

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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

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Down to Earth Women Luncheon



Featured speaker, Marguerite Remde, co-owner Belle Farms Olive Oil, at the Down to Earth Luncheon

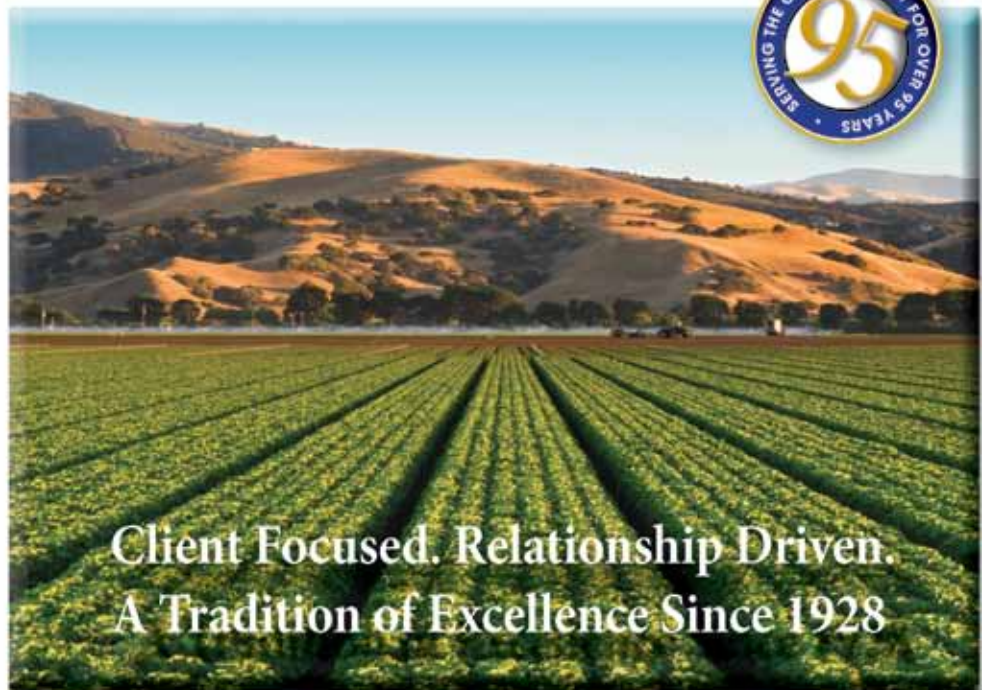
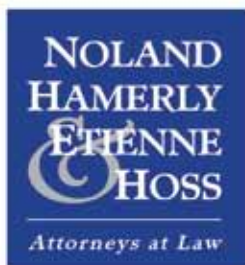
The 17th Annual Down to Earth Women (DEW) Luncheon was held at Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos in Watsonville in May and had an attendance of almost 300 women. This event is for women who are involved in, or support, agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

This year's featured speaker for the event was Marguerite Remde, Co-Owner, Belle Farm Olive Oil, who spoke on the topic "The Essence of Olive Oil: Food, Community...and Snake Oil." Susan True, CEO, Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, was the Mistress of Ceremonies for the luncheon.

The purpose of the luncheon is to raise funds for Agri-Culture's Focus Agriculture program, the Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship fund and the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau's school programs. This year the event raised over \$90,000. Erica Padilla Chavez, CEO, Second Harvest Food Bank, spoke about her experience as a participant in Agri-Culture's Focus Agriculture program. Lillian Mendonsa, the 2025 Jeannie Witmer Memorial Scholarship recipient, spoke about how the scholarship will help her pursue her educational career. ■



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See the President's Message on Page 5



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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Director & Farm Advisor
UCCE, Santa Cruz County

Cold Conditioning of Strawberry Plants

Q. At a recent meeting, you shared that you have made significant steps in understanding cold conditioning of strawberry plants? Could you elaborate on this further?

A. Yes, through research with several collaborators, I have made significant progress in understanding what is happening to the strawberry plant as it undergoes the two stages of chilling prior to planting.

In the way of review, strawberries, being plants from temperate regions with a cold winter season need to go through a period of dormancy and dormancy to grow optimally in the following spring. The way this is managed in the California strawberry industry is that transplants are grown in the higher elevations and latitudes of Northern California where they are able to receive this requirement before planting in the late autumn.

