

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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104th Annual Meeting

2021 Farmer of the Year



(L-R) Nishan Moutafian, Thomas Am Rhein, Chair and Tom Broz.

Farm Bureau COVID-19 Task Force

At the 104th Annual Meeting of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau, the Farm Bureau COVID-19 Task Force was announced as the 2021 Farmer of the Year. The four members of the Task Force are Tom Am Rhein (Chair), Nishan Moutafian, Adriana Silva and Tom Broz. A speech was given about the work of the Task Force by Chair, Tom Am Rhein. Below is his speech.



Adriana Silva

I am confident I'm speaking for all of us here in expressing our appreciation to the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau (SCCFB) for all they have done over the past two years to continue to have functions such as this where we can all meet together face to face and enjoy the fellowship and culture of the farm community in Santa Cruz County.

In terms of the Task Force, so many people did so much over the past months that it would be difficult to thank all of them. I do want to personally thank the Task Force members who were so dedicated throughout this process: Nishan Moutafian, Adrianna Silva and Tom Broz. Believe me, we did not always agree on everything, and

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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor,
Strawberries & Caneberries UCCE

Mechanization of Field Work

Q. Could you discuss a little bit about efforts going on for mechanization of field work like weeding and harvesting in strawberry? Seems this would be an obvious place for research given the constraints of late on labor.

A. There have been a number of things going on, mostly however being done by private enterprises which then work with institutions like the University of California and CalPoly in San Luis Obispo.

The thing that everybody would like to see is a fully automated machine harvest, and indeed there are several attempts going on currently, but my feeling is that a fully functional "robot harvester" is still well over the horizon. One of the problems with strawberry is that it is a continuously cropped plant, which means that it cannot be removed from the ground and the fruit shaken or taken off, such as is done with processing tomatoes for example, to create a situation more advantageous for machine harvest. The second problem as we all know is that the strawberry fruit is very soft, which while according to robotics people is possible to do with a machine, it is still very slow and missteps on the part of the robot mean a fruit unsuitable for the fresh market most California growers are selling into. Thirdly, and this does seem to be one of the more important points when talking about machine harvest of strawberry, is that the fruit is often hidden by leaves over it, creating what is known as "occultation" and is a problem that is very difficult for a machine to solve, much less act on it by successfully picking the fruit off of the plant.

It has also been very much discussed

that breeding of strawberries should be working hand in hand with engineers when it comes to automating fruit harvest, for example producing strawberries on longer, more exposed stems which get them out more from under the leaves. This kind of collaboration is indeed happening, in both public and private breeding efforts.

Another project that this office will be involved in is the automatic cutting of strawberry runners. Runners of strawberries are understood to detract from fruit yield, and growers strive to remove them frequently to lessen this impact. For many of the University of California varieties, this is actually a fairly expensive activity since it is needs hand labor to do and some growers report expenses up to \$5000 per acre annually. This work is actually fairly doable by the machine, since the runners for the most part are quite exposed, generally distinguishable from other vegetative growth and do not need to be handled with any care.

The above has been a brief article regarding the development of automation of work in the strawberry field. For questions on this topic and others in agriculture, please contact Mark Bolda, UC Cooperative Extension, Santa Cruz County 831 763 8025 or mpbolda@ucanr.edu.

**What ocean is home to 75% of the
Earth's volcanoes?**

See page 4 for the answer.

THE WATER NANNY

A Rose is a Rose

As school children we all learned the "History of Thanksgiving" where the first English settlers broke bread with local Indians in thanks for a good harvest and their continued survival. Maybe it happened like that, but it is a great creation story. On the other hand, George Washington was the first to declare a day of public thanksgiving on Thursday, November 26, 1789, just not as good a story line.

Watsonville is named after John Watson, who laid out the first town plot map back in 1852-1853. He came to California for the gold rush, with his slave (who he later freed). He endeavored to sell lots along the Pajaro to newcomers. Unfortunately, he did not own the land, it was part of the Rancho Bolsa del Pajaro, owned by Sebastian Rodriguez, a former Mexican soldier at the Presidio de Monterey. As they say, litigation ensued, to the detriment of Watson.



Cabrillo College is searching its very soul to determine if its once grand name should be scrubbed from buildings. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was the first European to explore (sail along) the California coast of behalf of the Spanish Empire in 1542-1543. He died in 1543 on Santa Catalina Island, in present day California. He arrived in the New World and joined Cortés in New Spain (Mexico). Later he made a fortune mining gold in Guatemala, becoming one of the richest conquistadores. Cabrillo was part of a system of encomienda, where Spain rewarded conquerors with slave labor by heathen (non-Christian) natives.

