

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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Let's Talk Trash

Keep Our Community Beautiful



The following is an interview by Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Executive Director, Jess Brown (JB), with Sally-Christine Rodgers (SCR), founder of the Trash Talkers, a coalition of agencies and organizations who have been meeting once a month for the past year to take on the issue of illegal dumping of trash in Santa Cruz County.

JB: Tell me about the Trash Talkers and how it relates to Farm Bureau members?

SCR: Farmers are some of the most adversely affected by illegal dumping. "Empty lots", i.e. open fields, are often sites of illegally dumped furniture, mattresses, oil, and garbage.

This disregard for the business of agriculture, let alone private property, costs our local farmers tens of thousands of dollars annually in additional labor costs —labor costs that should have been focused on production. Pollution from discarded trash in our water sheds also can put farmers at

Let's Talk Trash - continued on Page 7

President's Message

Strategic Planning For The Future



Dennis Webb, President

As a forester managing private timberlands on the Central Coast, late winter and early spring is my busiest time of year. Logging

season starts in April, so February and March are usually spent finalizing harvest permits, negotiating contracts and hurrying to finish planning our projects. There is no time to spare in the spring. This spring, I'm trying my best to focus on more than what is just right in front of me. While I obviously need to focus on managing my day-to-day projects, it's

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 Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon!*

March 15, 2023

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ASK THE UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Barb Satink Wolfson, Fire Advisor, UCCE

Agriculture Related Fire Needs

Barb Satink Wolfson has Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Forestry from Northern Arizona University, focusing on fire ecology. She grew up on a farm in Vermont, but spent the last 20 years training and working in forestry and fire in the mountains of Arizona. She has always loved the central coast area and is excited to be in the new Fire Advisor position and address fire issues across the four counties she serves: Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz. She is eager to learn how fire impacts agriculture and happy to come to you where you are. She can be reached at: bsatink@ucanr.edu

Although the ground is wet and wildfire seems far off, it isn't. As you've likely learned, wildfire can be a year-round issue in much of California. Now is an excellent time to consider your own risk- to your personal safety and that of employees, to structures, or harvest infrastructure. Have you reviewed the new [Fire Hazard Severity Zones released from CalFire?](#) Does your home, farm or ranch sit in a high or very high fire hazard area? The maps are out for public comment until April 4, 2023.

My position is new, which means I am developing a program from the ground up. Now is an excellent time to connect with me so I can help address agriculture related fire needs. Are you interested in burning piles to eliminate orchard trimmings? (There was a pile burn workshop in San Benito County February 26th.) Or are you interested in

prescribed fire for range improvement? I can help address fire issues that concern you and I'm currently looking for partners interested in fire related research on their property.

Lastly, I'll mention the Central Coast Prescribed Burn Association, with whom I partner regularly. They are an excellent resource if you have any interest in prescribed fire. Through a CalFire grant, funds are available to write burn plans, which do not require CEQA if used on private property. We also partner on training opportunities related to fire if you'd like to learn more, contact me at [bsatink@ucanr.edu!](mailto:bsatink@ucanr.edu)

Additionally, I'd like to share a fire survey to help me identify the issues I should address. If you have 10-15 minutes, [please complete it.](#) ■

Interesting California Trivia

California is also home to the "giant sequoia" – arguably the largest living organism on earth and the world's most massive tree. It is also one of the longest-lived of all organisms on earth. The estimated life-span of the tree is between 1800-2700 years. A tree as old as 5,067 years was also found in California (it the longest living non-clonal organism on Earth). Giant sequoias have very specific climate requirements, so specific that they grow naturally only in a narrow 260-mile strip of mixed conifer forest on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains, primarily between 5,000 and 7,000 feet in elevation. ■

THE WATER NANNY

The Way of Water

Santa Cruz County is defined by two rivers draining watersheds with infrequent but catastrophic floods. Both the Pajaro and San Lorenzo Rivers seem to flood, on average, every five years. To be fair to the Army Corps of Engineers, the flooding now is still ongoing, but the area awash seems to have been reduced. Who can forget the 1955 Christmas Day floods which inundated Santa Cruz and Watsonville, even after the new levee was constructed in Watsonville in 1949? Recently we had floods along the lower Pajaro in 1982, 83, 86, 95, 97, 98 and again in 2022-23. This is the way of water.

