

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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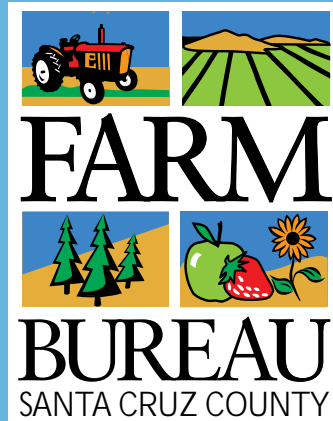
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Between The Furrows is a monthly publication of the SCCFB. Members receive a subscription as part of their membership investment.

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President's Lunch and Board Retreat

Annual Event Held at Rancho Santa Maria



(L-R) Current Farm Bureau President **Cynthia Mathiesen** and Past Presidents **Chris Enright**, **Matthew Bissell** and **John E. Eiskamp**

Photo Credit: Bill Ringe

The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau held its Annual Board Retreat and Past President's Lunch at Rancho Santa Maria in Watsonville. This beautiful private setting overlooks the Pajaro Valley and the Monterey Bay. The retreat included presentations from several guests on a wide range of subjects. Prior to the retreat a lunch was held for past presidents. Newly elected County Supervisor Zach Friend was the special guest speaker. Presidents from 1974 to present attended.

A Special Thank You

During the retreat, the following representatives made presentations:

Zach Friend, County Supervisor, 2nd District; **Bruce McPherson**, County Supervisor, 5th District; **Cory Caletti**, Senior Transportation Planner, SCC Regional Transportation Commission; **Luis Mendez**, Deputy Director, Management and Administration; Rail Line acquisition; **Barbara Mason**, Economic Development Coordinator, County of Santa Cruz; **Michael MacDonald**, County of Santa Cruz Sheriff's Office; **Lindsay Coate**, Executive Director, Ag Against Hunger; **Laura Berlanga**, 2nd Vice President, Ag Against Hunger; **Rob Morse**, Central Coast Manager, PG&E; **Jamie Johansson**, CFBF Second Vice President; **Abby Taylor**, Vice President, Policy and Communications, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California

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President's Message

CYNTHIA MATHIESEN, PRESIDENT

Water, Water, Everywhere

PART II

Last month, I wrote about the many water related agencies, coalitions, and boards demanding our attention including the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. This month, I'll navigate through six more agencies.

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program

CCAMP is the CCRWQCB's regionally scaled water quality monitoring and assessment program. CCAMP is primarily funded by the State Water Board's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program and by a private endowment held with the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay. It's mission is to collect, assess, and disseminate scientifically based water quality information to aid decision makers and the public in maintaining, restoring, and enhancing water quality and associated beneficial uses.

Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc.

CCWQPI manages the Cooperative Monitoring Program (CMP) on behalf of irrigated agriculture throughout the Central Coast. This CMP satisfies the fifth requirement of the RWQCB's July 2004 Conditional Ag Waiver and provides outreach and education to growers regarding the results of the CMP, in partnership with other agricultural organizations.

Farmers for Water Quality

FWQ was created in response to the CCRWQCB's 2011 Conditional Ag Waiver and funded by

Continued on Page 6



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ASK LAURA

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, Strawberries & Caneberries, UCCE

What Is The Best Way To Prune Blackberries?

The pruning of blackberries is a good subject to cover, as many commercial growers in Pajaro Valley are engaged in this activity right now.

Pruning is a very important step in the management of blackberries, since it removes old, unusable cane and keeps the hedgerow disease free and vigorous. However, there are a few key points to bear in mind when pruning blackberries.

The first key is that blackberries bear on the second year canes, known by caneberry growers as the floricanes. These are the canes, once having flowered and fruited, that need to be removed in the pruning, and one should cut them down; in most cases down to the ground. By doing so, one is removing canes which are dead and will no longer produce while at the same time removing a potential source of disease and insects. Most often it is best to do this a little bit later in the fall or in the winter to allow the remaining energy reserves to descend from the floricanes back into the crown.

Secondly, the first year vegetative canes, also known as the primocanes,

are the canes one wants to leave when pruning since they will be producing flowers and fruit in the following year. In the first vegetative, non-bearing year, the primocanes should be trained to the trellising system and pruned back (or tipped) to 4 to 5 feet long and the branches pruned back to a length of 2 to 3 feet. When pruning these canes back, it is suggested to make pruning cuts not flat across the front of the cut, but rather at an angle so as to allow water to flow off of them more easily.

