

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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

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President's Message Professional Similarities

Every now and then I reminisce about the people who have influenced my life. Of course, there are the usual family members: mom, dad, wife, grandparents, siblings, children. They all have influenced me in different ways. Though mostly positively, some may have been cause for therapy (siblings?). However, outside of my family circle, the number of people shrink significantly. There were a few coaches and professional mentors, but the largest group of my influential people were teachers.

I think we can all relate to this. Everyone reading this can think of at least one teacher who had a positive influence in their life. For me, I can think of six. I remember the confidence they helped me develop that has carried forward in my life. A second-grade teacher who I attribute to helping me decode how to read, a few shop teachers who taught me that success does not have to be done through books alone, a high school English Literature teacher who saw that I was capable of more than what my grade was showing, and a few college professors who helped me find the joy in learning. Each helped me grow in their own way.

Previously I said there were six teachers that influenced my life. That is not completely true; my wife is also a teacher. Since I met her, I have been privy to witnessing the dedication this profession takes. Not just to educate, but to encourage, to nurture and to inspire. The first time I asked her why she chose to be a teacher, she simply replied, "I've always wanted to be one." Over the years I have asked other teachers the same question and they often give me a similar answer.

At this point you may be asking, how does this reflection fit in an agriculture newsletter? I have observed that teachers and farmers have a lot in common. Each profession is feeding the next generation, farmers' nutritional food, teachers' knowledge and confidence. Neither are in it solely for the money. If they were, they would be severely disappointed. Each profession constantly has non-professionals (bureaucracies, interest groups, etc.) telling them how to do their jobs. Each profession requires long hours of dedication, hard work and patience. Each profession is shrinking in numbers because it is getting harder and harder to do their jobs well. As I see it, we should be supporting our teachers with the same passion we support agriculture. ■

Former U.S. Speaker of the House, John Boehner, visits Farm Bureau office

John Boehner led a delegation from Squire Patton Boggs LLP to Central Coast to learn about specialty crops.



(L-R) SCCFB President Arnett Young with former U.S. Speaker of the House, John Boehner.

Community Foundation funds have been established for Susan Kim Am Rhein and Frank Prevedelli. See page 11 for more details.

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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, Strawberries & Caneberries UCCE

What Is Meant By Healthy Soil?

Q. Could you clarify a little bit what is meant by a healthy soil? This seems to be a topic of more discussion these days, it'd be nice to have more clarification from people with the UC Cooperative Extension.

A. You are right to ask this question, since it isn't one that is easily answered! While many people have a feeling what is meant by a healthy soil, once one gets down into the weeds on defining the term it gets more difficult. Allow me to shed some light on the issue.

The official definition of a soil health by the US National Resource and Conservation Service is "the capacity of a soil to function as a vital living ecosystem to sustain plants". Unpacking this a little bit, we find that this definition, through the idea of "living ecosystem", is saying that the soil is something containing many living things, which as we all know it is indeed, full of microbes (good, bad and in between) along with the bigger organisms like worms, insects, plants and the others. As with all living things, they need adequate amounts of food, water and shelter. Thus, maintaining the health of these living things is subsequently the goal of maintaining a healthy soil.

Viewing the soil as a living ecosystem in need of care to stay healthy is quite a bit different from just viewing it as a substrate from which to extract stuff. Understanding the soil as an ecosystem with healthy populations of living organisms, especially for the microbes which modulate much of its function after all, means that it is being managed with the goal of providing nutrients for plant growth, absorbing and holding water, filtering and buffering potential pollutants from leaving it, and serving as a place where one may successfully farm.

To close, this concept of maintaining a healthy soil is no longer a matter of just discussing, but also has a growing amount public interest and subsequently funding behind it. For local growers, an example is the Healthy Soils Incentive Program run out of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, for which our own UCCE office here in Santa Cruz County is fortunate to have a person, Valerie Perez, for local growers to get involved in this program. You can contact her at valperez@ucanr.edu.

The above has been a short description of soil health. For questions or comments on this and other subjects, please contact Mark Bolda with UC Cooperative Extension at mpbolda@ucanr.edu or (831) 763-8025. ■



THE WATER NANNY

Water Bankruptcy Water History - Act 2

As the curtain opens on Act 2, we see happy Californians watering crops and lawns, filling up resort lakes in Palm Springs and debating then Gov. Brown's proposed peripheral canal. Federal, state, local governments and water districts had been building dams, pipelines and canals throughout the west for over 50 years, with the last great dam, New Melones, in 1978. Reservoirs all over the west were full. Las Vegas and Phoenix were booming. Life is good.

