

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.

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
Web: <http://www.sccfb.com>

Seas, Sours and Shopping

Agri-Culture's 23rd Annual Progressive Dinner



A wonderful evening began at Bontadelli Inc. Brussels sprouts farm at Sunset Beach for hor d'oeuvres. Then it was on to dinner at Four Winds Growers Citrus Nursery on Casserly Road for a spectacular dinner prepared by Barbara & Co. Last stop was Blossom's Farmstore and Coffeeshop for dessert and back to Casserly Hall to pick up farm fresh produce donated by many local growers. Mark your calendars for next year...October 24, 2020



President's Message

What Will You Be Thankful For?

As you gather around the table this Thanksgiving holiday, what will you be thankful for? Having family, health, and financial security are all things for which to be thankful. Be thankful for the bountiful feast before you and that many of the foods you will be enjoying were grown right here in Santa Cruz County.

Many areas of our state that were once rich around the agricultural regions no longer resemble their agrarian past. Many of California's cities such as Los Angeles, San Jose, and Santa Cruz rose from the establishment of spanish missions, which were sited near fertile lands and sources of water that could support vibrant agricultural systems. Few could imagine that Los Angeles County was the top farming county in the country only 70 years ago in 1949. The sprawling steel cities linked by miles of snaking freeways reveal no

President's Message - Continued on Page 8

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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, County Director, Strawberry & Caneberry Farm Advisor, UCCE

Handling Transplants And Starting Plants

Q. With strawberry planting season just around the corner, could you remind us what the recommendations are for handling transplants and starting plants off right?

A. Yes, of course I can remind everyone how important the handling of strawberry transplants is at planting. I never tire of reminding growers on avoiding mis-steps in soil preparation and transplanting, since such mistakes will have a huge impact through the entire following year on plant health and productivity.

Keep the transplants from drying out. Since the smaller roots of a strawberry transplant essential for good initial root growth dry out and die quickly, especially on the sunny, windy days common at the end of October and the beginning of November here on the Central Coast, growers must actively work to protect them. Transplants should not be left out in the open during breaks, and the plastic liners of boxes of transplants should be open only during the time plants are being transferred to workers. If possible, store the boxes of plants in the shade and don't pull out too many from the cooler at a time.

Plant correctly and at the right depth: Transplants need to be planted correctly and for this reason are planted by hand. Whether one slots the holes prior to planting or asks workers to do punch the holes as they go along, the transplant must be placed at the proper depth in the soil. Proper transplant placement means that only a small part of the crown bud is exposed. If the transplant is placed too deep, the plant will struggle to grow, be prone to soil diseases and maybe even die. Conversely, if the transplant is

planted too shallow with the roots exposed, it will not start well and grow poorly through the subsequent season.

Position the plant's roots correctly. Additionally, it is important that the roots of each plant be positioned in a way that they grow straight down and not in the curved fashion with root tips pointed up known as "J-roots". University research done many years ago showed that such J rooting resulted in significant losses in fruit yield. If necessary, one can trim the roots to facilitate better planting, but be sure not to trim the roots shorter than 4 inches in length.

Irrigate newly planted transplants abundantly. In addition to making sure beds are at field water capacity at planting, sprinkler irrigation immediately after transplanting will help the plants get started right. The relatively large amounts of water coming from this irrigation will help keep the roots moist and reduce potentially damaging salinity. These irrigations should go on frequently for the first four weeks after planting, and if the winter is dry, continue from time to time in the subsequent months.

The above has been a brief summary of key points when planting strawberries. 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.

THE WATER NANNY

Sword & Shield

CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act, requires a review of any government “project” prior to adoption. It is similar to the Federal Environmental Impact Report (not to be confused with *Eir*, the Norse goddess of healing) in that both are subject to court review and action if the underlying study and possible alternatives are not complete. The agency or city council need not adopt the “preferred alternative” in the report, only have all the information available for review prior to adoption.



This means that EIR's are often litigated to determine their completeness. Many times the litigation is for the sole purpose of delaying the project, causing costs to increase and preventing eventual completion due to financial considerations, independent of the environmental review. Think of this as a shield, deflecting the project to the ground.

However, the EIR court review can also be a sword where the litigant forces the agency to consider, possibly for the first time, additional scientific facts or possible alternatives. This may be the case with the forthcoming rewrite of the Ag Order. The Water Board has entered into a Stipulated Judgment with Save the Sea Otter extending the existing order to January 31, 2021. This means there is very little time to write the new Order, as pen has not met paper on this yet, and even less time for the CEQA process. Yet, the requirements for full review of all options, including adoption of findings of fact, remains.