Finally, a good idea to be able to distinguish floricanes from primocanes in the dormant season is to paint the bottoms of the primocanes with white latex paint in the winter of the first year. This will allow one, following the harvest of fruit of those same canes in the second year, to distinguish the dead floricanes from the still living but defoliated primocanes by merit of the white paint at the their base.

The above has been an article about pruning blackberries. For any questions about strawberries or caneberries, please contact Mark Bolda at UC Cooperative Extension in Watsonville, (831)763-8040 or mpbolda@ucdavis.edu.



**Daylight Savings Begins
March 10, 2013**

**Ag Day Luncheon &
First Day of Spring
March 20, 2013**

THE WATER NANNY

Spindletop

J.R. Ewing does not live here. Indeed, I know of no oil tycoons who live here. But folks in Aromas are convinced that they want to visit us soon. Aromas is an interesting village, perched on the border of three counties, with a quarry as its singular landmark. The Pajaro Valley Management Agency (PVWMA) allows export of metered water from the Pajaro basin to Aromas. But what has the good villagers' knickers in a twist is seismic testing around the quarry. Fears of oil fracking, or more likely a shrewd deal by Granite to have someone else pay to see how much stone they have to mine?

Excepting Aromas, all other water is used in the basin. The City of Watsonville has several wells, and a surface water source in Corralitos. While the water is distributed, it is consumed by residents within the valley.

California water law is interesting, archaic and conflicting. A grower can pump an unlimited amount of water from an aquifer beneath their farm for reasonable use on the property. Unlimited is not equal to reasonable. In essence you can use all you want on your land but not waste it or export it off your farm.

Since we are already over pumping the aquifer there is also a fundamental economic issue, we pay the PVWMA for all the water we pump. This money funds the augmentation of our groundwater. Quarterly bills provide additional incentive not to waste water.

In 2009 Cal-Pine proposed to build a peaker electrical power plant in Pajaro. This was during a period of electrical shortages due to deregulation of rates and manipulation of supply by Enron. More electricity is good, but there are usually unintended consequences. Here it was the need to use water to cool the power plant, water from our already over-drafted aquifer. Peaker plants don't run all the time so it's hard to estimate the water use, but it looks like about 300,000 gallons per day. Fortunately the peaker was not built.

Now it seems all the kingdom

is concerned about fracking. Fracking produces recoverable oil and gas which will bring down the cost of fuel and reduce our reliance on imported oil. The downside is possible contamination of drinking water aquifers by unknown and undisclosed drilling contamination. There is another impact, particularly in the arid West; high water consumption. Each fracking well uses about 4,000,000 gallons of water per day.



While J.R. may have no interest in drilling in the Pajaro Valley, we should consider the possibility. Why not head these wildcatters off at the pass. The PVWMA has never limited or restricted pumping from wells in the valley. It has not imposed rules on waste of water. But, interestingly, it has the authority to do so. Fracking takes place thousands of feet down, the bottom of the lower Purisima aquifer in the eastern Pajaro Valley is just below 1000 feet. This injected water will be lost forever, so it could be considered waste. What if the PVWMA prohibited reinjection of water from our aquifers back into the ground beneath our existing water aquifer?

Resolved: No water may be extracted from water wells within the jurisdiction of the PVWMA for the purposes of reinjection of such water back into the ground to a depth greater than 1,000 feet below sea level.

Sly move by the PVWMA to preserve the water in our aquifer for our use when no one is asking otherwise. After all, it wasn't raining when Noah built his ark.





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FAVORITE RECIPES

Homemade Irish Cream Recipe

1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 2/3 cups Irish Whiskey
1 teaspoon instant coffee granules

1 tablespoon chocolate syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract



In a blender, combine heavy cream, sweetened condensed milk, Irish Whiskey, instant coffee, chocolate syrup, vanilla extract and almond extract. Blend on high for 20 to 30 seconds. Store in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator. Shake well before serving. Will keep for 2 months if refrigerated.

For an alcohol free version of Irish Cream, try this:

1 can (12 oz) evaporated milk
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 cup 2% milk
1/4 cup sugar

1 tablespoon instant coffee granules
2 tablespoons chocolate syrup
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon almond extract

In a blender, combine the first eight ingredients; cover and process until smooth. Store in the refrigerator. For each serving, place 1/2 cup brewed coffee in a mug. Stir in 1/3 cup Irish Cream. Heat mixture in a microwave if desired. Irish Whiskey may be added to each serving if desired.