Time is measured by cycles, whether it be lunar, or droughts or life. Some cycles are so long that they are hard to measure. Average flow of the Colorado River is a good example. When the first great dam, Hoover/Boulder Dam, was built during the Depression there were about 100 years of river flow records. Lots of water, more dams were built, canals dug and cities and farms sprang to life in the desert. The water was divided up with LA and the desert south of Palm Springs getting first access. Las Vegas and Phoenix were dusty train stops. Turns out the 100 year record was the global maxima, the high point in the cycle. Now the river is in decline and greater Phoenix has over 2 million residents.



California's rivers are likewise tamed by dams, water was distributed, with the apparent recent realization that the system was oversubscribed. Deliveries to farms were restricted, even the giant Oroville Dam ran so low on water that its hydro power plant was shut last fall. Turns out many of our groundwater basins are also oversubscribed as well. You can only pump water until the well goes dry. In financial terms, if long term expenses exceed income, insolvency soon follows.

The size of your bank account may prevent bankruptcy, and this is where we return to water rights. River diversions from dams, now delivered in canals have contract holders entitled to water to offset riparian rights prior to the dam, and other irrigation district customers. The contract holders receive more during times of drought. Cutbacks to the other customers may leave them with only a 5% to 15% allocation of full deliveries. Pumping is now also restricted due to Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

Water prices are also based on irrigation district water budgets. For example, in Kern County, the Kern Delta Water District charges \$17/ac-ft, while "White Land" owners, those outside of a water district, may have to pay up to \$770/ac.ft. during dry years. It is over \$1,000/ac-ft. in parts of San Diego County, while Coachella canal rates are \$34/ac-ft. Turns out some bank balances were deflated by drought and regulatory reality, others by the cost of water, a few by both.



Tale of two basins: We have our own water rights locally. The Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA) has been granted up to 3,000 ac-ft./yr. of water annually from the future project at College Lake, and has 2,000 ac-ft./yr. from Harkins Slough. Both are active projects, and Harkins Slough has recharged 8,700 ac-ft. so far. Our neighbor to the south, the Salinas Valley, has built several large projects, but has never touched an allocation of 168,538 ac-ft/yr. from the Salinas river for the East Side and Castroville canals, awarded in 1949, almost lost and restored in 2013, with the proviso that it be built by 2026, which is unlikely. Both basins use the water to balance their aquifer, the PVWMA is very close, the Monterey County Water Resource Agency (MCWRA) and Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), even with giant historic projects, still have a ways to go.

The Soquel Creek Water District, PVWMA and Salinas GSA all are working on adding to their bank accounts. The White Lands have no such option; water insolvency has arrived and land values have plunged 35% and more. Years from now water restrictions may be the norm for basins that have not figured out how to balance their water account. Those that have, will see strong farms and higher land values. Maybe watching the collapse of agriculture from lack of water elsewhere will motivate us to redouble our efforts to bring our basins into balance. *"Capitalism without bankruptcy is like Christianity without hell"* (Frank Borman). ■



FAVORITE RECIPES

Irish Soda Bread

This soda bread recipe is one of my family favorites. It is an Ina Garten recipe that I found several years ago and made for one family St. Patrick's Day dinner and it barely made it to the table. It's often requested, even if it's not St. Patrick's Day and often enjoyed for breakfast. Hope you will enjoy as much as my family.

Ingredients:

4 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for currants	1 3/4 cups cold buttermilk, shaken
4 tablespoons sugar	1 extra-large egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon baking soda	1 teaspoon grated orange zest
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt	1 cup dried currants
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2 inch dice	



Directions:

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.

Combine the flour, sugar, baking soda and salt in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the butter and mix on low speed until the butter is mixed into the flour.

With a fork, lightly beat the buttermilk, egg and orange zest together in a measuring cup. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the buttermilk mixture to the flour mixture. Combine the currants with 1 tablespoon of flour and mix into dough. It will be very wet.

