

# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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# FARM



# BUREAU

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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

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## Agri-Culture, Inc. Receives Gift Of \$2 Million To Establish The Peixoto Organic And Sustainable Farming Education Fund

*Lakeside Organic Gardens provides initial funding for new education programs and Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Learning Center*



The Peixoto family (L-R): Dick & Marisella with children Ashley, Ricky and Amanda

The organization, Agri-Culture, Inc., received a \$2 million gift from Lakeside Organic Gardens to establish the Peixoto Organic and Sustainable Farming Education Fund. The purpose of the gift is to develop an Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Learning Center in the Pajaro Valley to educate, train, teach and otherwise advance public knowledge of all aspects of organic and sustainable farming practices, including jobs and careers.

In presenting the gift, Dick Peixoto, founder of Lakeside Organic Gardens, stated, "The public has shown us a strong interest in organic and sustainable agriculture. I feel strongly that the proposed Learning Center will create opportunities that will allow the public to advance its knowledge while encouraging careers in organic agriculture through education and focused training programs."

In receiving the gift, Agri-Culture, Inc.

President, Steve Bontadelli stated, "Agri-Culture is honored to be chosen to help Dick Peixoto and his family fulfill their dream of providing educational programs focused on organic and sustainable agriculture." Bontadelli further commented, "Our area has been the leader in organic and sustainable agriculture. It's wonderful that the program Dick Peixoto envisions will benefit the public, the industry and our local area."

Jess Brown, Executive Director of Agri-Culture, Inc. noted, "Other individuals, corporations and foundations that see the importance of this vision are encouraged to donate to the fund so that more programs can be provided."

Agri-Culture, Inc. will house the fund at the Community Foundation Santa Cruz County where it already has ten other funds for various purposes that relate to local agriculture.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.SCCFB.COM](http://WWW.SCCFB.COM)



# President's Message

DAVID VAN LENEP, PRESIDENT

## The 97th California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

Early in December, a small group from Santa Cruz County traveled to the 97th Annual Meeting of the California Farm Bureau Federation held in Reno, Nevada. Reno is one of the rotating locations for the Annual Meeting, which originated with a prominent California ranching family's ties to the city.

The California Farm Bureau Federation again recognized Santa Cruz for two outstanding accomplishments this year; County of the Year and one of four finalists for the Innovator Award.

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau earned **County of the Year** honors among Farm

Women (DEW) Luncheon, which has raised over \$362,000 over the last eight years. This money benefits Agri-Culture, a local non-profit dedicated to education and outreach about agriculture. Despite the success of the program and the outstanding efforts and dedication of our two emissaries, Cynthia Mathiesen and Nita Gizdich; we did not win, missing by five votes.

Each Annual Meeting is an opportunity to see what is happening to others around the state and to get a better understanding of what California Farm Bureau has been focused on for the year.

President's Message - Continued on Page 7

**"State and local Farm Bureau's are membership-based organizations. Just as local Farm Bureau's reflect local opinions and regional outlooks, the state Farm Bureau represents California as a whole to advocate at the state and federal level for all of California agriculture. Being a member allows our voices to be heard, whether voting for leadership or directing the leadership and staff of State Farm Bureau, to benefit farming across the state."**



Bureaus of similar size for the third straight year. It is such an honor and reflects the work our Farm Bureau does consistently to advocate for agriculture, engaging in local politics and policy making, fundraising and our outreach through news and social media.

For the **Innovator Award**, each of the four finalist counties set up a booth to showcase their particular accomplishment, to be voted on by meeting attendees. We presented our tremendously successful Down to Earth

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# ASK LAURA

Steve Tjosvold, Farm Advisor, Environmental Horticulture, UCCE

## EL NINO AND PLANT DISEASES

**Q:** What conditions are predicted for the upcoming El Nino winter?

**A:** El Nino conditions in the Monterey Bay area this winter are predicted to bring above average rainfall, which can come in drenching rains that flood and waterlog soils for extended periods. At the same time, winter air temperatures are predicted to be warmer than normal and consequently soil temperatures will be too.

**Q:** What impact might this have on plant diseases?

**A:** At least one important group of plant pathogens might be favored by these conditions. *Phytophthora* are fungus-like pathogens that develop particularly well in wet conditions and some species such as *P. cinnamomi* do best in moderately warm conditions. They all need water to reproduce, spread, and infect plants. During rain downpours, infested soil or spores can move readily in water runoff and splashing water. Water logged soil predispose nursery plants to root and root-crown infection caused by *Phytophthora cactorum*, *P. tentaculata* and other soil-borne *Phytophthora* species. The longer leaf wetness periods will favor the production of aerial spores and infection of *P. ramorum* (causing sudden oak death and *P. infestans* (causing potato and tomato late blight) and other species that mostly attack and develop in above-ground portions of the plant.

