

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

JUNE 2013

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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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Agriculture, Watsonville's Proud Cornerstone

Common Sense Wins! Measure T Defeated!

By Chris Enright, Past President

The community of Watsonville voted on June 4th to send a clear message- "We continue to support our valuable farmland, and one terribly misguided city councilman is not going to undo Measure U's collaborative effort". Agriculture is our biggest asset, not our biggest nuisance. Most of our problems can be fixed with good leadership.

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Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau presents 96th Annual Dinner Meeting Thursday, June 27, 2013

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5:45 p.m. Wine Reception

6:45 Dinner

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President's Message

CYNTHIA MATHIESEN, PRESIDENT

We have enough water woes as it is without shoving our water back into a man-made crack in the earth in search of what was once called Black Gold that now causes more wars, pollution, and climate changes than it is useful. We need to put our efforts into finding alternative clean and efficient energy solutions.

Fracking Fundamentals

Hydraulic Fracturing, or Fracking, is the high-pressure injection of a mix of millions of gallons of water, sand, and chemicals known as "proppants" into a deep underground oil or gas reservoir to free trapped gas and oil. The mix, injected under pressure, fractures the reservoir rock. When the fluids are removed, the proppants keep open the cracks left by the fracturing, allowing oil or natural gas to flow back to the well. Fracturing the rock is necessary to extract oil or natural gas from formations in which the pore space in the rock making up the oil or natural gas reservoir is too tight to allow the flow of fluids or gasses to the well. Without a man-made fracture, the oil or gas cannot be recovered.

Hydraulic fracturing was first used in 1947 in a well in Kansas. Multiple stage fracking, which is more common in the Eastern United States and can use an elongated, horizontal drilling hole, is "relatively new" to California and is limited by geology.

The fracking method more commonly used in California involves one or two fluid pressure injections to break up the rock and release the oil. California is the fourth largest oil-producing state in the US and a deposit known as the Monterey Shale may hold 15.4 billion barrels of oil, according to federal estimates, two-thirds of the nation's shale-oil reserves. Literally in our backyards, fracking has become a highly controversial issue so I thought I would share some interesting tidbits.

Chemical Pollution – The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) published a report finding many of the substances used in the fracking process are toxic
---Continued on Page 9



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ASK LAURA

Mark Bolda, County Director, Farm Advisor, UCCE

Control of Redberry Mites in Blackberries

Question: Could you remind us of what the program for control of redberry mite is in blackberries?

Redberry mite activity prevents berries from ripening uniformly, causing from several to many drupelets to remain bright red on the otherwise black and fully ripe fruit. The affected drupelets never ripen and subsequently that fruit is not suitable for consumption.

The problem of redberry mite in the Pajaro Valley is not a small one. Commercial blackberry growers estimate that left unaddressed, redberry mite infestations can cause 10-50% loss in total yields and personally I have seen a few instances where redberry mite resulted in a near total loss of harvestable fruit.

Fortunately, there is a good method for managing redberry mite in blackberries due to the efforts several years ago of the University of California Cooperative Extension working together with a private industry entomologist. This method is usable in both conventional and organic situations and involves the use of Golden Pest Spray oil, which is a plant-derived horticultural oil and is applied at key physiological stages of the blackberry

plant's development.

Redberry management needs to be proactive in that growers and gardeners are to be applying the oil before the symptoms start to show up on the fruit but not too early as to damage the tender developing plant parts. Thus, UC IPM guidelines instruct applicators to begin treatment with Golden Pest Spray Oil once the plant is at about at the stage of 50% flowering and some green fruit are beginning to emerge. The rate of the Golden Pest Spray oil recommended by the guidelines is 1.2 to 2% of the total mix volume, so for example 1.2 gallons of oil would be added to 100 gallons of water carrier. This initial application of oil having been made, two or three more applications of the oil are put on, spaced at intervals of 10 to 14 days apart. At this pace, by the time the time of the last oil application, one should be seeing the first harvestable blackberry fruit showing up.

The above has been a primer of using horticultural oil to manage redberry mite in blackberries. Please contact Mark Bolda at UCCE Santa Cruz if you have more questions on this topic or any other topics concerning blackberry, raspberry or strawberry cultivation.



THE WATER NANNY

"Agriculture, the Original Green"

A Fish Story

The crew had been burning the midnight oil for weeks. The crisis had to be averted. Someone will pay dearly. Actually it was only 5:30, still very late by bureaucratic standards. No one knew how a disaster of epic proportions had arisen. The press would have a field day. Environmental standards could not be ignored. Something had to be done about those damn carp.

It is not as if there was no notice. Everyone from California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) to the *Sentinel*, even Pajaro Valley High science students, had studied the problem. Pinto Lake was full of carp. Carp are bottom feeders, like little vacuums without benefit of a liner to catch the stream of sand and bottom gunk ejected as they graze about. Not only do they make a mess, the resuspended bottom sediment spreads phosphates throughout the lake. This in turn causes toxic cyanobacteria to flourish.