The question for growers and researchers for many, many years has always been what is sufficient cold conditioning to optimize strawberry production? How many hours of in field chill, usually defined as temperatures between 33 and 45 degrees, and how many days of cold storage subsequent to that, does the transplant need to perform optimally after planting?

My research work on this matter, which began in the fall of 2023, has begun to elucidate what is going with the strawberry plants during these two stages of in-field chill and post-harvest storage. First, as temperatures begin to drop and days become shorter in the nurseries in Northern California, clearly in preparation

for dormancy, strawberry plants begin to build up reserves of starch in the roots. Once the transplants are harvested, stripped of leaves and placed into the darkness and steady temperatures of cold storage, the built up reserves of starch begin to drop in the roots and at the same time the presence of energy providing sugars like glucose and fructose become significantly higher. In other words, the stored starch in the roots, on the plant being placed in supplemental storage, is being reduced to form sugars in preparation for planting and growth anew.

These are still early days in this work, but it does offer a fascinating window into how the strawberry plant responds metabolically to the environment around it at a critical point in its life cycle.

The above has been a short explanation of dormancy and dormancy breaking in strawberry, and what this looks like in terms of plant metabolism. For questions on this and other topics in berries on the Central Coast, please contact Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, Strawberries and Caneberries, UC Cooperative Extension, mpbolda@ucanr.edu.

HAPPY
Father's Day

THE WATER NANNY

"Agriculture, the Original Green"

Graduation

May and June are great festive months all due to graduations, whether from high school or college. It is a time to be recognized by your school, friends and teachers; time to stand up and throw your hat skyward, in celebration. This year of celebration is more important as we seem to have become stuck in a time of ennui, uncertainty and a clouded future. Commencements shine a light on what is necessary to leave the nest of college, to find jobs, relationships, and fulfillment in a chaotic world, raw optimism.

Some commencement speakers give cautious guidance, a few provide wisdom to departing grads. Federal Reserve, Chair Jerome Powell spoke at Princeton last month. ***"Another thing I have learned along the way is that, as you strive in coming years to reach your full potential, you will need to take risks and make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. Take it from an expert! But the bigger mistake is to avoid taking risks. If you aren't failing from time to time, you aren't asking enough of yourself. All I can say is go for it! Throw yourself into the deep end of the pool. Believe in yourself. Take risks. When you fall down, get up! Repeat cycle."*** Some time ago I attended a seminar about how California farms are undergoing rapid change in how we grow, harvest, process and market our fresh produce, while dealing with uncertain weather, labor and safety issues. At the end of the day one person asked how farmers could tolerate so much risk, and I have to say it never occurred to me as a farmer that we are in a risky profession, only that I was a farmer.



Kermit the Frog gave more down to earth homilies to the grads. ***"Life is like a movie. Write your own ending. Keep believing, keep pretending. Sharing life with the right people — even a spotlight-hogging pig. Life is better when we leap together."***

Recalling earlier sunny graduation lore, Steve Jobs gave a commencement at Stanford in 2005. ***"If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right. If today was the last day of your life, would I want to do what I am doing today. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking***

you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart. Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish."

Graduation is like a farmer with her spring planting; full of optimism, hope, and certain profit. In spite of our ennui, we need to proceed carrying the optimism generated by careful planning, like graduation, as the alternative will result in the demise of our farm. We do not know what the weather may be, but our experience will see us through future uncertainty. We just have to go for it now, to stay hungry and foolish. Afterall ***"the farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer."*** (Will Rogers.) It should be noted that Steve Jobs, Will Rogers and Kermit never graduated from college, but they knew how to inspire us, to leap together.



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FAVORITE RECIPES

Fruit Cobbler

This is another of the recipes from the old Omega Nu cookbook. It was submitted by Kelly Velasco. It's always a good time of year for a fresh fruit cobbler, but none better when we actually have an abundance of fresh fruit.

Mix together:

1 cup flour

1 cup sugar

1 heaping teaspoon baking powder

Cut In 1/2 cup shortening

Stir in 1 cup milk

Pour into a baking dish.