Floods happen; however, rainfall is one of the many factors that also impacts our regulatory environment. Rainfall increases soil moisture and groundwater recharge. Planting time is delayed and the first real strawberry harvest seems to be suspended until the rain and temperature increase and flowers blossom.



The way of water has become a way of data, eliminating the farming on instincts alone. How do you stay on top of all this information which is stored away on the internet? We have five CIMIS weather stations in and surrounding the Pajaro Valley, each reported rainfall from October 1 through January: Pajaro (129) located off San Juan Road reported 26.1"; Watsonville West II (204) off San Andreas Road showed 23.2"; San Juan Valley (143) on the San Juan Oaks golf club, inoperative; De Laveaga (104) near the golf course, 33.5"; and Salinas North (116) only 14". California Water Watch reported year to date for the entire Pajaro Watershed as 21".

What are we going to do with all this information? First off, send the irrigator home, reducing both your PG&E bill and the augmentation charge to the PVWMA. Groundwater levels will increase due to the rain, but the results won't show up until later in the spring surveys. The last three years were a drought. This year we exceeded 191% of average for the year to date, and are 107% compared to a normal rain year (Oct-Sept). But don't let up on the rain in the forecast as La Nina has left with average rain year through the season ending in April, more rain still ahead.

The way of water also means that your fields could be a victim of floods too. This may be more difficult than the transitory aspect of floods sweeping across your farm. The threshold question, "Did the existing crop come into contact with flood water." This is key as a lettuce field cannot be harvested, but strawberries which have yet to flower, means the harvest is not impacted. For field crops, like lettuce; do not harvest. Do not harvest any crop within 30 feet of the high-water mark, and do not replant for 60 days. The 60 day period can be shortened if you test for fecal coliforms and salmonella, with negative results, the replant period can be only 30 days. Regardless, check with your food safety or CCOF consultant as the marketability of the crop could be impacted.



Maybe next time the floods of heaven fall upon us a new levee will be built and our crops and homes will be spared. Preparation is necessary, so keep the sandbags around until then. Mark Twain said in turns: *"The solution to our water problems is more rain."* and *"It's better to build dams than to wait for the flood to come to its senses."* ■

"The mind is like a TV set...When it goes blank, it's a good idea to turn off the sound"

Bill Lyon



FAVORITE RECIPES

Dublin Coddle

A traditional Irish casserole with potatoes, sausage and bacon slow cooked to perfection. An invitation to enjoy a very Happy St. Patrick's Day.

- 2 1/2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes peeled and sliced 1/2" thick
- Fresh ground black pepper
- 12 ounces thick-cut bacon (see notes)
- 6 bratwurst sausages or bangers if you can find them
- 2 large white onions, peeled and sliced into 1/2" rings
- 14 ounce can chicken broth (low sodium preferred)
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup beer (plus more if needed)
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley, divided

1. Lightly grease a Dutch oven or covered casserole dish. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Layer the sliced potatoes in a shingle pattern on the bottom of the Dutch oven. Sprinkle the potatoes with about 2 teaspoons fresh ground pepper.
3. Cook the bacon in a skillet until crisp. Drain on a paper towel lined plate and set aside. Lightly brown the sausages in the bacon fat, but do not fully cook. Set aside.
4. Remove all but about 3 tablespoons of the bacon fat and discard. Add the sliced onions to the hot skillet and cook covered for 5-7 minutes stirring once or twice. Remove the lid and add the chicken broth, vinegar and season with black pepper. Bring the onions and broth to a boil. Remove from the heat and carefully pour the onions and broth over the potatoes in the Dutch oven.
5. Top the onions and potatoes with half the crumbled bacon and half the chopped parsley. Place the browned sausages on top and cover with the lid.
6. Transfer the Dutch oven to your preheated oven. Bake covered for 90 minutes removing the lid for the last 45 minutes.
7. Check the casserole periodically to make sure it does not dry out or burn.
8. After about an hour, add 1 cup or more of your favorite beer to the pot.
9. Garnish with the remaining parsley and bacon.
10. Serve and enjoy with a loaf of crusty bread to soak up the broth.