The bureaucrats knew this would be a tough nut to bring to justice. Fortunately carp already had an unsavory reputation. Not even People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) would object. So they established the Carp Regulatory Authority Protocol, so top secret no one dared to speak its acronym.

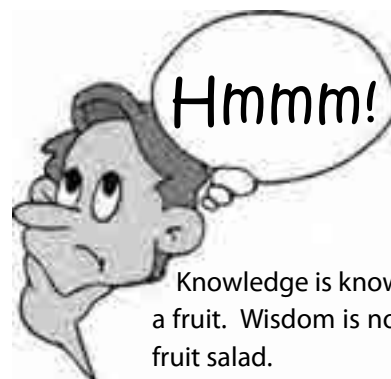
Alas, the City of Watsonville beat them to the solution, somewhat out of self-defense. It is hard to operate a park with a lake and then warn, in multiple languages, to stay out of the water. As usual, the water is the problem. It is full of *Microcystis aeruginosa*, a cyanobacteria, responsible for the lake's ill health. You can't see, touch or smell them, but they are toxic and may cause rashes, nausea, diarrhea, liver and kidney damage. Visit the park, but stay out of the water.

What has fueled this plague of the microscopic? Carp. The solution is a carp bounty. Catch a Pinto Carp and get 25¢ a pound. This is no fish bate as the

carp can weigh up to 20 pounds. Not only is there a cash reward, there is a contest and prizes. Of course there are rules; fishing licenses required, legal method of take (no clubs, bow fishing or snagging), and the carp must be humanely killed before you present it for your reward and photo. You just can't take the carp home, not even for the cat.

Fish stories are a dime a dozen, what does this have to do with farming? Pinto Lake is downstream from several hundred acres of farm land. Runoff from farms causes nitrate and phosphates, both key parts of fertilizer to wash into the lake. Nitrates can cause algae blooms and low oxygen, which coincidentally did kill 200 carp this spring, but does not nourish cyanobacteria. Phosphate travels with sediment, the soil washing off fields, and has accumulated in the lake bottom for decades, only to become an issue when stirred up by the carp. So, beyond the great carp hunt, we need to be more attentive to keeping our soil on the farm where it belongs. After all no one wants the bureaucrats to think this is more than just fishy.

"I caught a twenty pound carp last week." "Were there any witnesses?" "There sure were. If there hadn't been, it would have been forty pounds."



Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.



"Agriculture, the Original Green"

FAVORITE RECIPES

Renee's Lavender Shortbread

From Renee Shepherd, Owner of Renee's Garden

These rich but not too sweet shortbread cookies have just a hint of sweet lavender fragrance and flavor. They are perfect to serve with tea, milk or lemonade. I make several batches to divide up and tuck into pretty decorative boxes or tins lined with pastel tissue paper. Be prepared to share the recipe -- or, better yet, write it up on lavender-colored paper to include in the box.

1 ½ cups (¾ pound) butter, at room temperature (no substitutes)
2/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons very finely chopped lavender florets (fresh or dried)

1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
2 1/3 cups flour
½ cup cornstarch
1/4 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 325°F. Cover bottoms of two baking sheets with parchment or brown paper. In a large bowl, cream together the butter, sugar, lavender, and mint with an electric mixer. Mix until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add flour, cornstarch, and salt and beat until incorporated. Divide dough in half. Flatten into squares and wrap in plastic. Chill until firm.

On a floured board, roll or pat out each square to a thickness of 1/2 inch. Cut the dough into 1 1/2 -inch squares or rounds. Transfer to baking sheets, spacing cookies about 1 inch apart. Prick each cookie several times with a fork. Bake 20 to 25 minutes until pale golden (do not brown). Cool slightly, then transfer to a rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. If desired, garnished serving plate with sprigs of cut lavender.

Editor's Note: This recipe is being shared with us by Renee Shepherd, owner of Renee's Garden. Renee was the featured speaker at the recent Down to Earth Women Luncheon. More recipes from Renee's cookbook, *A Kitchen Garden*, are available at: reneesgarden.com

Smile!



A Doctor asked his patient about his activity level and how he spent a typical day.

"Well, doctor," the patient said, "yesterday I took a five hour walk through four miles of rough terrain. I waded along the edge of a lake, got sand in my shoes, climbed several rocky hills and nearly stepped on a snake."

"You must be a heck of an outdoorsman," said the doctor.

"No, I'm just a heck of a bad golfer."