Dump the dough onto a well-floured board and knead it a few times into a round loaf. Place the loaf on the prepared sheet pan and lightly cut an "X" into the top of the bread with a serrated knife. Bake for 45 to 55 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean. When you tap the loaf, it will have a hollow sound.

Cool on a baking rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Interesting Trivia

Here is number 30, last but not least, awesome facts about California, the sunniest state in the U.S.

- In Sunol, California, a dog was elected honorary mayor. He "served" from 1981 to 1994.

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WHY ELECTRIFY?

- The Central Coast Ag community communicated an interest to invest in cleaner technology to improve air quality for surrounding communities and farmworkers
- Replacing fossil fuel powered equipment with new electric equipment will reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions
- Providing extra incentives for small and medium farming operations will tighten up gaps in equitable access to cleaner technologies
- **Switching to new electric equipment provides cost savings opportunities**

WHEN ARE PROGRAM INCENTIVES AVAILABLE?

- The Ag Electrification program runs through October 2021 - September 2022
- **Incentives support up to 70-100% of total project cost, not to exceed \$30,000 (depending on project type)**
- Incentives are available on a first come, first served basis until funds are fully reserved



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THE AG COMMISSIONER

Juan Hidalgo, Agricultural Commissioner, Santa Cruz County

Pesticide Notification Pilot Coming to Watsonville



The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) was awarded \$10 million in fiscal year 21-22 to begin the development of a Statewide Pesticide Notification system. DPR's objective is to provide more transparency about pesticide use information and to give community

members the opportunity to take additional precautions. California has a robust pesticide regulatory program, and a notification system will complement existing regulations that ensure the safe and effective use of pesticides and protect people and the environment.

As a first step in this process, DPR held focus group meetings with growers, industry representatives, state and local regulators, and community groups last summer to receive feedback on the design of a notification system. The agency also held a public webinar this past November to receive feedback on the practical considerations for this project. The project's guiding principles are public health, improving equity and transparency, complementing existing regulations, prioritizing pesticides by health impacts, and encouraging communication. In addition, DPR also sought comments from webinar participants to help guide the design of the system. As this process moves forward, four counties will be collaborating with DPR on implementing local pesticide notification pilot projects. Riverside County will provide pesticide notifications in the Eastern Coachella Valley starting this February; Stanislaus County will provide notifications to the Grayson Community starting in April; Ventura County will provide notifications to the Nyland Acres Community starting in April; and Santa Cruz County will provide notifications to the Senior Village Community in Watsonville starting in July. Feedback received from growers, community members in the pilot areas, and county staff responsible for implementing these projects will be shared with DPR as they continue to design a statewide notification system. The pilot counties will explore different methods of providing notification to their communities and this will also help to inform DPR on best approaches.

In Santa Cruz County, it is estimated that approximately 1,400 homes will participate in the pesticide notification pilot project, which not only include the Senior Village Community but also additional surrounding homes. This area was selected due to the proximity to commercial agricultural farms. The notification area will cover farms within one mile of the community; however, notification will be specific to field soil fumigant pesticides due to their toxicity and use restrictions. The fumigants that will be included in the notification are 1,3-Dichloropropene (1,3-D), chloropicrin, and metam potassium. The goal is to provide a 36-hour notification to community members that sign up to receive this information through a text message or email. Outreach to homes within the pilot community will take place later this spring and will provide information about the project and how community members can sign up to receive notification. More information about this project will be available soon on the Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner's website at www.agdept.com

DPR plans to host more public meetings this spring and expects to launch a statewide notification system in 2024. For more information and updates on the development of the statewide notification project visit: www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/pesticide_notification_network/ ■

Down To Earth Women Luncheon

Thursday, May 12, 2022

11:30 - 1:30

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Watsonville events

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NEWS FROM RCD

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

Drip Tape Flow Rates

Drip tape comes in several configurations of thickness, emitter spacing, brands, etc. But there is one aspect of drip tape that you do not want to overlook. That is the flow rate of the tape, typically expressed as gallons per minute per 100 feet of tape. Many have experienced supply chain shortages in recent months that have led to your preferred tape not being in stock. When going to alternate sources and/or tapes, be sure you know the difference in the tape's flow rate as this could have a significant impact on your run times. You could be putting on a lot more or a lot less water if you use the same run time with a new tape that has a different flow rate.

