

# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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# FARM



# BUREAU

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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

Mary Walter, Editor  
Jess Brown, Managing Editor

141 Monte Vista Avenue  
Watsonville, California 95076.  
(831) 724-1356 or (831) 763-4450  
Fax: (831) 724-5821  
Email: [sccfb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sccfb@sbcglobal.net)  
Web: <http://www.sccfb.com>

## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FARM BUREAU TO RECEIVE "COUNTY OF THE YEAR" HONOR



Santa Cruz County is also a finalist in the Innovator Award Contest for its involvement with the Down To Earth Women Luncheon. Pictured above at the 2015 DEW Luncheon is (L-R) the events featured speaker Brittany Nielsen of KSBW Action News 8, Loretta Estrada and Judy Nielsen

The **Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau** has been informed that it will receive the "County of the Year" award at the California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) 97th Annual Meeting in Reno this December. It will also receive five County Activities of Excellence Awards in the categories of Membership, Policy Implementation, Leadership, Ag Education and Public Relations. The county also is a finalist in the "Innovator Award Contest" and will have a booth at the Annual Meeting displaying its involvement with the Down to Earth Women Luncheon.

A local delegation of six will be attending the CFBF 97th Annual Meeting December 5-9. The official delegates representing the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau are **David Van Lennep**, President and **Thomas Broz**,

First Vice-President. The Alternate Delegates will be past Farm Bureau Presidents **Cynthia Mathiesen** and **Nita Gizdich**.

Also attending from Santa Cruz County will be Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Executive Director **Jess Brown** and Agri-Culture board member **Jane Nelsen**

"We are very honored to receive the 'County of the Year' award," said David Van Lennep, Farm Bureau President. He further stated, "The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for Farm Bureau members throughout the state to discuss mutual issues that affect farming. It is also an opportunity to meet and make new friends while preparing our organization for the legislative issues that lie ahead in 2016." There are 53 County Farm Bureaus in California.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.SCCFB.COM](http://WWW.SCCFB.COM)



# President's Message

DAVID VAN LENNEP, PRESIDENT

**"Many remember the polling of urban children and even adults where the question was asked, 'where does milk come from?'. The sad answer was commonly, 'the store'. This unfortunate perception has been seen with elected officials as well, widening the gap between those that provide and those that consume."**

## Hidden Benefits

It is sometimes difficult to understand all of the impacts, good or bad, from making changes. Last month I touched on some of the benefits that the proposed County Code Modernization will have for local farmers. Farm Bureau supported much of the modernization effort with the understanding that it would generally be an improvement over current conditions.

This month I had an opportunity to experience how one aspect of farming might benefit from the updated codes. Many of the proposed code revisions deal with day-to-day farming issues such as farmworker housing or equipment storage. Others address the increasingly popular farm stays, educational events and other gatherings that might take place on agricultural zoned land. Both are important to a strong farming future in the county.

Recently, I had a chance to visit a local farm that generates food and also provides great outreach and educational programs for children and families, like hands-on farm to table cooking, farm camps and a broad hands-on educational curriculum. These programs, tours and other events give children and adults a glimpse at the workings of a farm, and connect the business of farming to food on the table. Proposed code revisions may provide some additional hoops to navigate for larger events, but they acknowledge these events as a compatible use with farming.

In recent decades, the connection between farming and food in the stores or on the table has been weak. Many remember the polling of urban children and even adults where the question was asked, "where does milk come from?". The sad answer was commonly, "the store". This unfortunate perception has been seen with elected officials as well, widening the gap between those that provide and those that consume.

Progress on this front has been slow, but progress is being made. Some of the efforts may not bear fruit for many years, until children and young adults that have benefited from these educational programs

President's Message - Continued on Page 9

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# ASK LAURA

Laura Tourte, Farm Management Advisor, UCCE

## 2014 Organic Survey

### Q: Do you have any new or updated information about organic agriculture?

**A:** Yes! In September of this year the USDA released results from the nationwide 2014 Organic Survey, which is a special study conducted as part of the Census of Agriculture. There is a lot of really interesting information about organic agriculture at the national and state level with details about certified farms, exempt farms (defined as those engaged in organic agriculture but that have less than \$5,000 in annual sales), and operations that are transitioning to organic. Not surprisingly, California figures prominently in the report, with more farms and acreage in organic production than any other state, and the highest value of sales in the nation. Here are a few highlights.

