

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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INSIDE this issue

- 3 Ask Mark**
What Are Growers Doing
In Response to COVID-19?
- 4 Water Nanny**
Easter Egg
- 6 Recipe**
Mixed Berry Buttermilk
Muffins
- 12 Calendar**



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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

BRENDAN MIELE, PRESIDENT

The Essential Business of Farming



In the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, reducing human to human contact has been identified as the most effective way to slow the spread to enable our healthcare system to manage the growing load of infected patients. To that end, we have been fortunate that Santa Cruz County and the State of California were early adopters of sheltering in place mandates, resulting in fewer cases of COVID-19 than areas such as New York State. The shelter in place order restricts people to their homes unless engaged in food shopping, doctor appointments, exercise or going to work at a job in an identified critical industry. Apart from nurses, doctors and healthcare providers, I can think of no other industry as critical as farming and food production.

While some in our community have the luxury of being able to work from home, many more have been furloughed or forced into unemployment as businesses are shuttered in to protect public health. Those still working are providing critical community needs while risking personal illness and putting their families at risk. Ensuring the continuity of our nation's food supply is the essential work being done by agriculturalists. The impact of Covid-19 has laid bare many of

our country's social and economic inequities, such as health care and housing. The shortage of affordable housing in Santa Cruz County has resulted in overcrowding, putting many farm workers living in dense housing conditions at particular high risk for infection.

As restaurants have shuttered, food service sales have plummeted, while simultaneously retail sales of agricultural products have surged with consumers mostly confined at home. Initial panic buying not only decimated store shelves of toilet paper and hand sanitizer,

but many crop staples such as potatoes and onions. Growers, packers and shippers have been thrust into a maelstrom of market dynamics that could not have been foreseen. Online shopping and delivery services have boomed. Farms

operating community supported agriculture subscriptions have seen an incredible increase in business as consumers isolated at home vye for shopping options that allow them to maintain social distancing guidelines. In the midst of a challenging business environment, many farmers have stepped up to meet the needs of a community in crisis. Santa Cruz

County unemployment is projected to reach 19%, forcing many who have never needed public assistance to seek help to meet their basic needs. Philanthropic Santa Cruz County farmers have donated equipment, funds and food to support the food needs of county residents now on the economic brink.

"Our farmers, fieldworkers and packinghouse workers must be able to protect themselves and keep food moving from field to fork."

President's Message - Continued on Page 6

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.SCCFB.COM

**For up-to date information on
COVID-19 and resources for those involved in farming**



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

COVID-19/Coronavirus Agricultural Industry & Consumer Resource Updates

**use this website created by the California Farm Bureau Federation:
<https://www.cfbf.com/covid-19-information/>**

I hate when a couple argues in public and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on!



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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, Strawberries & Caneberries UCCE

What Are Growers Doing In Response to COVID-19?

Q. Could you give us some ideas what the growers are doing in response to the coronavirus? Will they still be able to cultivate their crops and harvest? Seems it would be difficult with all the restrictions.

A. The answer to your second question is absolutely yes, growers in this area are continuing much as before with maintaining and growing their crops, an activity which has been identified as an essential (it is!!) enterprise and allowed to continue provided growers and workers adhere to the restriction on not getting too close to one another.

Growers are thinking through and making the necessary changes to observe recommendations for social distancing to slow the spread of the disease. Many activities, such as fixing irrigation, doing pesticide sprays or repair work in the shop are for the most part solitary activities and don't warrant much change.

Where the big changes in activity takes place is in harvest. This is where many people can be close to one another at the same time and this warrants that steps very much need to be taken to obtain the required social distancing. Understand that this project is still very much a work in progress, as this hasn't ever been done before and will certainly need adjustment before it reaches the optimum of efficiency. Nevertheless, it is expected that any of these implemented measures will cost more, simply because it slows down the harvest in the field.