You may have noticed that it is hard to find any employees, much less qualified, hardworking ones. In parts of California, there are three job openings for every prospective applicant. One of the few options is hiring students just out of college. The Regional Water Board has become a first job for many environmental studies graduates. Now environmental studies means many things depending on the university, but it does not necessarily mean a scientific understanding of the environment. For example, at the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) there appear to be two tracks; one science based, with field testing and observation and a second based on the social sciences and environmental justice.

Becoming a California State Employee is a pretty sweet gig; mostly full time, with full benefits. There is an additional side benefit, almost no one is fired for anything short of malfeasance. So you get hired out of college with a generic degree in environmental studies. After ten or fifteen years you are head of a department, maybe with no additional professional studies. It is almost as if it is a tenured job.



The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) staff writes the proposed Ag Order. There is no one with current agricultural experience, and there may be no one with any field environmental work. Yet, they are currently proposing eventually reducing N fertilizer applications to 50 pounds per acre per year and up to a 250' setback from lakes, swamps and some streams and rivers. There is no scientific basis for either, none has been put forward by staff, and so far, there have been no hearings to establish relevant regulatory numbers.

This is when CEQA can become a sword, to force the RWQCB Board, and staff, to seriously address and make findings that could support the eventual order. The State Water Board is concerned that the RWQCB is moving out of bounds on some of these issues and has sent Emel Wadhwani, the Assistant Chief Counsel to the State Water Board to participate in the hearings. She has pointed out repeatedly to the board and staff that some of their ideas are without foundation and have insufficient basis to survive EIR review by the State Board. This was not a learning experience for staff. The next RWQCB Ag Order item may be on the agenda for December in San Luis Obispo. We will see if wisdom has been found by then.

That said, it is time for Thanksgiving. We should be thankful for many reasons, which will be borne out by the optimism of spring and a hopefully rainy winter. I would also like to note and appreciate the 30th anniversary of Focus Agriculture and another successful Progressive Dinner last month. As Will Rogers said: *“Be thankful we’re not getting all the government we’re paying for.”*



FAVORITE RECIPES

Curried Roasted Cauliflower Coconut Soup

This recipe was contributed by Cynthia Mathiesen, a Farm Bureau member who currently sits on the Board of Directors. We encourage all of our membership to submit their favorite recipes so they can be shared with fellow members in this newsletter. Please send them to our editor at jemawalter@sbcglobal.net or to the office at sccfb@sbcglobal.net. A little history of the recipe would be great if it is a family favorite. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from many of you!

This is a smooth, subtly spicy soup with a hint of sweetness from the coconut milk.

- 3 Tablespoons melted coconut oil
- 1 head cauliflower, chopped into small pieces
- 1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 14-ounce can lite coconut milk
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ¾ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated pepper
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice

Garnish: 1 scallion, green party only, sliced thin (optional)

Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss the cauliflower with enough coconut oil to lightly coat it (about 3 tablespoons). Spread the



cauliflower in a single layer on a large baking sheet and roast until the tips of the cauliflower are golden brown, about 25 to 30 minutes.

Pour the olive oil in a large pot set over medium-low heat. Add the onions and cook for 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic and the ginger and cook for three minutes, stirring often to prevent burning. Add the roasted cauliflower and cook for 5 minutes.

Pour in the coconut milk and chicken broth. Increase the heat to high and bring the liquid just to a boil, then decrease the heat to low and simmer uncovered for 20 minutes or until the cauliflower is very soft.

Cool the soup slightly then puree using an immersion or standing blender. Stir in the salt, pepper, curry powder, cumin, paprika and lemon juice. Adjust seasonings to taste. Serve hot with sliced scallions.

Yield: 5 cups



Top 10 Agribusiness Insurance Claims

Motor vehicle accidents are the most common agribusiness insurance claim, according to insurer Nationwide®. Ohio-based insurer, the nation's largest insurer of farms, said that over the last three years, the top 10 claim types have accounted for more than 50,000 claims by its agribusiness customers.