Join Us

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

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

\$35 per person

Codiga Center & Museum at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

For more information, please contact

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau at (831) 724-1356

Tickets are also available online at www.sccfb.com



President's Message - Continued from Page 2

several Central Coast Farm Bureaus, Grower-Shipper Associations, and growers. This group developed and presented an Ag Alternative Proposal to the CCRWQCB in September 2011 in an effort to influence and compel the board to accept this proposal as an achievable, reasonable, and meaningful Conditional Ag Waiver.

On Farm Solutions

OFS was created in 2012 to help growers meet the Best Management Practices (BMP) required by the current CCRWQCB Conditional Ag Waiver. This proactive group has hired consultants to research, determine, and model the BMP for different commodities in different watershed areas. This is a pilot project with the goal of improving agricultural water quality. Potentially, the final project can become a Coalition in March 2013 but managed by a group other than CCWQPI, as it is outside of its scope of work.

Groundwater Cooperative Monitoring Program

The GCMP was formed in 2012 to meet the requirements outlined in the CCRWQCB's Monitoring and Reporting Program Orders No. R302012-0011-01 and R302012-0011-02. It is an optional part of the Conditional Ag Order and may be accepted in the Summer of 2013 and implemented in the Fall 2013. The final GCMP could be administered by Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc., if CCWQPI is interested; but, the growers must put together a program and make a request of CCWQPI.

Central Coast Agricultural Water Quality Coalition

The CCAWQC was created in 1999 and is a unique partnership between Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, farmers, ranchers, environmental organizations, and governmental agencies. The Coalition launched its Agricultural Water Quality Program which spans seven counties, including Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Benito, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. The Program works to demonstrate the compatibility of environmental protection and economic viability on specific issues such as Rangeland Water Quality Education and the Co-Management of Water Quality and Food Safety.

This is **by no means** a complete list; we are swimming in water issues and we are not the only county in California or the nation trying to solve our water problems. We have a number of directors and members volunteering on the ever increasing list of water agencies, coalitions, and boards. This is time consuming with very little, if any at all, appreciation. Even John F. Kennedy recognized farmers' role in this world when he said, "There is too little public recognition of how much we all depend upon farmers as stewards of our soil, water, and wildlife resources."



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FROM THE AG COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Mary Lou Nicoletti, Agricultural Commissioner

A Tale of Two Pests



Recently a colleague and I were discussing “the good old days” regarding our jobs. We seem to recall that there used to be a slow time at work, a period when one could catch up on reading, purge old files, spend some

time thinking about policy or new projects. There no longer seems to be any “slow times”. Increasingly we seem to operate putting out fires, or at least trying to avert crises. I’ve never been a farmer, but it got me to wondering if any of you experience slow times. Do you sleep late, put your feet up on your desk and gaze at the ceiling? Somehow, I doubt it. So I’ve been asking growers who come into the office, and thus far, no one has told me that he or she is bored or looking for things to do! In fact, one person who grows seedling plants in greenhouses for sale to growers told me this is one of his busiest times of year. He went on to say that he used to experience slow times in the fall, but this is no longer the case.

I’m sure many people look at fields this time of year, and think that not much is happening. It is easy to know how

busy growers are during the harvest season, when there are crews in the fields and trucks loaded with produce. People don’t understand all the work involved between growing seasons: the analysis and looking back at the past season, the inventory and supplies ordering, equipment maintenance, marketing plans, the grading, propagation, pruning, pest control, etc. And, there are the regulatory requirements like getting your permit renewed, employee training, water issues and ag waiver requirements. I imagine I’ve just scratched the surface, and that there are many things I have not mentioned. (I welcome you to give me a call and tell me about what I’m forgetting, so that I can continue to educate myself!)

Speaking of looking back at the past year, please do not neglect to send us your information for the 2012 Crop Report. You should have received a Survey Form when you renewed your permit. If you did not, please call our office and we will fax you a form. Agriculture is a very important economic engine in our county. We really appreciate your help in giving us the data we need to prepare an accurate and complete report!




Food For Thought



“One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation.”

- Arthur Ashe

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SAFETY TIPS

Mike Klimenko, Farm Bureau Group Manager

Stay Up-To-Date With Personal Protective Equipment

There are many tasks on farms and ranches that pose potential hazards. Everyone knows not to cut corners in these situations in an effort to get the work done quickly, but what about making sure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is being properly used?