Organic crops represent about 60 percent

and melons are valued at \$847 million, or 68 percent of the US total. California is also shown to produce the vast majority of organic blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries in the US, along with the highest value of products sold in these categories in the nation.

The Survey includes information on production practices used in organic agriculture, for example, the use of biological pest management, the release of beneficial insects, and the use of compost. Marketing practices are also reported, including types of sales outlets and information on the first point of sale. Production challenges are highlighted, with farmers noting regulatory problems as their most pressing issue.

Finally, the Survey asked farmers if they plan to increase, maintain, decrease, or discontinue organic production in the next five years. In both the US and California

### 2014 US And California Organic Agriculture (Certified And Exempt Farms)

|                                       | US           | California   | CA as percent of total US |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Number of farms                       | 14,093       | 2,805        | 20                        |
| Acres operated                        | 3,670,560    | 687,168      | 19                        |
| Value of all products sold (\$1,000)* | \$ 5,454,979 | \$ 2,231,241 | 41                        |
| Value of crops sold (\$1,000)**       | \$ 3,290,188 | \$ 1,659,305 | 50                        |

\* Value of products sold is before taxes and/or production costs.

\*\* Value of crops sold includes nursery and greenhouse.

of the total value of all organic products sold in the US; the remaining 40 percent is for livestock and poultry, and livestock and poultry products. For California, the percent of organic crops is higher, at 74 percent of the total value, with the remaining 26 percent in livestock, poultry, and products. California's organic vegetables, potatoes,

about 80 percent of respondents indicated that they will increase or maintain their current level of organic production.

This is only a small sampling of the detail and information available. The full survey can be accessed at: [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online\\_Resources/Organics/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Organics/)

# THE WATER NANNY

## Clarion Call

The call went out. The Marquesses, Dukes and other landed gentry journeyed on the appointed date to the baronial estate overlooking verdant fields and the river valley far below. Our host, after thanking his neighbors for attending, laid out the problem, the wealth of our valley, groundwater, was declining. People can move, farmers can move, but the land cannot. Everyone in the grand hall owned farm land, most still were farmers. They did not plan on moving soon.



The scribes summarized the facts, the drought hasn't helped. On average 53,814 acre feet is pumped in the valley. That is about 12,500 ac/ft. beyond aquifer sustainability. In 2013 over 61,222 ac/ft. was extracted when it only rained 3.51 inches during the worst

year of our drought. (In 2008 it rained 16.29 inches and we pumped 62,145 ac/ft. so we are getting better as this. Better still in 2014.) Regardless, the aquifer is still declining.

The Royal solution - the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA) adopted a Basin Management Plan (BMP) to reduce pumping (conservation) and provide new water totaling 12,200 ac/ft./yr. by 2025, almost solving the overdraft. You have heard all about this plan, by now it is the stuff of ballads. So much for the party line. The royal scribes were ushered out of the hall so the real business of the realm could be conducted.

After four years of drought what else can we do, what can the landed gentry contribute to speeding up a permanent solution? Contrary to the image of plodding farmers, this was not a reticent group. Two key land-based ideas received the most support: 1) aquifer recharge and 2) land fallowing. Both ideas had the same disadvantage, it takes land out of production. If you are a land owner, fallow land is less farmable or rentable land, pure and simple. Recharge areas, mostly along the east side of the Pajaro Valley, particularly near the river and Murphy's crossing, may be typically marginal so the income loss is less.