Drip tape is typically classified as low, medium and high flow based on its flow rate. The chart below shows a good rule of thumb for how to classify the flow rates of tape.

Flow Class	Flow Rate
Low	.4 gpm/100 feet
Medium	.5 gpm/100 feet
High	.6 gpm/100 feet
Extremely High	Greater than .8 gpm/100 feet

When going from low flow tape to high and especially extremely high flow tape it is important to adjust your run times. For example, we recently worked with a grower that could not purchase their preferred .5 gpm drip tape due to supply shortages and used "what they had" instead. What they had was 1.07 gpm drip tape. In this case, the grower needs to decrease their run time by more than half to compensate for the doubled output of their tape. Continuing with the same run time on a clay soil could result in increased run off and less water infiltrating for plant use. You may also run into issues with a pump that doesn't put out water at the rate needed for the high flow tape.

Often a low flow tape offers the most control over your irrigation system. The only downside is that you slightly increase run times to apply a given amount of water. In an era of scarce labor and ongoing drought, a low flow tape will offer the most potential for keeping water in the root zone and limit opportunities for too much water (and

Continued on Page 11

Save the Date

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds
March 16, 2022

105th Annual Meeting

Rodgers House Patio, SCC Fairgrounds
June 23, 2022

California State Fair

Cal Expo, Sacramento, CA
July 15 through July 31, 2022

28th Annual Golf Tournament

Golf Course to be determined
July 22, 2022

Santa Cruz County Fair

September 14 through September 18, 2022

Annual Directors' Dinner

November 3, 2022
5:45 p.m.

CFBF 104th Annual Meeting

Monterey, CA
December 4-7, 2022

Agri-Culture

14th Annual Down To Earth Women Luncheon

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos
May 12, 2022
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

14th Annual Testicle Festival

Estrada Deer Camp
August 27, 2022
3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

26th Annual Farm Dinner

Location to be determined
October 22, 2022
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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Memorial Funds For Susan Kim Am Rhein And Frank Prevedelli Established

Two new endowment funds have been established through the educational organization Agri-Culture in memory of members of our agricultural community. The funds will be housed at the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County. These memorial funds are described below and will benefit students in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.



The Susan Kim Am Rhein Memorial Fund was established by her husband Tom, in memory of his loving wife who passed away this past December. The purpose of the fund is to provide vocational education with an emphasis on culinary arts programs in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.



The Frank Prevedelli Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by the Prevedelli family. This fund will provide scholarships to students who attend high school in Santa Cruz County and plan to major in agriculture or a field related to agriculture.

Donations to either or both of these funds may be made by visiting the Agri-Culture website at www.agri-culture.us/funds/ and pressing the **"Donate"** button for your selected fund. You may also contact the Agri-Culture office at 141 Monte Vista Avenue, Watsonville, CA 95076 or call (831) 722-6622. ■

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Drip Tape Flow Rates - Continued from Page 11

fertilizer) to escape beyond where a plant can use it. Clay soils benefit from an appropriate application rate that allows water to infiltrate and, if an irrigator can't return in time to turn off a valve, less water is wasted and fewer nutrients are leached beyond the root zone. For our climate and soils, low flow tape offers many benefits with few downsides.

Through the Pajaro Valley Irrigation Efficiency Program, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County can help you determine the best tape for your set up and help you get rebates to purchase it. ■

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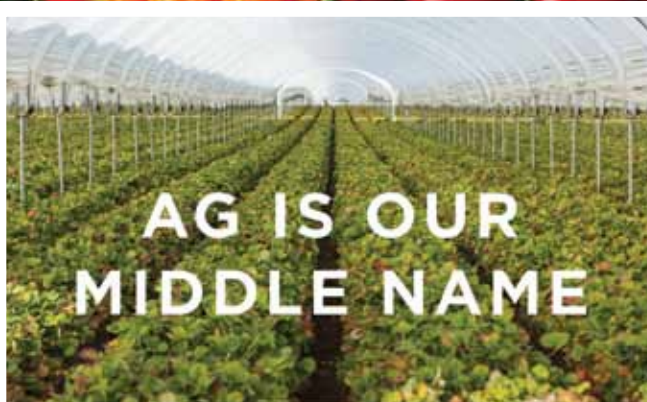
Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 16
National Agriculture Day
Spring Luncheon

THURSDAY - MARCH 31
Board Retreat



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