Northern California Federal Courts Are Fertile Ground for Food Label Lawsuits

A legal periodical recently reported that as of March 2012, twenty-eight food label class action lawsuits were pending in San Francisco Bay Area federal courts. False labeling lawsuits included listing “evaporated cane juice” instead of sugar in breakfast pastries, labeling “0 grams Trans Fat” on label for high overall fat content corn chips, labeling canned tomatoes “100% Natural” when the can contains citric acid and calcium chloride and saying a cooking spray that contained a propellant when the ingredient was pressurized with petroleum gas, propane and butane.

These consumer suits result from a convergence of several factors. One factor was the Federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeal decision in 2008 that a class of plaintiffs could pursue a claim against Gerber, one of the most trusted names in baby food. *Williams v. Gerber Products* (2008) 552 F.3d 934. In Gerber, consumers claimed the side panel of the baby food purported to claim it was a healthy snack. The class alleged that Gerber product’s claim for health and fruit content were misleading. The Court found that the statement on the product that it

was “made with fruit juice and other all natural ingredients” could easily be interpreted by consumers as a claim that all ingredients in the produce were natural, which appear to be false.

Another reason for the many lawsuits is the end of tobacco litigation and the re-direction of litigation efforts toward food. All natural labeling has become a hot bed of litigation due to the size of the market and because the term is not defined by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. And recent cases allege that labels violate deferral standards.

These cases rely on California’s Unfair Competition Law and Sherman Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law. Judges are sometimes unwilling to dismiss cases early in the case. This area of law is evolving and California is leading the way.

Save the Dates

96th Annual Meeting - Thursday, June 27, 2013

20th Annual Golf Tournament - Friday, July 12, 2013

California State Fair - July 12 - July 28, 2013

YF&R Testicle Festival - Saturday, August 24, 2013

Santa Cruz County Fair - September 10 - 15, 2013

17th Annual Progressive Dinner
Saturday, October 26, 2013

Annual Directors’ Dinner - November 7, 2013

California Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting
December 7 - 11, 2013 (Monterey)

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Contributions Of Agriculture



As a consumer, every day I appreciate that I live in such a wonderful agricultural area. Our community enjoys an abundant and diverse supply of fresh fruits and vegetables, at farmers' markets, through community supported agriculture, and at grocery stores. Our fertile soil and diversity of micro-climates supports many types of crops. As the Agricultural Commissioner I am privileged to interact with many of the dedicated growers and ranchers in our county.

I have long been curious about the contributions that agriculture makes to our local economy. My office recently commissioned Agricultural Impact Associates LLC, a local firm specializing in economic analysis, to do a study to discover the economic impacts of our agricultural industry. The study goes beyond our annual crop report gross production values to include the ripple effect from employment in agriculture and agriculture-related industries. This first comprehensive analysis of one of our county's top industries will be released in June.

I am very excited about this report. I will only say that it should come as no surprise that agriculture is a robust contributor to our local economy. Once released, the report will be available on our website at www.agdept.com.

Healthy Soil Saves Water

Molly Dragaron, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Healthy soils hold more water, nutrients and absorb more carbon dioxide. A good soil structure allows roots to spread deep and anchor themselves more securely. A simple field test to determine the relative health of your soil involves the use of your senses "sight, touch and smell".

First, look at the soil. A healthy soil will have plant organic matter mixed in. It should be dark, cool, and have a loose, crumbly texture. The slight clumping of soil allows roots to penetrate and for air and water to seep into the pore-space. Unhealthy soils are lighter in color. They don't hold structure, nutrients or water well.

Healthy soil should be sweet and earthy smelling. This indicates the presence of good bacteria (actinomycetes) that help break down organic matter and bring nitrogen into the soil. Unhealthy soils typically smell sour or like "kitchen cleanser".

Lastly, feel your soil. It should be cool to the touch and hold together slightly when squeezed before crumbling. Healthy soils should feel "thicker" than unhealthy soils. This is because the soil organic matter forms air pockets and pores for water and roots to navigate.

A healthy soil sustains food production year after year, reduces water and nutrient applications, and mitigates drought, flooding and erosion impacts. NRCS has launched a nationwide campaign to "Unlock the Soils." For more information visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/ or contact the Capitola NRCS office at 475-1967.

SAFETY FIRST

Mike Klimenko, State Fund Farm Bureau Group Manager

Be Diligent To Prevent Heat Illnesses Among Employees

California's sizzling summer temperatures are on the horizon, and there have already been some days with temperatures in the 90s and above in many areas of the state. In a few weeks, temperatures approaching and surpassing the century mark are not uncommon.