What are the opportunities here? Well if an acre of farmland receives 2.5 acres of irrigation per year, fallowing 500 acres would save 1,250 ac/ft. per year. If there are 18,000+ acres of farmland and 5% are fallowed, 910 acres, or a savings of 2,275 ac/ft. Assuming the Royal solution is completed, then this would make up for the drought overdraft and provide a cushion against future dry years. Recharge is harder to calculate but it could have a greater return per acre set aside during the winter. A simple 2 acre basin with drainage from surrounding farms could allow 50+ ac/ft. of recharge in the winter, when it starts to rain again. More engineered collective projects could each add 800 ac/ft. Indeed the Royal plan includes a 500 acre recharge project at Murphy's Crossing.



It is one thing to dream about verdant springs, it is another to encourage landowners to actually implement recharge or land fallowing. The PVWMA could give a credit against the extraction tax for acres fallowed. This would clearly be a conservation project and within the scope of its new authority as a Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency. Recharge could also be a credit, but even better, the agency could participate and help with direct funding as recharge is part of the approved BMP.

*"There is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents."* (Thomas Jefferson) What could be a better description of farmers and landowners who individually work toward resolving our overdraft?



# FAVORITE RECIPES

## Pumpkin Roll

**Note from the Editor:** This recipe was given to me by a friend and co-worker many years ago. He brought it to a Christmas party one year and everyone enjoyed it so much, we talked him out of the recipe. It is a great alternative to pumpkin pie during the holidays and easy to make. Hope you enjoy!

### Cake:

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Beat the eggs on high speed for 5 minutes. Gradually beat in the sugar. Stir in pumpkin and lemon juice. Set aside.

Mix together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg. Fold the dry ingredients into the pumpkin mixture.

Grease and flour a 10" x 15" cookie sheet. Spread the pumpkin mixture onto the cookie sheet. Top with nuts. Bake in a 375°F oven for 15 minutes. Turn out onto a clean cotton

- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 cup finely chopped nuts
- Powdered sugar

### Filling:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 6 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 4 tablespoons margarine, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla




dish towel sprinkled with powdered sugar. Fold the towel edges over the cake. Starting at the narrow end, roll the towel and the cake together. Allow to cool.

When cool, unroll the cake. Spread the filling on the cake and roll again. Cover and refrigerate. When ready to serve, dust with additional powdered sugar and slice individual pieces across the roll. Plate and serve.

**Talk & Slide Show:**

**Farm Workers and Food Security in the Pajaro Valley**

Presented by  
**Kristal Caballero**, Executive Director of  
the Pajaro Valley Leaves and Fides



**WHEN:** Monday, November 9, 2015 6:30pm  
**WHERE:** Watsonville Public Library  
Meeting Room  
**SPANISH TRANSLATION PROVIDED**  
**MORE INFORMATION:** Watsonville Public Library  
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<http://cityofwatsonville.org/public-library>

**Plática y Presentación:**

**Los trabajadores agrícolas y la seguridad alimentaria en el Valle de Pájaro**

Presentadora:  
**Kristal Caballero**, Directora Ejecutiva de  
Pajaro Valley Leaves and Fides




**CUÁNDO:** Lunes, 9 de noviembre, 2015, 6:30pm  
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## Take Care When Working Around Overhead Power Lines

Every year or so in the United States, there are media reports of someone being electrocuted when a metal ladder or irrigation pipe they are carrying makes contact with an overhead line.

When a person is busy working on a task such as irrigating or harvesting, it is very easy to forget about the presence of nearby power lines. If you employ irrigators or harvesters, be sure to remind them frequently about the potential danger from power lines.

Concerning irrigation pipes, remember that aluminum is an excellent conductor of electrical current. If a pipe touches a power line, the person holding the pipe is subject to serious injury or fatal shock. It is easy to forget about the presence of power lines. However, just one thoughtless moment can result in a tragedy on your farm. Look overhead and note electrical lines that are within reach of the long pipes. When lifting and transporting the pipe sections, keep well clear of the power lines.

If possible, store your irrigation pipes in an open area well away from power lines. The tendency is to store pipes along the perimeter of a field. But the perimeter is generally where power lines are strung, so it is not usually a safe storage area for pipes. When it comes time to clean, assemble or disassemble your irrigation line, please take special care to survey your work area. Remember that you are working with unusually long pieces of metal pipe.