Europeans, Egyptians, actually every empire, had a long history of slavery. Serfs were owned by the manor, some Scot clans enslaved other Scots. Romans thought little of the Gauls they slaughtered. Aztecs and Incas enslaved their weaker neighbors. Such is the sad truth of our collective history. This is not to rationalize slavery, as to recognize that it may have been a foundation of many conquests, the spoils go to the winner. Cabrillo's life reflects success in this environment.

History is how we recall the past. Current fashion or leaders

try to dictate how it should be recalled, in many cases by wiping unpleasant parts away. As one group conquers another they have built new cities on top of the vanquished towns. Mexico City shows this with clarity where the Spanish conquerors built a cathedral on top of an Aztec temple, showing their dominance and a change in religious preference. Hitler burned books which told the historical story in an inconvenient way. The discussion on Cabrillo College's name can be a recognition of the great and horrendous times and events as cultures clashed in Spanish California, or it can be a cover-up of a period we no longer want to dwell upon as it is inconsistent with our current mores.



If the latter choice is preferred, we clearly need to consider the namesake of Watsonville. Since he appears to have been yet another Yankee land swindler (one of many in the 1850s), not a peer of the community, maybe the town's name should reflect its original owner Rodriguez; to be consistent we can keep ville, ala Rodriguezville.

This is the month of Thanksgiving, after the past year we do have much to be thankful for. *"Don't let yesterday take up too much of today"* (Will Rogers).

Answer:

The Pacific Ocean basin is home to 75% of the world's volcanoes. These volcanoes actually form a ring around the Pacific Ocean basin known as the Ring of Fire. The Ring of Fire is a horseshoe-shaped belt about 40,000 km (25,000 mi) long[1] and up to about 500 km (310 mi) wide.[2] The Ring of Fire includes the Pacific coasts of South America, North America and Kamchatka, and some islands in the western Pacific Ocean. Although there is consensus among geologists about almost all areas which are included in the Ring of Fire, they disagree about the inclusion or exclusion of a few areas, for example, the Antarctic Peninsula and western Indonesia.



FAVORITE RECIPES

Rustic Apple Galette

A galette makes an almost guilt-free dessert. Unlike a pie made with lots more sugar, a thickener, and much more fruit per slice, a slice of a galette is the perfect portion for dessert — not much thicker than a slice of pizza, but every bit as tasty and satisfying as a whole slice of pie. By Annaliese Keller, *Edible Paradise*, a recipe adapted from Jennifer Segal, *Once Upon a Chef*.

INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE CRUST:

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

1-1/2 sticks (12 tablespoons) very cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1/4 cup very cold water

FOR THE FILLING:

3 large apples, cored (and peeled, if desired), cut into 1/8 inch slices

1/4 – 1/3 cup sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1/8 teaspoon salt

FOR ASSEMBLING AND BAKING:

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

1 egg, beaten

1 tablespoon turbinado or sparkling sugar

MAKE THE CRUST: In a food processor bowl, place the flour, salt, and sugar. Pulse briefly to combine. Add the cold butter to the bowl and process about 5 seconds, or just until the butter is the size of peas. Sprinkle the ice water over the mixture evenly and process just until moistened, about 5 seconds.

Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and collect the dough into a cohesive ball by gently pressing and kneading a few times, just until it comes together. Pat the dough into a rectangle. Lightly dust the surface of the dough with flour, and then fold one-third of the dough into the middle, and repeat with the other side. Press firmly. Gently pat or roll the dough into another rectangle and repeat the folding and pressing firmly. Pat dough into a disk, wrap it in plastic, and place in the refrigerator.

Flour your work surface again and dust the dough with flour, as well. Using a rolling pin, roll into a circle 8 to 10 inches in diameter, turning and adding more flour as necessary so the dough doesn't stick. Transfer the dough to the parchment-lined baking sheet and refrigerate while you prepare the filling (you'll roll the dough out further on the parchment paper so go ahead and clean your work surface).

MAKE THE FILLING: Place prepared apples into a large bowl (you should have about 4 cups). Add the sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, melted butter, and salt and toss apples to coat all surfaces with the mixture.

ASSEMBLE THE GALETTE: Preheat oven to 350°. Place a sheet of parchment paper on a baking pan.

Remove the chilled dough from the fridge. Lightly flour a work surface. Using a rolling pin, roll dough into a circle 8 to 10 inches in diameter, turning and adding more flour as necessary so the dough doesn't stick. Transfer to the circle of dough to the baking pan. Sprinkle the flour evenly over the pastry. Arrange the apple slices on top in overlapping concentric circles to within 3-inches of the edge, working quickly. Gently fold the edges of the dough over the apples working your way around and creating pleats as you go. Brush the top of the crust evenly with the beaten egg using a pastry brush. Lightly sprinkle the turbinado or sparkling sugar.