**Q:** What can be done to manage these diseases in nurseries?

**A:** Prevention is the key to management of diseases caused by *Phytophthora*. Start with a sterile planting mix, use clean containers, and keep pots up off the ground to avoid contact with existing soil. Gravel nursery beds allow for drainage away from the pots and can eliminate standing water. Don't transplant too deeply because soil covering the base of the stem encourages infection by *Phytophthora*. Avoid irrigation practices that wet the foliage for prolonged periods. If sprinklers are used, irrigate in the morning to allow for thorough and quick drying of foliage. Prudent irrigation scheduling is important to minimize water stress, over-watering, and salt accumulation in the soil. These factors can predispose plants to *Phytophthora* infection. Soil mixes should drain well, providing at least 10% air-filled pore space after drainage. Avoid mixes that have inadequately composted components because they can break down quickly; the soil settles and loses air-filled pore space. There are several fungicides that help control *Phytophthora* diseases. The most effective fungicides are those that are specifically active on *Phytophthora* and related species. The regular and blanket use of these fungicides encourages the development of resistant strains. Rotation of fungicides with different modes of action is especially important to reduce the chance of resistance from occurring. A rotation strategy attacks different susceptible stages of the *Phytophthora* life cycle too.

# THE WATER NANNY

## Das Data

It has been over a week since my last cake, sugar plum or candy. The holiday season is over and I now know the cause of winter gloom...it is not shorter day lengths. So I thought it best to take advantage of my dour mood and talk about our obsession with data and political expediency, always sunny topics.

**Necessary Data:** Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA), your favorite "water agency", is mailing all well owners and farm operators a *simple* survey with a map of the farm. It seeks to determine what acreage is irrigated by which ag well. California's new Sustainable Groundwater Management legislation requires agencies know how groundwater is used within the local basin. For a 40 acre farm with one well, the few questions are easy. For a 300 acre farm with 6 wells, multiple tenant farmers and full cross connections, simple questions become more interesting. Agency staff can assist and will follow-up if the results are unclear or no response.

**Excess Data:** Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) nitrate reporting is required for many Tier II and III farms. If a farm falls into this category of fertilizer use, just the nitrate portion must be reported by block and crop, regardless of the size of the crop or the overall mixture on a particular farm. A 200 acre farm with 10 acre blocks growing 2½ crops per year per block has 50 crops to track for every fertilization and irrigation cycle. Without computers such detail would be unimaginable; it still is. So much information does not improve groundwater quality, only the number of consultants, especially since RWQCB only looks at annual N applied. Maybe in the next ag order, the reporting can be simplified with just the total N use information reported by major crop type, not every tablespoon of fertilizer.

**No Data:** The Santa Cruz Transportation Commission tax proposal is an example of no data, no prioritization and no concern regarding need. It represents an agency responsible for expensive public capital projects sublimated to political fashion, mostly from a few in Santa Cruz. There's no objective data to support the decision as to which projects would be funded if a sales tax ballot measure is approved.

Here's the deal, too many Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) meeting participants protested highway improvements advocating that no money should be spent on Highway 1. So, the Commission folded and offered trails, light poles and rail line repairs (not actual trains) to get possible votes. The tax would produce \$450 million over 30 years, with only \$113M for state highways. Maybe the tax will be more palatable if public art painted on overpasses was included; but I forget, we already have taggers doing that tax free. Unlike other counties where transit funds are based on observed present traffic and future needs, Santa Cruz finds that unnecessary as people are not welcome unless they ride the nonexistent train. It is hard to believe anyone living south of Capitola participated in this pedestrian allocation of highway funding. The tax will be on the November 2016 ballot.



### Transportation Funding

Neighborhoods, local streets, bike & pedestrian use	30%	\$135M
Highways 1 & 17	25%	\$113M
Public and para Transit	16%	\$ 72M
Coastal Rail Trail	15%	\$ 67M
County owned railroad	14%	\$ 63M

At this point it may be necessary to provide a disclaimer; but why, as this article is written by a character whose picture is a black and white cartoon. That alone should provide sufficient caution.