Prevention is one of the best ways to avoid electrocution. As farm operators, it is important to make periodic inspections of electrical equipment and the electrical leads going to that equipment. Look for broken outlets, cracked cables, bare wires, improperly grounded tools and other preventable situations.

Equally important is proper training. No one should work on electrical problems without proper experience and knowledge. Never work on an electrical problem until the power is shut down and there is no chance of someone else switching power back on before the repairs are completed. When repairing equipment, make sure the power is locked out and tagged to prevent anyone from turning on the power prematurely.

State Fund has a wealth of information on safety topics available for easy access on our website at [www.statefundca.com](http://www.statefundca.com). Click on "Employers" and then "Resources" to find the extensive list of topics.

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.

## Agri-Culture Expands to Santa Clara County

At the invitation of the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau, the Agri-Culture Board of Directors took action to expand its boundaries to include Santa Clara County. President Steve Bontadelli commented, "We are very honored to be asked to widen our geographic boundaries to educate the public about agriculture." President Bontadelli further commented, "Santa Clara County is now best known as Silicon Valley but for many generations it was known as the Valley of the Heart's Delight because of the abundance of fruits and vegetables it produced. Local agriculture still plays an important economic role in the county and Agri-Culture will provide opportunities for the public to learn about that role." One of the first activities within the expanded boundaries was collaborating with the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau to coordinate their Annual Farm to Table Dinner in September. Sponsorship from the event will go to agriculture educational programs in Santa Clara County.



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## California Supreme Court Removal of Legislature's Proposal from Ballot is Argued



On October 6 to 2015 the California Supreme Court heard oral argument in the case of *Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association vs Padilla*, S220289.

The California Secretary of State chaptered an Assembly Joint Resolution on June 27, 2014 after passing the California Legislature. It was known as Proposition 49. The Resolution calls for a federal constitutional convention to propose an amendment to the United States Constitution. The amendment would "limit corporate personhood for purposes of campaign finance and political speech and would also declare that money does not constitute speech and may be legislatively limited."

A federal constitutional convention hasn't been held since the first one in 1787. Along with California, 33 other states would need to issue similar resolutions to effectively call for a convention. This case is one of the most significant separation of powers cases the California Supreme Court has considered in decades

The case arose when the California Supreme Court removed Proposition 49 from the November, 2014 ballot until "final resolution of the matter." Proposition 49 was an advisory measure placed on the ballot by the California Legislature recommending that Congress and the State Legislature ratify an amendment to the United States Constitution overturning the 2010 United States Supreme Court case of *Citizen's United v. the Federal Elections Commission* (2010) , 588 U.S. 310 which held that political contributions and spending were protected as "free speech" under the [First Amendment](#).

Proposition 49 would have asked the voters to vote whether Congress should propose, and the California Legislature ratify, one or more amendments to the U.S. Constitution overturning the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 decision in the *Citizens United* case.

Instead, the Supreme Court directed Secretary of State to refrain from placing the measure on the ballot pending a full review by the California Supreme Court.

This is reportedly the first time the Supreme Court has removed a measure from the ballot that was proposed by the Legislature. The Supreme Court said their reason was "because the Proposition's validity is uncertain" whereas legal scholars say the standard until this case has always been to require a "clear showing of invalidity" to remove any measure from the ballot, particularly one proposed by another branch of government.

.A decision is expected in the near future

May your stuffing be tasty

May your turkey plump,

May your potatoes and gravy

Have nary a lump.

May your yams be delicious

And your pies take the prize,

And may your Thanksgiving dinner

Stay off your thighs!

Anonymous



# Happy Thanksgiving



# FROM THE AG COMMISSIONER

By Mary Lou Nicoletti, Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner

## OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE



California's agricultural industry continues to grow. Crop statistics compiled by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reveal that:

- California's gross sales increased by 4.6% in crop year 2013, to \$46.4 billion dollars.
- California was the top agricultural state in cash receipts for 2013, representing nearly 12% of the nation's total.
- California produces nearly half of U.S. grown fruits, nuts, and vegetables.
- California's exports increased by 15% in 2013, to over \$21 billion dollars.
- California leads the nation in organic sales, with a value of \$2.2 billion dollars for the year 2014. The NASS 2014 Organic Survey reported that sales from U.S. organic farms have increased 72% since 2008.