Notes: Be sure to check the finished dish before adding salt. The bacon you use will determine the saltiness of the dish overall.



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Join the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau



The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is a vital part of our community, providing an important voice for the Santa Cruz County and Pajaro Valley agriculture industry. Everyone is eligible to apply for Farm Bureau membership 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.

Questions? Contact the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau
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I'm a Farm Bureau Member/ Supporter because...



"the Farm Bureau plays a vital role in supporting and sustaining commercial agriculture in Santa Cruz County, which benefits our community not only economically, but socially and environmentally, too. I like to think that our county's commitment to the permanent protection of commercial agricultural land has played a key role in making sure that we remain an "agricultural county," with all the benefits that has brought us. By supporting strong development limits for our cities (witness the recent passage of Measure Q and the defeat of Measure T in Watsonville), the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is continuing its leadership role, supporting innovative programs and keeping our agricultural industry strong."

Gary Patton, Attorney At Law

Save the Date

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Heritage Hall, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

SCCFB 105th Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 22, 2023

Rodgers House, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

30th Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 14, 2023

Pajaro Valley Golf Club

California State Fair

Friday, July 14, 2023 to Sunday, July 30, 2023

Cal Expo, Sacramento

Santa Cruz County Fair

Wednesday, September 13 to Sunday, September 17, 2023

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Annual Directors' Dinner

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Location to be determined

CFBF Annual Meeting

Saturday, December 2 to Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Reno, NV

Agri-Culture

15th Annual Down to Earth Women Luncheon

Thursday, May 11, 2023

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos

14 Annual Testicle Festival

Saturday, August 26, 2023

Estrada Deer Camp

27th Annual Farm Dinner

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Location to be determined



Let's Talk Trash - Continued from Page 1

risk from tainted irrigation water, not to mention potentially compromising organic grower's certifications, (discarded oil, plastic, drug paraphernalia, human feces and trash as a result of encampments comes to mind). The Trash Talkers Coalition is focused on addressing these issues.

JB: That is true! It has become a bigger and bigger problem over the years.

SCR: Trash adversely affects our agricultural sector, our businesses, washes into our watersheds and ultimately ends up in our National Marine Sanctuary. Trash is a human health issue, psychologically depleting, an environmental hazard and has a negative effect on all of us.

JB: Who are the Trash Talkers and how did they come into being.

SCR: The Trash Talkers are a coalition of agencies and organizations who have been meeting once a month for the past year to take on the issue of litter in Santa Cruz County. Many of these entities were working independently to address this challenge, but there lacked coordination. Each member was restricted to their jurisdiction, and frankly the results were less effective.

JB: What did you do?

SCR: I convened a meeting! The goal was to get the right people in the room, to learn what was being done, and to come up with real solutions. I went agency by agency and invited them to participate. Our goal was to create a coalition, develop a strategic plan, coordinate efforts and more importantly to support each other—acknowledging the hard, thankless work of picking up trash and to raise community awareness and participation.

Our current members include:

- Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau
- Cal Trans
- California Fish and Wildlife
- Santa Cruz County Sheriffs Dept.
- Pajaro Valley Chamber
- California Highway Patrol
- City of Watsonville
- California State Parks
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District
- Santa Cruz County Office of Public Works

- Santa Cruz County Office of Education
- Assemblyman Robert Rivas
- Watsonville Wetlands Watch
- Senator John Laird
- Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
- Congressman Panetta
- Santa Cruz County Council members
- Congresswoman Lofgren

JB: Tell me about some of the accomplishments.