Prevention is the best course of action to avoid problems with heat illness. Here are a few suggestions that everyone working outdoors during summer should heed:

- Drink small amounts of water frequently. Be sure to avoid alcohol because it increases the loss of body fluids.
- Whenever possible, schedule hot jobs for cooler times of day or cooler seasons of the year.
- Take rest breaks in cool areas and add more workers to reduce the workload or shorten the workday.
- Gradually adapting to heat will reduce the severity of heat stress.
- Mechanize heavy jobs and when possible increase air movement with fans or coolers.
- Clothing can affect heat buildup, so it is recommended that loose, lightweight and light colored clothing be worn.
- Do not use salt tablets. Taking salt tablets can raise blood pressure, cause stomach ulcers and seriously affect workers with heart disease.
- Heat stroke occurs when the body has used up all of its water and salt and stops sweating as a result. As the

body temperature rises, the person feels weaker and weaker, and may start acting confused or upset. As the situation becomes more dire, the victim may pass out or have convulsions. If heat stroke is suspected, it is imperative to call 911 immediately because this condition can kill a person quickly.

- While waiting for the EMTs to arrive, there are things that can be done to aid the victim. Remove excess clothing from the victim, fan and spray him or her with cool water. Offer sips of cool water if the person is conscious.

State Fund has a wealth of information on safety topics available for easy access on our website at www.statefundca.com. Click on "Employers" and then "Resources" to find the extensive list of topics.

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- Just Keep It Simple -

President's Message - Continued from Page 2

and some, like formaldehyde, are known carcinogens. After the fracking process is complete, a portion of the fluids that were pumped into the ground flow back to the surface. This wastewater is called "flowback" and, in addition to fracking chemicals, this flowback can also contain toxic substances that are naturally-occurring underground, including arsenic, barium, lead, mercury, and radioactive elements like radium.

Water – Fracking is under fire from environmentalists as a threat to water resources and is a suspected cause of groundwater contamination. Documented reports link fracking contamination with medically-confirmed health impacts in animals, including diseases, deaths, and second-generation birth defects according to the NRDC.

Earthquakes – Fracking hasn't caused "significant" earthquakes, according to a study released in April 2013 by Durham University. The study also found the process has the potential to reactivate dormant faults. Also in April 2013, the journal *Geology* reported there have been a lot of earthquakes recently in parts of the U.S. that traditionally haven't seen so many. All areas are where fracking activity just happens to have increased substantially in the past decade. The *Geology* study estimates that during the last four years, the number of earthquakes in the middle of the U.S. was 11 times higher than the average rate over the previous 30 years.

Fracking isn't just a US concern. Many countries around the world have either banned fracking altogether or have fracking moratoriums in place until further studies are completed. There are more states, cities, and municipalities with fracking bans on their books than those supporting fracking.

As far as current California legislation goes, three bills introduced in 2013 (AB649, AB1301, and AB1323) either ban fracking until a litany of requirements are met or ban the use of fresh water in fracking and prohibit fracking near aquifers. All three bills are now with the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

California's requirements for the protection of underground resources and well construction standards provide a first line of protection from potential damage caused by fracking.

California's regulations, however, do not require notification to the California State Department of Conservation when fracking occurs. There is a gap between the requirements placed on oil and gas operators to safely construct and maintain their wells, and the information they provide to the Department of Conservation about hydraulic fracturing operations and steps taken to protect resources and the environment. Without requirements for disclosure, members of the communities in which fracking occurs have no right to information about the procedures or chemicals involved. The Department's pending regulatory process is intended to close this gap.

It seems to me that California doesn't need any more cracks in our ground. We have enough water woes as it is without shoving our water back into a man-made crack in the earth in search of what was once called *Black Gold* that now causes more wars, pollution, and climate changes than it is useful. We need to put our efforts into finding alternative clean and efficient energy solutions. Just my opinion.


Food For Thought



"The past speaks to us in a thousand voices, warning and comforting, animating and stirring to action."

---Felix Adler

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Agricultural News

Agriculture, Watsonville's Proud Cornerstone

Continued from Page 1

It should be pretty apparent by now that the Watsonville City Council is not leading. Isn't it time to elect new leaders that can solve the city's problems by working with the community, not against it?

A majority of non-farming voters have spoken and they said...**Urban sprawl is not the answer. Paving our farms is not the answer. Dividing the community is not the answer.**

We look forward to a newly awakened city council that must take this election seriously. It's time to accept the obvious. Agriculture, Watsonville's proud cornerstone will not be paved over anytime soon.

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CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY - JUNE 5
Young Farmers & Ranchers meeting

FRIDAY - JUNE 14
National Flag Day

SUNDAY - JUNE 16
Happy Father's Day

THURSDAY - JUNE 20
Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission meeting

THURSDAY - JUNE 27
96th Annual Dinner Meeting

WEDNESDAY - JULY 3

- Executive Committee meeting
- Membership Committee meeting
- Legislative Committee meeting

THURSDAY - JULY 4
4th of July Observed
Office closed

MONDAY - JULY 8
Public Relations & Information Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - JULY 10
Focus Agriculture, Session 5

FRIDAY - JULY 12
20th Annual Golf Tournament

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