Top with:

4 cups fruit with 1/2 to 1 cup water depending on how juicy the fruit is.

Bake at 420°F until the dough comes to the top, then lower oven temperature to 350°F until done.

(It takes about 15 minutes for the dough to come to the top and about 30 minutes to finish baking.)

President's Message

A Meeting, a Mulligan, and a Mountain Oyster



Dennis Webb, President

As summer approaches, I want to personally invite you to join us at three signature events that reflect the strength, humor, and connection of our agricultural community.

First, on June 19, we'll gather in La Selva Beach for the 108th Annual Meeting. It's not just a routine date on the calendar—it's a moment to reflect on the year's progress, share the Farm Bureau's direction, and recognize those who've gone above and beyond for our local ag industry. Whether you've been attending for decades or this would be your first, I encourage you to be part of the conversation. It's your organization.

Next up: the 32nd Annual Golf Tournament on July 11 at Pajaro Valley Golf Club. This isn't just for golfers—it's a relaxed, friendly event that helps fund our scholarship programs and

other outreach efforts. It's also one of the best ways to meet fellow members and supporters in a casual setting. Bring a friend, a vendor, or someone new to the Farm Bureau—there's always room on the green.

And finally, we close out the season with a one-of-a-kind tradition: the 17th Annual Testicle Festival on August 23 at Estrada Deer Camp. If you know, you know—and if you don't, you probably should. This event brings together farmers, ranchers, and the broader community for a meal and an evening you won't forget. It's a celebration of local grit and good humor, and it supports our mission in a way that's uniquely Santa Cruz County.

I hope to see you at one—or all—of these events. If you have questions, want to sponsor, or are simply curious about what to expect, don't hesitate to reach out. These gatherings are where conversations start, relationships grow, and our shared future takes shape.

Being a Member Pays Off!

BECOME A FARM BUREAU MEMBER

Join the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau



The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is an important voice for the Santa Cruz County and Pajaro Valley agriculture industry. Everyone is eligible to be a member 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.

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I am a Farm Bureau member because...

"I am a Farm Bureau member because the Farm Bureau supports our community and local agriculture."

Evan Benevento, CPA
Farm Bureau Member



Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

SCCFB 108th Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 19, 2025
Paradise Garden, La Selva Beach

32nd Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 11, 2025
Pajaro Valley Golf Club

California State Fair

Friday, July 11, 2025 to Sunday, July 27, 2025
Cal Expo, Sacramento

Santa Cruz County Fair

Wednesday, September 10 to Sunday, September 14, 2025
Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Annual Directors' Dinner

Thursday, November 6, 2025
Location to be determined

CFBF Annual Meeting

TBD

Agri-Culture

17th Annual Testicle Festival

Saturday, August 23, 2025
Estrada Deer Camp

29th Annual Farm Dinner

Friday, October 10, 2025
Land Trust Little Bee Barn



THE AG COMMISSIONER

David Sanford, Agricultural Commissioner,
Santa Cruz County

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF AGRICULTURE



David Sanford

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

Each year, we publish our Annual Crop Report in which total acres, yields and gross production values for our major crops are compiled. However, there are more involved and immensely beneficial contributions agriculture makes to our local economy than just the harvest yields. My office recently contracted with Agricultural Impact Associates LLC,

a local firm specializing in economic analysis, to do a study delving deeply into the economic impacts of our agricultural industry. The study goes beyond gross crop values to include the ripple effects from employment in agriculture and agriculture-related industries. This is the second comprehensive analysis of one of our county's top industries, following an initial study that was completed over a decade ago in 2013. This newly updated report on the economic contributions of Santa Cruz County agriculture is on track to be completed and released early this summer, and we will ensure to get the word out when it is finalized and available.

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



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Strange But Impossibly True!

The second got its name for being the second unit of time, after the minute.

The Romans call 1/60 of an hour *pars minuta prima* (first small part), so it was logical that 1/60 of a minute would be *pars minuta secunda* (second small part).

Excerpts from the Readers Digest

California's Many Consumer Protection Laws

California is one of the leaders in passing consumer protection laws. California has a robust set of laws and implementing regulations to make sure consumers are treated fairly and have recourse if they are not. Consumer protection laws safeguard buyers of goods and services, and the public, against unfair practices in the marketplace. These laws cover a wide range of issues including deceptive advertising, faulty products, and unfair business practices.