# FAVORITE RECIPES

## Potato Leek Soup

I am always on the lookout for fresh local recipes and often prowl the web pages of local growers, including their Facebook pages, to find recipes using locally grown commodities. I came across this recipe on Lakeside Organic Gardens Facebook page recently. It is January, it is cold and a nice warm soup for dinner sounds very inviting. The recipe originally came from the Farmers' Almanac Newsletter.

Both Wales and Ireland claim this delicious soup as their national dish. The Scottish have their own version called "Tattie-and-Leekie," and the French are famous for their version, called vichyssoise, associated with Vichy France, and the French Vichy regime. Whatever the origin, it's sure to keep you cozy on a cold winter's night.

### **Ingredients:**

3 large leeks, sliced into 1/4" medallions

2 tablespoons butter

2 cups water

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

2 lb. potatoes, peeled, diced into 1/2 inch pieces

1 dash marjoram

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

Hot sauce to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions:** Cook leeks in butter with salt and pepper in a medium saucepan. Cover pan and cook on low heat for 10 minutes. Check often. Do not brown the leeks. Add water, broth, and potatoes. Bring to a low simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Pour half of the soup mixture into a blender (carefully), puree and return to the pan. Add marjoram, parsley, and thyme. Add a few dashes of chili sauce, freshly ground pepper, and salt to taste. Serve hot.

**Tip:** When cooking leeks, only use the white parts. Take care not to overcook them. Overcooked leeks become slimy and unappetizing. Properly cooked leeks are tender, but still offer resistance when pierced.

**Variation:** To make vichyssoise, a French version of the soup served cold, whisk in 1/2 cup heavy cream when returning soup to the pan after blending. Omit the hot sauce and add a pinch of nutmeg. Cool completely, then transfer to the refrigerator to chill. Serve cold.

## California Farm Bureau Federation 97th Annual Meeting



(L-R) David Van Lennep & Tom Broz attending policy sessions

The California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) held its 97th Annual Meeting in December at the Peppermill Resort in Reno, NV. Over 700 members participated

in the five-day conference attending meetings, workshops and other planned festivities.

Paul Wenger was elected to a fourth two-year term as CFBF President. Jamie Johansson was elected as 1st Vice President and Tony Toso, 2nd Vice President.

Santa Cruz County was recognized with five County Activities of Excellence awards in Membership, Policy Implementation, Leadership, Ag Education and Public Relations. Santa Cruz was also named County of the Year for a third consecutive year. The County delegation included David Van Lennep, President; Tom Broz, 1st Vice President; Cynthia Mathiesen, Past President; Nita Gizdich, Director; Jess Brown, Executive Director.

Right: The delegations from Santa Cruz, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties enjoy an evening meal together.



# JIMMIE COX MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

## Applications Are Available For The Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship

**A**gri-Culture is now accepting applications for the 2016 Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship. The \$4,000 award is for a student entering or currently attending college and majoring in agriculture. This award will be allocated for the remaining years in college (max. 4-years) with verification of registration for each session of full-time classes. This award is made possible through the Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship Fund and a \$2,000 contribution from American AgCredit.

To be eligible for the scholarships, students must live in Santa Cruz County or within the Pajaro Valley Unified School District boundaries, or be a member of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. Criteria for the scholarship are based on student leadership skills, a demonstrated commitment to the industry, grades and financial need.

The **DEADLINE** for submitting applications for the Agri-Culture Scholarship Program is:

**Wednesday, February 24, 2016**

To request an application, please contact the Financial Aid office at your school or the Agri-Culture office, 141 Monte Vista Ave., Watsonville, CA 95076 (831) 722-6622 or (831) 818-1193

Email: [agri-culture@sbcglobal.net](mailto:agri-culture@sbcglobal.net).

**Applications are available on our Website:**  
**[www.agri-culture.us](http://www.agri-culture.us)**

## Smile, It's Contagious

You know that you are living in 2016 when...

1. You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
6. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.
11. You start tilting your head sideways to smile. :)
12. You're reading this and nodding and laughing.
13. Even worse, you know exactly to whom you are going to send this list.
14. You are too busy to notice there was no #9 on this list.
15. You actually scrolled back up to check that there wasn't a #9 on this list.



## Funds for Water Conservation Practices on the Farm

**A**pplications are being accepted now and through June 2016 under the 2016 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill and administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Eligible and approved applications will be funded on a continuous basis through July 2016.

Irrigation related practices eligible for an incentive payment include: drip and sprinkler irrigation systems; irrigation pipelines; pumps; flow meters; irrigation water storage systems; and irrigation water management. Many other practices that address soil health and natural resource issues on local farms and ranches are also eligible for funding under the program.

