million of damage to public infrastructure, and that is just what we know of so far. Those of us who regularly drive our rural County roads know that the process of fixing everything will be a long one – the storm damage of 2017 still hasn't been completely repaired. While the Federal Disaster Declaration will help direct much-needed funding into rebuilding our community, the hurt will be felt for many years to come. The County is still waiting on tens of millions of dollars in funding

from FEMA that we were promised for CZU fire recovery.

This cycle of disaster on top of disaster has a tremendous impact. I was in Boulder Creek a few days ago and spoke with a local geologist. This geologist had just assessed a house that had been damaged by a mudslide. The family living in the house had just finished rebuilding after they lost their home to the 2020 CZU fire. Now, they are being told they can never move back in.

With the power back on and the roads open again, it's easy for most of us to go about our lives and forget about last month's rain. It's important to keep our neighbors in mind – there are many people who will need help recovering for months, even years. I am proud that so many people in our community came running to help their neighbors during the recent flooding. Let's all remember that when the water recedes, the recovery is only beginning. ■



## US Supreme Court “Punts” on Broadening Attorney Client Privilege



It seemed after the oral argument in Court on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, that the US Supreme Court would either affirm the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit (which includes all federal courts in the western United States) or dismiss the case of *In re Grand Jury*, No. 21–1397 as “improvidently granted.” On Monday, January

23<sup>rd</sup>, the Court did dismiss the case. The dismissal does not however mean that the Court lost interest in the issue raised, only that the facts were not right for deciding the legal issue.

The case asked: When a client confers with a lawyer and receives both legal and nonlegal advice, and the nonlegal advice is part of the legal advice, does the attorney-client privilege protect all of the advice or none of it? State and federal courts for years have said that the answer depends on whether the legal advice was the client’s *primary purpose* for consulting a lawyer.

The Petitioner law firm asking for a broader interpretation first said the *primary-purpose test* should be replaced and relaxed by merely asking if legal advice was a client’s “*significant purpose*” for the consultation. The law firm later changed that to ask whether it was a *bona fide* reason. Justice Elena Kagan said either of the law firm’s requests was “a big ask.”

Thirteen amicus (friend of the court) briefs from lawyer and business organizations, including the American Bar Association and the Chamber of Commerce, supported the law firm’s request for the broader interpretation. No amicus briefs supported the government, which urged the court to retain the *primary-purpose test*.

The justice’s questions did not reveal a left/right division this time, perhaps because the attorney-client privilege is not politically or socially controversial. It is a “lawyer’s issue,” about the practice of law itself, and the justices’ experience in law practice varies.

Chief Justice John Roberts asked about an accountant who completes a complicated tax form. The accountant’s work would not be privileged. But then the form is shown to a lawyer who identifies three items that are questionable and bills

for it. Would that legal advice make all of the communications privileged?”

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson described a hypothetical meeting that everyone agreed is over “a business decision ... but the lawyer [in the room adds a point.” She challenged the law firm’s attorney: “And you say, as long as it’s a legitimate point, that is good enough to require that the entire thing be privileged. ...”

Perhaps a majority of the Court wanted to save the issue for a case where publicly available facts permit a serious evaluation of a question and an answer that might expand secrecy and greatly affect the administration of justice. This was a criminal case and much of the information was protected by the grand jury privilege.

A reversal could have led to denying the government documents relevant to its investigation of a grand-jury target even though those documents would not have been privileged but for the fact that the target’s consultation with counsel included incidental legal advice. What the dismissal tells us is that the Court was not prepared to say, at this point and on this record, whether that would have been a just result in light of “reason and experience,” which is the standard in Federal Rule of Evidence 501.

So, for the time being in the Federal courts in the western United States, the *primary-purpose* rule stands. ■



### The Rule

**The rule is you have to dance a little bit in the morning before you leave the house because it changes the way you walk out in the world.**

Sandra Bullock

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# News & Information from RCD

Written by Dan Hermstad, Agriculture Program Specialist  
Resource Conservation District, Santa Cruz County

## Start to Irrigation Season

**B**erry growers do a great job conserving water, generally speaking. Of course, there are individuals that overirrigate but the fact that soil borne pathogens thrive in moist conditions and the standard irrigation practice of the industry (drip tape) means there are incentives to irrigate efficiently. Some might even say we can't save that much more water when it comes to berry irrigation. The fact is that we can always save more water and the Winter and Spring are just the right time for berry growers to consider taking a few small steps to achieve a great amount of water saved. Here's how.

You must begin by paying attention to soil moisture levels. This will allow you to know when to "start" the irrigation season at just the right time. It may be tempting to irrigate a few days or weeks early to 'help the plants out'. But if you've got a close eye on soil moisture levels where the plants roots are, you could delay the first irrigation of the season until it is certain that the plants need it. Every week of delay to the beginning of irrigation season (the first time you fire up the well pump for the season) could result in very significant reductions in groundwater pumped for that season. Especially when you consider that strawberries are the dominant crop in the valley. If winter and spring rains

continue, many ranches will continue to hold off on pumping groundwater which will result in immense water savings.

What is the best way then to know when to begin irrigating? There are several ways to check your soil moisture. Past Farm Bureau newsletter articles by the RCD have talked about many of them but for this specific purpose here's a good option. Deploy at least 4, up to as many as you want, soil moisture sensors in the field. Make sure they are no deeper than 6 inches. Strawberry roots are at about 4 to 6 inches now and you want to make sure you are measuring moisture where those roots are. Be sure to put sensors where you have different soil types so you can see the difference between clay, loam and sandy soils. Whatever soil moisture sensor you are using be sure you know how to read it and how to tell when it reaches a point when you need to water. Then monitor those sensors and only water when they indicate.

We don't always have a clear "start" to irrigation season due to winter rains stopping in January, for example, only to start again in March and April. Winter and Spring monitoring of soil moisture and watering only when needed is the best opportunity to save more water when it comes to berries. Those savings can add up! ■

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# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

## CALENDAR

**THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 2**

Policy & Resource  
Committee meeting

**TUESDAY - FEBRUARY 14**

Valentine's Day

**MONDAY - FEBRUARY 20**

President's Day Observed  
Office Closed

**THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 23**

SCCFB Board of Directors'  
meeting

**THURSDAY - MARCH 2**

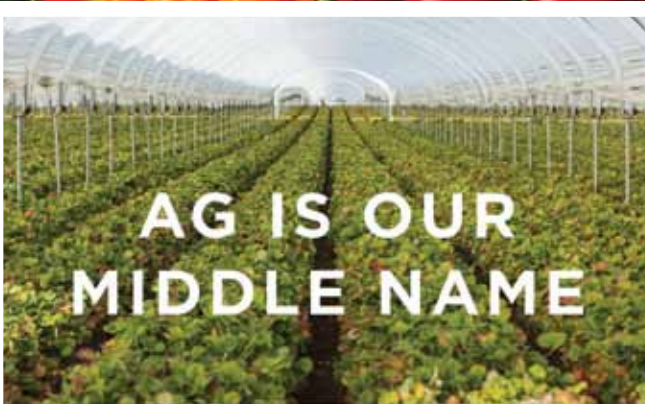
Policy & Resource  
Committee meeting

**FRIDAY - MARCH 10**

Focus Agriculture, Session 1

**WEDNESDAY - MARCH 15**

National Agriculture Day  
Spring Luncheon



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