Currently, the thinking for harvest is to have pickers in every other row, or even

greater, in strawberries, rather than every row as has been customary for many, many years. This would put eight feet between each person, rather than the former four feet. In caneberries, the thinking is similar since when pickers are on either side of a hedgerow they are somewhere three to four feet apart, so spacing people out to one every other row achieves the required minimum of six feet. On the other hand it is possible to have a person picking every row in both types of berries, but one would need to stagger the pickers in over time, again to avoid them being next to one another at any point in time.

Obviously, and this is important for consumers to know, is that growers and farm managers are being extremely vigilant about who is coming into work today. If a worker has a fever, coughing or just generally unwell, they should not be on the job and certainly not be around others and will be asked to go home. Fortunately, and this is by my own observation as well, the message to not be around others when sick, has gotten through to just about everybody around here so this really is no longer a problem.

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 production.

30 Days Hath September, April,
June and November

All the rest have 31 ... except March
which has 8000

THE WATER NANNY

Easter Egg

In the movies and computer games, an Easter egg is a hidden message, player or image. Sometimes the egg is only apparent to those in on the joke, the director's clever secret. The Regional Water Board, who may be meeting repeatedly this month to consider language for a new Ag Order, may not even notice, but there is an Easter egg in the draft proposal.

Ag Order 4.0 proposes that growers monitor their primary irrigation well and all wells used for domestic, i.e. drinking, water. This is somewhat consistent with the existing Ag Order. However, the draft Ag Order includes a new constituent for domestic drinking water tests, 1,2,3-Trichloropropane (1,2,3-TCP). The lab reporting limits are a tiny 1.5 parts per trillion. The State Water Board adopted a drinking water MCL (maximum contaminant level) of 5 parts per trillion (0.005 µg/L). To give this a real life perspective, it is like throwing a small child's wading pool into Lake Tahoe.



The real issue for rural wells is that 123TCP was an unintended byproduct of the original Telone fumigant. Manufacturers of Telone reformulated it in the 70s and 80s to eliminate 123TCP, so what is now in the groundwater in Ag areas is an old legacy chemical. The state database shows many Central Valley wells which exceed the standard, with very few on the Central Coast. That is only because of a lack of testing. Local counties included it in a revised water quality standard for new wells and water systems in 2018 which has resulted in more hits. There are hits in the Springfield area in North Monterey County, the Elkhorn area and along the east side of the Salinas Valley. If all growers conduct tests on domestic wells more 123TCP will show up.

The State Water Board has the following advice if the 123TCP test is positive: "What should I do?"

You do not need to use an alternative water supply (e.g., bottled water).

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have

been notified immediately. However, *"some people who drink water containing 1,2,3-TCP in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer."*

The cost of a single family filter is about \$6,000, with a four home water system running about \$13,000. The filters are simple activated carbon and may have a replacement life of 10 years, but to my knowledge none have been installed more than a few years. There are a few labs that can conduct 123TCP tests and it is expensive, over \$200 per test. It has to be sampled in a different container, in a more rigorous way than usual Title 22 water tests. Testing annually, as is proposed, is excessive and not warranted. The RWQCB testing program should include no further testing once there is a positive test, as this chemical has a very, very long life, a half life of 100+ years, so if found it is not going away. At the very low detection levels dilution is not an optimistic option. By the same token if there is no 123TCP, the test could be every five years, not annually. Like other parts of the proposed Ag Order, this testing protocol, while scientifically rigorous, is way beyond what is necessary to assure that we have safe drinking water.

Spring is a time of optimism and renewal, and farmers are the fountainhead of optimism. Our fields are planted and, at least for now, our employees can come to work. *"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."* (Winston Churchill)



Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends.

See Answer on page 8



FAVORITE RECIPES

Mixed Berry Buttermilk Muffins

This recipe comes from Driscoll's Pinterest page which is full of great berry recipes. Tips for this recipe: Don't be tempted to skip buttering and sugaring the muffin tin in favor of using paper muffin cups; the easy extra steps keep muffins from getting soggy while adding flavor and texture. Can't find cardamom? Cinnamon will be equally delicious. Freezing berries slightly helps maintain their shape during baking.