Here are the top 10 commercial agribusiness claims received by Nationwide in 2017:

Top 10 Agribusiness Insurance Claims

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Motor Vehicle Accidents | 6. Animal Caused Damage or Bite |
| 2. Workers Compensation for Disability or Death | 7. Glass Breakage |
| 3. Misapplication of Chemicals or Drift | 8. Wind Damage |
| 4. Slip, Fall or Injury | 9. Hail or Lightning Damage |
| 5. Food Related Claim | 10. Fire Damage or Loss |

"By sharing our top claims data, we hope to help agribusiness owners recognize areas of their operation that may need increased safety precautions," said Carol Alvarez, vice president of claims for Nationwide. "These national trends can help business owners pinpoint areas where they can take extra measure to keep their employees, products and equipment safe."

Over the past three years, motor vehicles accidents have accounted for more than 20,000 of Nationwide's total commercial agribusiness claims. Nationwide's data for these accidents show the following trends in frequency and severity:

Most Frequent Accidents

1. Rear end accidents
2. Backing into vehicles
3. Accidental strike of stationary object

Accidents Causing Most Significant Damage

1. Overturned vehicles
2. Head on collisions
3. Intersection accidents

Nationwide recommends the following risk management tips to help agribusinesses reduce motor vehicle accidents and keep employees safe:

- Embrace safety technology by equipping vehicles with collision mitigation and telematics monitoring systems.
- Develop standard hiring criteria for drivers comprised of new driver orientations and documented training.
- Develop "safe following distance" and "distracted driving" policies that include comprehensive training and procedure enforcement.
- Be aware of advanced safety benefits in newer trucks, such as electronic stability control systems to prevent overturn.
- Provide additional documented training for commercial truck drivers with tanker endorsements, and those carrying high center of gravity loads.

To learn more, visit nationwide.com/dfb.

A Time to Give Thanks



As we approach the end of the year, it gives me pause to think and reflect on all the things that I am thankful for this past year. I am thankful that our area received good rainfall to start the year and that we saw more average winter temperatures than in previous years. This not only helped in the process of recharging our groundwater aquifers but the cooler temperatures also provided much needed chill hours to some of our major commodities, such as apples, strawberries and caneberries. I am thankful for the incredible collaborations our growers have with various agencies, such as U.C. Cooperative Extension and the RCD, as they continue to pursue solutions to the many challenges facing our local agriculture. It demonstrates our growers' commitment to make agriculture more sustainable through

improved irrigation methods, new innovative ways to control pests through dynamic IPM practices, and exploring new technologies and equipment upgrades in an effort to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and boost energy efficiency on the farm. I am thankful to all our growers farming in the Pajaro Valley and on the North Coast and to our farmworkers for their effort and commitment to bring the highest quality bounty of fruits and vegetables to our dinner tables everyday. Our farmworkers and growers not only feed our County and California but also our Nation. It is thanks to them that the freshest salads and most delicious berry desserts can be enjoyed all summer long and late into fall. Lastly, I am thankful for my staff and the hard work they do in supporting our growers and our local agricultural industry to continue to make Santa Cruz County one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world. Thank you.

Today we Give thanks

for the food on our tables

the clothes on our backs

and the farmers who make it all possible.

SAVE THE DATE!

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

Annual Directors' Dinner

Crow's Nest
November 7, 2019
6:00 p.m.

CFBF 101st Annual Meeting

Monterey, CA
December 8-11, 2019

I'm a Farm Bureau Member because...

"...we became members to represent the beekeeping industry and for the benefits of membership. But, most importantly, it was the suggestion of current members that made it happen."

**Greg & Cathy Walls,
Walls Honey Farm**





President's Message - Continued from Page 2

semblance of the cattle ranches, poultry farms, and fruit and vegetable fields that once were. The Los Angeles River, which supplied the water needed to irrigate fields across the Los Angeles basin, is now a concrete lined drainage ditch in most places. In Santa Clara County, the valley of heart's delight, was once covered with the pink and white blooms of apricots and plums each spring; comprising the world's largest fruit producing and packing region until the 1960's. The orchards and packing houses have given way to track homes and business campuses of silicon valley.

Closer to home, Mission Santa Cruz spurred the agriculture development of cattle and vegetable crops. Farms in Live Oak during the gold rush era (1849) produced wheat, oats, and barley. By the start of the 20th century, cultivation shifted to fruits and vegetables and eventually developed poultry operations, and then a floriculture bulb nursery specializing

in callas, narcissus, freesias and begonias. The farms are all but gone, their remnants hidden beneath neighborhood homes, townhouses and strip malls.