There is a tremendous need for people to work directly on farms, performing cultivation, irrigation, harvest, maintenance, management, and pest control activities. The growth of the agricultural industry also provides opportunities for employment, on and off farm, for college graduates. USDA's latest report on the state of employment in agriculture (<https://www.purdue.edu/usda/employment/>) shows something very interesting, according to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. The report states that during the next five years, there should be 57,900 jobs available annually for U.S. college graduates with expertise in food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, or the environment. Yet, only an annual average of 35,400 new U.S. graduates have expertise in a field that would qualify for those jobs; these graduates are expected to fill 61% of the annual openings. Employers will need to look to other areas, such as biology, business administration, education, and communication to fill the remaining 39% of openings.

According to the report projections, almost half of the opportunities will be in management and business.

Another 27% will be in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Jobs in sustainable food and biomaterials production will make up 15%, while 12% of the openings will be in education, communication, and governmental services. There is a need for plant scientists, food scientists, soil scientists, water resource scientists and engineers, precision agriculture specialists, and farm animal veterinarians. Secretary Vilsack believes that "those who study agriculture are likely to get well-paying jobs upon graduation, and will also have the satisfaction of working in a field that addresses some of the world's most pressing challenges".



"Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after."

Henry David Thoreau

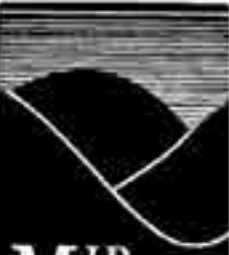
## President's Message - Continued from Page 2

come of voting age, or possibly involved with public policy in the future.

Some progress may be more immediate, especially at a local level, so maintaining the opportunity to educate the public about farming is a positive step. Not everyone is set up to provide tours and educational programs, so it is important to help maintain the efforts that are ongoing.

Keep up the good work, whether on or off the farm.

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# NRCS NEWS

By Dennis Chessman, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## El Nino and Drought Could Deliver a One-Two Punch to Unprotected Soil

**P**lowing and shaping fields in the fall is common practice in many parts of California, but let's think of a different strategy this year. Let your plow rest this fall. If we get high-intensity, above-normal rainfall like El Nino has brought in the past, fields will benefit from any crop residue left on the surface from this season's crop. Doing all tillage in the spring before you plant would be a better bet. Any living or dead plant matter gives a "shield" to otherwise vulnerable soil. Covered soil stays in place.

Soil moisture is another plus of leaving fields untilled this fall. Residue (as well as living plants) slows down rain and lets it infiltrate rather than running off the field. This builds soil moisture which will come in very handy next spring. If you capture several inches of rainfall in the soil it can help you delay or eliminate an early season irrigation.

Right now is an ideal time to plant a cover crop. Cover crops, like plant residue, protects the soil from erosion, but it can provide other benefits as well. A cover crop mix with legumes is a great way to add nitrogen to the soil. Regular use of cover crops can add organic matter to the soil and boost its water holding capacity as well as its ability to cycle nutrients. Whether it is a single species cover crop like barley or a mix you will gain a measure of erosion control and moisture trapping advantages for this winter.

For more details and possible financial assistance contact NRCS at: 475-1967 Ext. 101.

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## CALENDAR

# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

**WEDNESDAY - NOVEMBER 11**  
Veterans Day

**THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 26 &  
FRIDAY - NOVEMBER 27**  
Thanksgiving Holiday observed  
Office Closed

**WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 2**  
• Legislative Committee  
meeting  
• Executive Committee  
meeting  
• Membership Committee  
meeting

**SATURDAY - DECEMBER 5 TO  
WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 9**  
CFBF 97th Annual Meeting in  
Reno, NV

**WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 9**  
Young Farmers & Ranchers  
meeting

**MONDAY - DECEMBER 14**  
Public Relations & Information  
Committee meeting

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