SCR: Well, we are just getting started and there is much to do! We started small, focusing on Santa Cruz' south county; however, we have made great headway. Working as a coalition, the Trash Talkers have developed a mission statement, a logo, and a website which is being hosted by the County of Santa Cruz.

Since March of last year, Trash Talkers and our community partners have done clean-ups on East Lake, at Murphy's Crossing, on Hazel Dell Road, Green Valley, Corralitos Creek, and Paulsen Road. Most recently, Trash Talkers members were joined by 100 youth volunteers, Councilmember Felipe Hernandez, and his Chief of Staff Ramon Gomez, Santa Cruz County Public Works, and Santa Cruz County sheriffs to assist residents in the clean-up of sandbags and debris as a result of flooding in the Interlaken area.

The critical point is that Trash Talkers has effectively shown that when we work together in a coordinated effort we can achieve our mission. For example, now the City of Watsonville, Fish and Wildlife, Cal Trans and Watsonville Wetlands Watch are working together to address pollution and trash from encampments in our sloughs. Our County Public Works, and the Sheriffs and CHP, are supporting City of Watsonville clean-ups. The Coalition is working!

JB: That is an impressive list! How has the County of Santa Cruz responded to the Trash Talkers?

SCR: All of our Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and the Administrative Officer have supported and endorsed our initiative.

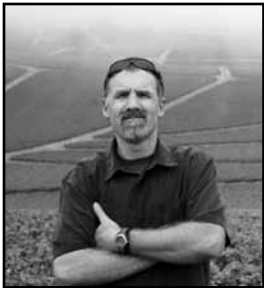
JB: So Farm Bureau members can get a better idea about your intentions, what is the mission of the Trash Talkers?

[Let's Talk Trash - continued on Page 9](#)

THE AG COMMISSIONER

David Sanford, Interim Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner

A Look Back, And A Look Forward...



As a grower in Santa Cruz County, you should have received our production survey for the 2022 Crop Report in the mail recently. (If not, the survey is available to complete and submit on our website at www.agdept.com, or directly from our office.) The Crop Report, which is released by our department annually, provides a window of information regarding agricultural production economics throughout the County and serves as a good indicator of the health of our farming community. Returning the survey to our office is, of course, optional; but the information provided is indispensable in helping us put together the most accurate report possible. Please also keep in mind that the information you provide is not shared with any other individual or agency – the data is compiled solely for the purpose of reporting total countywide averages. If you are able to take some time from your busy schedule to look back at your production data from last season and complete the crop report survey it would be greatly appreciated, and many thanks.

Transitioning to a subject of current and future interest, earlier this year a partnership of state agencies including CalEPA, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)

released a report for a plan they are calling “The [Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for California](#).” The plan, as described in a January 26th press release, is based on a “recognition of the need to accelerate a holistic, systemwide approach to safer, more sustainable pest management.” Central to the plan is the stated goal of reducing and eventually eliminating the use of what are being referred to as “Priority Pesticides” – materials that will be identified by DPR and a stakeholder advisory committee with respect to hazard and risk levels. This is a multi-faceted and lengthy plan, containing many elements and a protracted timeline. The “Roadmap” and its associated information and documents are available to review on DPR’s webpage (www.cdpr.ca.gov) and public comments are being accepted on its recommendations through March 13, 2023.

California is, by nearly any measure, the most regulated state in the nation where the commercial use of agricultural pesticides is concerned. Under the statutory authority of the state’s Food and Agricultural Code (FAC), DPR has over the years enacted requirements and restrictions that are vastly more expansive than the regulatory framework for pesticide use in any other state. On the local level, it is the county agricultural commissioner offices that provide oversight, education, outreach, and enforcement of the state’s pesticide regulations. ■

President’s Message continued from Page 1

important to remember my long-term goals.