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 cup granulated sugar, divided | 1 teaspoon vanilla extract |
| 1 teaspoon ground cardamom, divided | 1 Package (6 ounces or 1 1/3 cups) Driscoll's Blackberries, slightly frozen |
| 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, divided | 1 Package (6 ounces or 1 1/4 cups) Driscoll's Blueberries, slightly frozen |
| 2 teaspoons baking powder | 1 Package (6 ounces or 1 1/3 cups) Driscoll's Raspberries, slightly frozen |
| 1 1/2 teaspoons salt | 2 large eggs |
| 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into small pieces | |
| 1 cup buttermilk | |



DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter a muffin pan. Combine 1/4 cup sugar with 1/4 teaspoon cardamom; liberally sprinkle muffin tins with sugar mixture. Save remaining mixture for topping muffins.
- Sift 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, remaining 3/4 cup sugar, baking powder, remaining 3/4 teaspoon cardamom and salt together.
- Add chilled, cut butter to dry ingredients and cut in with pastry blender or two knives. (You can also use an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on low speed.) Stop mixing when the butter pieces are pea-sized and smaller.
- Whisk buttermilk with eggs and vanilla. Add to dry ingredients stirring just until combined. The batter will be lumpy.
- Measure out 1/2 cup each of blackberries, blueberries and raspberries and save any leftover berries for another use, such as a smoothie or yogurt topping.
- Toss 1/2 cup each of the berries with remaining 1/4 cup all-purpose flour and gently fold into batter. Fill muffin tins to the top and sprinkle with a generous amount of remaining sugar mixture.
- Bake 15 minutes and rotate pan. Bake 10 to 15 minutes longer or until muffins spring back when lightly pressed in the center and/or a cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Jumbo muffins will take approximately 5 minutes longer.

Small Office for Rent in Watsonville

Small office for rent in Watsonville. Ideal for sole proprietor. The office is part of a larger shared office building, complete with two bathrooms and a shared conference room and copy room. The private office is approximately 80 sq. ft, with a window and private locking door. The building has its own parking lot with ample parking. An independent insurance agent and his assistant have used the office for over 25 years, but have retired.

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President's Message - Continued from Page 1

The next stages of our societal response to Covid-19 will be pivotal. Will we have the strength to endure ongoing economic pain while a viable medical response is implemented? Recent outbreaks at meat processing plants nationwide are cautionary tales showing what happens when safety recommendations are ignored. Our farmers, fieldworkers and packinghouse workers must be able to protect themselves and keep food moving from field to fork. Agriculture is an adaptable industry. The ability of farmers to anticipate changing market conditions and pivot business practices in response will determine economic outcomes locally and nationally for months to come.



California State Fair Canceled

Excerpts from the Sacramento Bee

The corn dogs, blue ribbons and roller-coaster rides will have to wait a year. The 2020 California State Fair has been canceled, the latest big event to fall victim to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Cal Expo board of directors voted 7-0 in a video meeting to scrub the fair's 17-day run, with board members saying they couldn't be sure that conditions would be safe when the event was set to begin July 17.

Despite struggles with attendance in recent years, the fair remains a major attraction in the Sacramento area. Last year's fair drew 601,761 patrons. "The significance of this decision — it is obviously heartfelt by all of us, not a decision that we took lightly," said board chairman Jess Durfee. The board's vice chair, Rex Hime, who introduced the vote to cancel the fair, called it "a motion I didn't think I'd ever have to make."

"It marks the first time since World War II that the fair has been canceled", said Cal Expo deputy general manager Margaret Mohr.