The pressure to develop agricultural land has threatened many areas of our county from Watsonville to Wilder Ranch. In Santa Cruz County, we can be thankful that we have maintained the majority of our farmland and agricultural heritage and be thankful that our community values agriculture and has chosen to keep farmland in production. We can also be thankful that we produce much of our own food and are able to supply food to communities that have paved over their farms and no longer can. I am thankful that the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau will continue working to ensure that agriculture land preservation is at the forefront of city, county, and state planning; protecting our local economy and securing our agricultural future.

Wordplay from the Washington Post

Readers were asked to supply alternate meanings for various words. The following were some of the winning entries:

Abdicate v. To give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.

Balderdash n. A rapidly receding hairline.

Esplanade v. To attempt an explanation while drunk.

Flabbergasted adj. Appalled over how much weight you have gained.

Frisbatarianism n. The belief that, when you die, your soul goes up on the roof and gets stuck there.

Lymph v. To walk with a lisp.

Negligent adj. Describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightie.

Rectitude n. The formal, dignified demeanor assumed by a proctologist immediately before he examines you.

Semantics n. Pranks conducted by young men studying for the priesthood, including such things as gluing the pages of the priest's prayer book together just before vespers.

Testicle n. A humorous question on an exam.

Participate in Santa Cruz County's AgTech Conversation

The Santa Cruz County AgTech Meetup was formed in March, 2015, to facilitate the conversation between produce growers-shippers, and technologists in Santa Cruz County. We meet every other month with an agenda that rotates to reflect the "process" growers-shippers go through.

December - Planning and Resource Allocation

February - Land Preparation

April - Planting

June - Production

August - Harvesting, Productivity Solutions.

October - Processing & Shipping

The meetups are held in Watsonville on the last Wednesday of the month from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. Food & Refreshments are provided and the speakers start at 6pm.

Please attend and promote attendance to these unique AgTech conversations. More information can be obtained at: <https://www.meetup.com/Santa-Cruz-County-Ag-Tech-Meetup/>

Funding Opportunity for Growers and Ranchers!



The State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program, also known as SWEEP, is a California Department of Food and Agriculture grant, which **provides financial assistance** for practices that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save water. In a state that so desperately needs to be saving its water, this is a great opportunity for agricultural operations to receive funding to do so.

Applications for SWEEP will be open from October 21st, 2019 until December 16th, 2019. Funding for SWEEP next year is undetermined, so be sure to take advantage of the funds this year.

Growers and ranchers can receive funds for practices that will eventually reduce their water usage and greenhouse gas emissions. Applicants can apply to **receive up to \$100,000** for eligible practices. So far, CDFA has awarded 725 projects equally about \$72.2 million.

Some eligible practices include variable frequency drives, soil moisture monitoring, drip systems, switching to low pressure irrigation systems, pump retrofits and installation of renewable energy.



Drip Irrigation

The applications process is lengthy, so be sure to start as soon as possible. If you are interested in applying please contact **Valerie Perez** at (831) 763-8028 or valperez@ucanr.edu, who can provide **free technical assistance**. For more information please check out CDFA's Office of Environmental Farming & Innovation page online.

The CropManage Workshop is right around the corner!



The Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District and University of California Cooperative Extension are hosting a CropManage training, that is sponsored by Pajaro Valley Water.

CropManage is a free online tool used to provide real-time **recommendations for water and nutrient management for crops**. The workshop will feature a hands on demonstration of how to use CropManage, so **don't forget your tablets or laptops!**

Habrá traducción en español para todos los que ocupen

When: November 20th, 2019

Time: 8:00am to 12:00pm

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Lucille Ball



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~ C&N Tractor, Julie Oliver

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CALENDAR

MONDAY - NOVEMBER 4
Public Relations &
Information Committee
meeting

THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 7
Annual Directors' Dinner

WEDNESDAY - NOVEMBER 13
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 28-29
Thanksgiving Holiday
observed - Office closed

WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 4
• Legislative Committee
meeting
• Executive Committee
meeting
• Membership Committee
meeting

**SUNDAY - DECEMBER 8 TO
WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 11**
CFBF 101st Annual Meeting
Monterey, California

MONDAY - DECEMBER 9
Public Relations &
Information Committee
meeting

WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 11
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 25
Christmas Day Observed
Office Closed

WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 1
New Year's Day Observed
Office Closed

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication



We see things from the ground up, all
of the small details that go into the big
picture of farming. Because agriculture
is what we know, it's all we do.



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