Incentive payments are flat rate and based on actual cost. Payments can vary between 40% - 90% of the total project cost including installation. All practices approved for funding

are required to be designed and installed according to NRCS specifications. Program sign-up begins with an application request from the local NRCS office and a visit to the USDA Farm Services Agency in Salinas to establish eligibility to participate in a 2014 Farm Bill program.

NRCS is able to provide free planning and engineering design assistance on most practices to help reduce those related costs to the grower. All projects that are part of a NRCS conservation plan will be given a higher priority and chance of funding. Although the program is competitive the likelihood of an EQIP application being approved and funded is generally high based on applications and participation in years past.

For more information about the 2016 EQIP program and technical assistance available from NRCS, please contact Rich Casale, NRCS at **475-1967 ext. 101**.

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## **President's Message** - Continued from Page 2

**Medical Marijuana** - Cannabis was on everyone's lips this year due to the passing of three different bills in California providing regulatory framework, permitting process for growing and distribution and, of course, taxation. An interesting component is that now marijuana has been deemed an agricultural product. Local agricultural commissioners will now be tasked with enforcing some of the regulations similar to their duties with other crops. Santa Cruz County has struggled to manage this activity recently to address an exponential increase in neighborhood conflicts and rampant environmental damage in the rural mountain areas.

**Elections** - There were some interesting proceedings, at what is usually an ordinary progression of state leadership. Our recent 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, Kenny Watkins, announced in mid-October he was stepping down from the ranks. Generally the officers ascend the ladder to President, taking up to 16 years in the lower ranks. This is to prepare for the duties of representing such a diverse agricultural state. In a surprising twist, Kenny was then nominated

from the delegate floor to run against Paul Wenger, current President. Paul remained following a vote of all county delegates.

Following Kenny's October announcement several qualified people announced that they would vie for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Following a few rounds of voting by county delegates, a new 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President was elected. Tony Toso, a rancher and cattleman from Mariposa County was elected.

State and local Farm Bureaus are membership-based organizations. Just as local Farm Bureaus reflect local opinions and regional outlooks, the state Farm Bureau represents California as a whole to advocate at the state and federal level for all of California agriculture.

Being a member allows our voices to be heard, whether voting for leadership or directing the leadership and staff of State Farm Bureau, to benefit farming across the state.

*"Agriculture, the Original Green"*

# NATIONAL AG DAY CONTESTS

## Poster & Poetry Contests Announced

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau & Agri-Culture  
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**2016 NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY  
POETRY CONTEST**  
For Grades 7-12

*Your poems from grades 7-8 divisions and 10-12 division will be judged for best poem!*

**The winning entry will receive \$200**

**Theme:**  
**"GROWN IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
AND THE PAJARO VALLEY"**

Any style poetry may be used and should not exceed 12 lines.

The winning entry will also be used on 15,000 placemats and distributed to county restaurants next year!

 All entries must be submitted to:  
Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau  
142 Monte Vista Avenue  
Westonville, CA 95076



PLEASE PRINT FULL NAME, GRADE AND SCHOOL ON BACK OF ENTRY  
**Deadline: Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 4:00 pm**  
For more information about agriculture in Santa Cruz County/  
please call (831) 724-1356 or (831) 722-6822

**POSTER CONTEST**  
**Spring**  
**2016 NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY**

CONTEST IS OPEN TO GRADES 6-8  
Pajaro Valley

**"GROWN IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AND THE PAJARO VALLEY"**  
*(The winning poster will be selected for the poster contest and will be used on 15,000 placemats and distributed to county restaurants next year!)*

**First prize receives \$200**  
*(winning poster will be placed in the county museum)*

Winning entry will be featured on 15,000 placemats and distributed to county restaurants next year!!

**Contest Rules:**  
Posters must be 11" x 17" in size.  
Posters must be submitted by Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 4:00 pm.  
Posters must be submitted to:  
Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau  
142 Monte Vista Avenue  
Westonville, CA 95076  
For more information about agriculture in Santa Cruz County/  
please call (831) 724-1356 or (831) 722-6822

**Contest Deadline:**  
Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 4:00 pm.



"After all is said and done,  
more is said than done."