If you’re anything like me, you have probably spent plenty of time reacting to situations that could have been solved months or even years in advance with the proper planning. Of course, it’s not easy to take the time out of our busy schedules to focus on work that won’t pay off for months or years. But doing so is exactly the way to get ahead.

It’s hard enough to react to whatever issue is thrown at you on a given day. By designing effective processes, improving your organization’s infrastructure, and building your team,

you can prevent the situations that will cause you to have to react in the first place.

The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau has embarked on a process to develop our strategic plan. The strategic plan is being developed by several of our most experienced and trusted leaders, past and present. This is a process that will bring our current and future leadership the focus it needs to develop our organization in ways that will benefit agriculture for many years into the future. More to come on this important effort. ■



Let's Talk Trash - Continued from Page 7

SCR: Our Mission:

- Make Santa Cruz the Cleanest County in California
- Eliminate litter, encampments and dumping on roadways, waterways and agricultural land
- Educate and engage community, non-profits, schools and local governments
- To improve the health, wellbeing, economic value and the beauty of our region

JB: Tell me about the logo you have developed?

SCR: The "Pitch In" Logo, in Spanish and English (see below & page 11), was a collaborative process which came from Trash Talker member's ideas. The final design was executed by Erika Rosendale, a local mural artist. It features iconic images from our beautiful county: beaches, mountains, Natural Bridges and includes the importance of farming! It is a marketing tool to help raise awareness to the problem and to get community members and visitors to "Pitch In"!

The County of Santa Cruz Public Works will be rolling out our "Pitch In" logo on trash cans, trail heads, at beaches, in parks and other locations county-wide to educate and engage the public.

Our hope is that it will trigger a behavioral change, just as "scoop your poop" has led to dog owners carrying plastic bags to clean up after their dogs.

JB: That is a great analogy, and true. Tell me a little about the "Pitch In" website?

SCR: Again, Trash Talker members gave input on what should be on the website, and it will continue to evolve. The "Pitch In" website is in Spanish and English. It features our mission, lists our members, our logo, a list of clean-ups, resources for community members to see where they can take unwanted items, a schools page for students to participate for community service credit, a place to post sponsored clean-ups by community members and an opportunity to donate through the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz to fund items like pickers, gloves, trash bags and snacks for volunteers. It is a work in progress and I'm

so grateful to the County of Santa Cruz for their continued support. The "Pitch In" website should be live in early-mid March at: www.pitchinsantacruz.org.

JB: What are next steps to further this important work?

SCR: Well, as I mentioned, there is much to do! Santa Cruz county is the second smallest county by geographic area in the state (San Francisco County being the smallest). We want to make it the cleanest county in the State of California and we can do this!

Our next steps include engaging other cities in our county. We are beginning to work with Cabrillo, UCSC and school districts to get participation from staff and students to host their own clean-ups and to support our initiative. We are reaching out to businesses through the Chambers and working with service organizations to further gain support.

JB: How can the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau help support this initiative?

SCR: We'd like to have farmers post the "Pitch In" logo on their land as a messaging tool to raise awareness to send a message not to illegally dump and make clear our mission to keep Santa Cruz County Clean! Interested parties can contact the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau for details. ■



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Eleanor Roosevelt

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CALENDAR

THURSDAY - MARCH 2
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

FRIDAY - MARCH 10
Focus Agriculture, Session 1

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 15
National Agriculture Day
Spring Luncheon

FRIDAY - MARCH 17
St. Patrick's Day

MONDAY - MARCH 20
First Day of Spring

THURSDAY - MARCH 23
SCCFB Board of Directors'
meeting

THURSDAY - APRIL 5
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

FRIDAY - APRIL 7
Focus Agriculture, Session 2

SUNDAY - APRIL 9
Easter

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FUTURE
GROWS
HERE.**

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