2020 Events

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Heritage Hall, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Watch for date - Late July

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

103rd Annual Meeting

Location to be determined

Watch for date - Fall 2020

California State Fair - Canceled

Cal Expo, Sacramento, CA

26th Annual Golf Tournament

Seascope Golf Club

12:00 p.m. Shotgun Start, July 10, 2020

Santa Cruz County Fair

September 16 through September 20, 2020

Annual Directors' Dinner

Location to be determined

November 5, 2020

5:45 p.m.

CFBF 102nd Annual Meeting

Reno, NV

December 6 - 9, 2020

Agri-Culture

13th Annual Down to Earth Women Luncheon

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos

Postponed - Date To Be Determined

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

12th Annual Testicle Festival

Estrada Deer Camp

August 15, 2020

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

24th Annual Progressive Dinner

Location to be determined

October 24, 2020

3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Key Reminders To Protect Fieldworkers When Pesticides Are Used



As our region marks the start of another agricultural season, this year will be remembered unlike any other due to the current COVID-19 crisis our nation is facing. This year will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging you and your farming operation have

ever faced due to the need to incorporate new protective measures to educate farmworkers and keep them safe and healthy during the COVID-19 crisis. As you incorporate new safety protocols and adjust current farm practices during these challenging times, it is important not to lose sight of everyday farm activities that are essential to keep fieldworkers safe. These activities include determining which fields to harvest, coordinating the best timing of pesticide applications and protecting fieldworkers and others during and after pesticide applications. It is important to remember that **communication** with your own employees and those of neighboring agricultural growers is absolutely essential.

It is strongly recommended that you inform your neighbor of any planned pesticide application at least two (2) days ahead of time so that they can plan their harvesting or other agricultural activities accordingly. Take time to assess any neighboring fields that have recently been treated before you direct your employees to harvest adjacent to those areas. Remember that certain pesticides can have offending odors even after the application has been completed.

It is essential that you and your pesticide handlers remain alert while conducting pesticide work and take a **proactive** approach to keep fieldworkers and other bystanders safe. Remember to continually monitor the weather and wind direction and be familiar with the application equipment you are using. If you or your pesticide handlers see fieldworkers within 100 feet of the application site, **STOP** the application until you can assess the situation and can determine if it is safe to continue. Keep in mind that thanks to the type of commodities we have in our county, rarely do fieldworkers remain in one location for more than one hour. Fieldworker crews are constantly moving from one part of a field to another. It is best to stop an application and wait until fieldworkers have moved to a safe distance. Remember that protecting the well-being of fieldworkers is everyone's priority.

If you are not sure who your neighbors are, please let us help. Call our office at (831)763-8080 and we will be glad to provide you with that information. During the COVID-19 crisis, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office website (www.agdept.com) has important informational resources to help you keep fieldworkers safe on the farm. CDFA has also put together excellent resources for food and agriculture on their website at www.cdфа.ca.gov/coronavirus. We are very grateful to you and all fieldworkers for keeping food on our tables. We will get through this.

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"they support local agriculture, is well run and feel the value of the services received far outweigh the cost of membership."

Tony Scurich, President



Civil Rights. Police Power, 10th Amendment and COVID-19



The 10th amendment to the US Constitution generally reserves enforcement of quarantine and mandatory vaccination to the states. A 1905 United States Supreme Court decision was the first important case on this subject and still controls after 115 years. Attorneys call this “legal precedent” and is a fundamental tenet

of the US and English legal systems. This 1905 case is often regarded as the most important judicial decision in public health. *This 1905 decision* was judicial recognition of police power—the most important aspect of state sovereignty. So a review of this case and a few others is in order.

Jacobson v. Massachusetts 197 US 11 (1905) is the case. The Massachusetts legislature required inhabitants of cities and towns to be vaccinated when in the opinion of the local board of health determined it was necessary for public health and safety. *Jacobson* was decided just a few years after a major outbreak of smallpox in Boston that resulted in 1596 cases and 270 deaths between 1901 and 1903.