Aesop



"The answers to life's biggest  
questions are not found on Google."  
Author Unknown

## How To Prepare For and React To a Flood

**Y**ou may not be able to stop an oncoming flood, but you may be able to mitigate some of its damage by knowing what to do before, during and after one of nature's most devastating perils. Floods damage or destroy more homes than any other natural disaster – causing \$2 billion-plus in property damage every year. A flood can happen to anyone, so it's important for you to consider adding the protections provided by a flood insurance policy.

**Find out about flood insurance:** It's important to know that standard homeowners insurance generally doesn't cover damage caused by a flood. The government offers federal disaster assistance only when the president declares a major disaster. Ask your insurance agent about whether flood insurance is available in your area. Before, during and after a flood you can consider taking these and other measures as appropriate.

### What to do before a flood

To help reduce damage:

- Install backflow valves or standpipes to prevent sewer lines from backing up.
- Elevate your washer, dryer, water heater, oil tank, furnace and electrical wiring on concrete blocks. If you're unable to raise an item, anchor it and protect it with a floodwall or shield.
- Clear debris from gutters and downspouts.
- Landscape with plants and vegetation that resist soil erosion.
- Move furniture, valuables and important documents to a safe place.
- Install a flood-detection device that sounds an alarm or calls your phone if it senses water.
- Keep sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, lumber, hand tools and other materials handy for addressing stormwater issues.

### What to do during a flood

A flood can be scary, but try to stay calm. The most important thing is to keep your family safe, but if you have time:

- Turn off utilities at the main power switch.
- Move valuables, important papers and clothing to upper floors. If you have only one floor, put items on

shelves, tables or countertops.


- Sanitize your bathtub and sinks and fill them with fresh, clean water in case the water supply becomes contaminated.
- If you feel threatened by rising water, leave your home or move to upper floors.
- Never try to drive through a flood. Six inches of water can cause loss of control and possible stalling.
- If you're in your car when the water begins to rise quickly, abandon it and move to higher ground.
- Don't walk through flood areas. Just 6 inches of water can sweep you away.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

### What to do after a flood

After emergency officials have given permission to re-enter your home:

- Check for structural damage before going inside.
- If it's dark, use a flashlight – not matches, a candle or a lighter.
- Listen for reports to see when drinking water is safe again.
- Don't turn your power on until an electrician has inspected your system.
- Use your cell phone or other camera to photograph damage, which can help get your claim started sooner.
- Inventory damaged or destroyed items – again, to expedite your claim.
- Report your claim to your insurance agent or company as soon as possible.
- Begin initial cleanup as soon as waters recede. Separate damaged from undamaged items and clean and disinfect everything that got wet.
- When cleaning, wear a mask, gloves and coveralls to minimize exposure to possible hazardous materials.
- Mold can be a hazardous result from a flood. Consider a professional service that specializes in post-flood cleanup.
- Once you've gathered documentation about your damage and your insurance coverage, contact your insurance company or agent.

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# FOCUS AGRICULTURE NEWS

## NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM FOR COUNTY RESIDENTS

**A**pplications are currently being accepted for Class XXVII (27) of **Focus Agriculture**, a "first-in-the-nation" program, designed for selected community leaders to learn about agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley. The program consists of once-a-month, day-long seminars commencing March 11, 2016 and ending October 21, 2016. Twenty-one people will be selected for Class XXVII.

Speakers, ranging from elected officials to representatives from environmental groups, address the class. The sessions cover such topics as:

- Environment and technology
- Ethnic groups in agriculture
- Regional diversity of commodities produced

- Many farm tours and hands-on experiences.

In announcing the application process for Class XXVII, Agri-Culture President, Steve Bontadelli, stated, "Many people who are involved in the community are interested in agriculture. Focus Agriculture was created to allow community leaders an opportunity to learn, through discussions and hands-on experiences, about local agriculture." Bontadelli continued, "We are proud that the program received a National Award in 2011."

Applications are available online at [www.agri-culture.us](http://www.agri-culture.us) or in the office at 141 Monte Vista Avenue, Watsonville (831) 722-6622.

**Applications are due January 15, 2016**

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A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

## CALENDAR

**MONDAY- JANUARY 18**  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
Office Closed

**THURSDAY - JANUARY 28**  
Agricultural Policy Advisory  
Commission

**THURSDAY - JANUARY 28**  
Board Retreat

**WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 3**  
• Legislative Committee  
meeting  
• Executive Committee  
meeting  
• Membership Committee  
meeting

**MONDAY- FEBRUARY 8**  
Public Relations & Information  
Committee meeting

**WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 10**  
Young Farmers & Ranchers  
meeting

**SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 14**  
Valentine's Day

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