Maybe there's a temptation to forego eye protection because your goggles are back on the seat of your truck. Or maybe you want to skip your hard hat this time because you sweat so much when you are wearing it. Three words: **DON'T DO IT.**

One way to prevent injury at work is to wear proper personal protective gear. Some protective equipment is necessary for specific jobs, while other items are necessary for any work. Employers should know the hazards their workers face on the job and provide the proper equipment to protect against those hazards. It's important that workers be trained on how to use and care for the equipment so it will provide maximum protection.

Here are some of the main PPE items for farms and ranches:

Hand protection: Properly fitted gloves—cotton, canvas, leather, rubber or plastic coated—protect hands when handling tools, rough objects, or when exposed to weather, chemicals, solvents, branches and so on.

Eye protection: Eyes are vulnerable to injury when a person is performing a number of different tasks on the farm or ranch, such as pruning, harvesting, haying or handling agricultural chemicals. Protective eyewear is a must.

Head protection: Hard hats protect the head from impact and flying or falling objects. Some of the tasks that necessitate the wearing of a hard hat include trimming trees, operating or repairing machinery, and working under low ceilings.

Foot protection: Safety shoes with metal toes and puncture resistant soles should be standard issue of agricultural workers. They protect feet around livestock, power mowers and other equipment and when handling heavy or sharp objects.

Ear protection: Ear plugs and external ear coverings protect the ears from noise-generating tractors, harvesters, chain saws and other loud equipment.

Skin protection: Protect the skin from chemical burns, sunburn and scrapes by covering with clothing, as well as proper skin washing and garment laundering.

Breathing protection: Various types of respirators—disposable dust masks, filter respirators, chemical cartridge, gas mask or self-contained breathing apparatus—protect workers from breathing hazardous substances. Be sure to match the proper respirator to each specific task.

Even if a job only takes a few minutes, it is important to do things the right way. Wearing appropriate personal protective gear will greatly lessen a person's chance of injury on the job.

Today, State Fund is the largest workers' compensation carrier in California. State Fund has regional offices throughout the state, which provide a full range of services to policyholders and injured workers. We provide coverage to employers of all sizes, from "mom and pop" operations to major organizations.

Since 1943, the California Farm Bureau and State Fund partnership has provided farmers with affordable worker compensation insurance coverage and accident prevention training for agricultural employers and their employees. In addition to providing farm and ranch employers with workers' compensation insurance protection, we also have taken on the mission of assisting employers in providing safe places to work.

For more information, call toll-free at (800) 773-7667, or check the State Fund Web site at www.statefundca.com.



Proper Tillage Can Save Water, Energy and Money

Over cultivation and/or cultivating at the same depth over and over again can be very damaging to the soil's structure which can affect the soil's ability to hold water for crop use. It can also lead to irrigation water waste, lower soil fertility, and an increased hazard of erosion.

Soil particles and organic matter combine to form aggregates that allow for proper root penetration, water holding capacity and movement of water through the soil profile. Although some and regular cultivation is necessary over cultivation can destroy aggregates making it more difficult for plant roots to hold on to the soil and be usable to the crop.

When the soil's capacity to hold water is reduced, the grower is forced to use more irrigation water and perhaps irrigate more frequently in order to meet the crop's needs. Tilling the soil at the same depth can also damage soil structure by creating tillage/hard pans and limit crop rooting depth. This condition can contribute to over saturated soil and an increased hazard of runoff and erosion all of which can affect both crop health and productivity.

Limiting and timing cultivations to those that are absolutely necessary will help protect soil structure and the ability of the soil to optimize the use of irrigation water. In addition, proper tillage will ultimately lead to a savings of both water and energy. For more information on conservation practices for the farm contact National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at (831)475-1967.



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CALENDAR

FRIDAY—MARCH 15
Focus Agriculture, Session 1

SUNDAY—MARCH 17
Happy St. Patrick's Day

WEDNESDAY —MARCH 20
National Agriculture Day
Spring Luncheon
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

THURSDAY —MARCH 21
Agricultural Policy Advisory
Commission meeting

THURSDAY—MARCH 28
Board of Directors' meeting

SUNDAY—MARCH 31
Happy Easter!

WEDNESDAY —APRIL 3

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

MONDAY —APRIL 8
Public Relations & Information
Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY —APRIL 10
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

FRIDAY—APRIL 12
Focus Agriculture, Session 2

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