The Supreme Court found a City of Cambridge law imposing a criminal fine of \$5.00 on those who did not vaccinate was constitutional but established a floor of constitutional protections from the state’s police power. The *Jacobson* case established four standards: (1) necessity, (2) reasonable means, (3) proportionality, and (4) harm avoidance. Under *Jacobson*, the courts are to support public health matters insofar as these standards are respected.

Before *Jacobson*, state courts were heavily engaged in the vaccination controversy, and their judgments were very deferential to local public health agencies. The courts routinely found school vaccination requirements constitutional. Some courts did impose a standard of “necessity,” but without strong safeguards of individual liberty.

The question was whether Cambridge’s mandatory smallpox vaccination law violated Jacobson’s Fourteenth Amendment right to liberty. The Court held that the mandatory vaccination law was a legitimate exercise of the

state’s police power to protect the public health and safety of its citizens. Local boards of health determined when mandatory vaccinations were needed, thus making the requirement neither unreasonable nor arbitrarily imposed.

“Upon the principle of self-defense, of paramount necessity, a community has the right to protect itself against an epidemic of disease which threatens the safety of its members.”

“But the liberty secured by the Constitution of the United States to every person within its jurisdiction does not import an absolute right in each person to be, at all times and in all circumstances, wholly freed from restraint. There are manifold restraints to which every person is necessarily subject for the common good. On any other basis organized society could not exist with safety to its members. . . . This (US Supreme) court has more than once recognized it as a fundamental principle that ‘persons and property are subjected to all kinds of restraints and burdens in order to secure the general comfort, health, and prosperity of the state; of the perfect right of the legislature to do which no question ever was, or upon acknowledged general principles ever can be, made, so far as natural persons are concerned.’”

There have been many more cases over the years, but the *Jacobson* case is still good law and is being cited even today as the requirements of (1) necessity, (2) reasonable means, (3) proportionality, and (4) harm avoidance still apply.

The Answer Is: Boxing

Grant Program Helps Fund Voluntary Best Management Practices For Irrigated Agriculture

The Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County is wrapping up a three-year project funded by a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Water Grant through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board. The goal of the project was to reduce pesticide loading and toxicity to surface and groundwater in the Pajaro River watershed by collaborating with growers and landowners and providing cost-share funding to implement a variety of voluntary management practices.

Grant partners, including Loma Prieta RCD, UC Davis Marine Pollution Studies Lab, UC Cooperative Extension, CDPR, NRCs, and other knowledgeable members of the Technical Advisory Committee selected priority areas for outreach to growers and landowners, and helped select project sites.

Nine farms in the upper and lower Pajaro Watershed implemented projects ranging from

tried and true practices like hedgerows and grassed filter strips, to more innovative, multistep, collective systems incorporating biochar filtration. This equates to a total of 1,685 irrigated agricultural acres that receive water quality benefits from these grant funded projects.

Three of the projects—a hedgerow planted by elementary school students, a grassed waterway with biochar filtration, and a woodchip bioreactor combined with a carbon biochar filtration system—are highlighted in the Pajaro Toxicity Reduction Grant Newsletter, which is available on the RCD of Santa Cruz County's website at www.rcdsantacruz.org/resources/latest-news



TO BE RESCHEDULED

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Watch for Date - Late July

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

Tickets and Sponsorships Available
Heritage Hall

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds
2601 E. Lake Ave., Watsonville

visit www.eventbrite.com/search for National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

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Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY - MAY 6

- Legislative Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - MAY 20

CANCELED

TO BE RESCHEDULED

Focus Agriculture - Class 31

MONDAY - MAY 25

**Memorial Day Observed
Office Closed**

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

SPRING LUNCHEON

**TO BE RESCHEDULED - WATCH
FOR DATE - LATE JULY**

THURSDAY - MAY 28

Board of Directors' meeting

13TH ANNUAL DOWN TO

EARTH WOMEN LUNCHEON

**TO BE RESCHEDULED
WATCH FOR DATE**



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