The California Department of Consumer Affairs (DC9A) is the primary state agency for enforcing consumer protection laws. The DCA oversees State boards and bureaus that regulate different professions and industries. For example, the Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) handles issues related to car repairs, while the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) addresses complaints against contractors.

ADVERTISING: One important consumer protection law prevents deceptive advertising. California laws prohibit businesses from making false or misleading statements about their products or services. For example, The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) State Organic Program (SOP) is responsible for enforcement of the federal Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, and the California Organic Food and Farming Act of 2016. These statutes protect consumers, producers, handlers, processors and retailers by establishment of standards under which fresh agricultural products/foods may be labeled and/or sold as "organic". They provide for producer and handler registration, enforcement, education and outreach, and cost sharing.

UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES: The state also has strict laws against unfair business practices. The Unfair Competition Law (UCL) prohibits any unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business act or practice. This law is broad and covers a wide range of behaviors, including bait-and-switch advertising and charging hidden fees.

CONSUMER CONTRACTS AND WARRANTIES: California law has significant protections when it comes to consumer contracts and warranties. For example, the Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act (also known as the "Lemon Law") protects consumers who purchase or lease new cars. If a new vehicle has substantial defects that are not fixed after

a reasonable number of attempts, the consumer may be entitled to a replacement or a refund.

PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION: In recent years, consumer protection has begun to include data privacy. The California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) gives consumers more control over the personal information that businesses collect. It gives the consumer the right to know what data is collected, to whom it is being sold, and the ability to access and delete their data.

CONSUMER RECOURSE: There are several avenues for recourse if a consumer believes their rights have been violated. They can file a complaint with the DCA. They can take legal action against businesses through the courts. California law also allows class action lawsuits, where a group of consumers who have been similarly wronged can come together to sue a business.

SMALL CLAIMS COURT: For small disputes, consumers can take their cases to small claims court. This is a simpler, quicker and less expensive way to resolve legal disputes, without the need for a lawyer.

In conclusion, understanding consumer protection laws can empower you to make better decisions and know your rights when things go wrong. California's extensive consumer protection laws are intended to create a fair marketplace and provide consumers with the tools they need to stand up against unfair practices. These laws can help you fight deceptive advertising, unfair business practices, protect your personal data, and much more

**FOOD FOR
THOUGHT**

**"You'll never be criticized by someone who is
doing more than you. You'll always be criticized
by someone doing less. Remember that."
—Denzel Washington**

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FarmTeam Alert!

Farm Bureau Successful at Fish and Game Commission

Recently, the Fish and Game Commission held their Wildlife Resources Committee meeting. The topic was a possible change to coyote management in the state which would have taken tools away from farmers and ranchers to manage their land. After an 8+ hour meeting, with more than 500 people in attendance, the two commissioners agreed to drop the proposal.

This is a big win for Farm Bureau who submitted over 1,300 letters via FarmTeam and a joint letter with 32 County Farm Bureaus getting involved. In addition, a handful of California Farm Bureau members showed up to speak out at the meeting and let the commission know how the change would hurt their farms and ranches.

The testimony was powerful and swayed the commission to tabling the proposal. This is a giant win for Farm Bureau and agriculture. It wouldn't have been possible without your support!

Thank you for your tireless work to defend agriculture in California!



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CALENDAR

SUNDAY - JUNE 15
Happy Father's Day

THURSDAY - JUNE 19
108th Annual Meeting

WEDNESDAY - JUNE 25
Focus Agriculture
Session 5

THURSDAY - JULY 3
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

FRIDAY - JULY 4
Independence Day Observed
Office Closed

FRIDAY - JULY 11
32nd Annual Golf Tournament

FRIDAY - JULY 30
Focus Agriculture
Day on the Farm

THURSDAY - AUGUST 7
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - AUGUST 20
Focus Agriculture
Session 7

SATURDAY - AUGUST 23
17th Annual Testicle Festival

THURSDAY - AUGUST 28
Board of Directors' meeting

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication



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