Bake the galette for 55 to 65 minutes, or until the apples are tender and the crust is golden and cooked through. Transfer the pan to a rack to cool. Using two large spatulas, transfer the tart to a serving plate or cutting board. Slice and serve warm or at room temperature.

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In recognition of Sam Sakamoto, of Soquel, who has been a member of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau for 72 years. He is believed to be the last known living veteran of the World War II 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

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Use of Technology Here to Stay



One thing the pandemic has demonstrated is our ability to adapt to change. This change has created new opportunities in the way the Agricultural Commissioner's Office has operated for the past several months to provide services to growers and clients. The increased

use of technology for many of the services we provide offers convenience and flexibility to our clients and it is something we hope to carry forward, with modifications as needed. This winter, we will be incorporating a hybrid process to issue Restricted Materials Permits (RMP) and Operator Identification Numbers (OIN). Like last year, all the information and discussion needed to update these documents will take place over the telephone or via teleconference. Growers can choose to sign the documents electronically as well as receive key updates virtually so there is no need to come to the office. Alternatively, growers can elect to stop by the office to sign in person and receive updates by meeting with one of our inspectors. Unlike the way we operated prior to the pandemic, in person meetings will be kept short at 15 minutes or less and will address only the most pertinent information. We enjoy meeting face to face with growers and we hope this new process will provide that opportunity while allowing flexibility and keeping everyone safe and healthy.

Last year we were unable to host a Continuing Education (CE) course; however, this year we will be hosting a live webinar via Zoom likely in early to mid-December. Participation will be limited to the first 90 registrants and, as you may be aware from taking online CE courses last year, there will be a brief exam at the end of the course on the content that was covered that must be passed with a score of 70% or better to receive credit. More information on the course will go out later this month with details on how you can sign up.

Lastly, we want to encourage all agricultural businesses, structural operators, Pest Control Advisers and Farm Labor Contractors to register their business for 2022 via regular mail. Businesses can print and complete the annual registration form from our website at www.agdept.com and mail the

form and additional documents such as a business license, equipment list, Farm Labor Contractor license or QAL license to our office along with payment. New this year, businesses and registrants can also pay online by clicking "Point & Pay" on our website and selecting the registration option from the drop-down menu. For more information and assistance with registrations please call our office at 831-763-8080.





ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

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there were spirited moments, but we got through it. The diversity of our group was essential to our success.

The SCCFB is no stranger in terms of dealing with challenging, even catastrophic events. The dedication of our membership, some who have been active for 40, 50 even 60 years, has imbedded in our organizational memory the challenges of multiple floods on the Pajaro River, the Reagan Amnesty, the AIDS epidemic, wildfires, and the Loma Prieta Earthquake.

Challenges were encountered and met with unique responses derived not from experts or consultants or government agencies or elected officials, but from our members. People like you, who are gathered here this evening.

When COVID made it's way 6000 miles across the ocean and threatened to bring the world's finest system of fresh fruit and vegetable production to its knees, while the bureaucracy deliberated on which agency would finally do something, the SCCFB board knew they had to act. And so the Farm Bureau COVID-19 Task Force was established. I would like to thank last year's Farm Bureau President, Brendan Miele, for his leadership in appointing the Task Force members as well as to thank Arnett for his continued support.

As COVID took hold in the spring of 2020, the Federal government, through the CDC, issued broad guidelines on how to manage COVID, particularly in essential industries such as agriculture. There was a wide latitude for local communities and industries to create specific, practical and effective operational solutions. By contrast, the State government managed from the top down. It was extremely difficult to effectively use the resources, talents, knowledge, experience and ingenuity of the local community to address the unique challenges that each community and industry faced. This was starkly highlighted in terms of the vaccine role out.

Furthermore, individual County Health officers were left to interpret and apply ever changing and sometimes conflicting orders from the State, County by County. This was a potential nightmare for us because our farming district is divided by the Monterey County line along the Pajaro River. There was the potential for two sets of conflicting rules to be applied to the many farmers and ag workers who crossed over the county lines multiple times a day.

It also became clear early on that in our own County, the government staffs, qualified as they are, lacked the

institutional depth of knowledge and historical memory to understand all the relationships, organizations and resources that could be organized and applied to the COVID challenges in the County. The County staffs were also dealing with the consequences of the devastating fire complex in North County at the same time.

When our Task Force was introduced to our County Health Officer, Gail Newel, by our supportive Supervisor Zack Friend, our weekly zoom calls with her staff and the Santa Cruz Ag Commissioner were established. Our message to them was clear: There was no problem the SCCFB could not solve if we were asked to solve it. The COVID-19 Task Force did not ask the SCCFB board if we could make that promise, and the County was skeptical; but, I can say unequivocally, the SCCFB and the COVID-19 Task Force kept to our word.

The Task Force worked to bridge gaps in terms of resources such as isolation housing, we worked to harmonize directives with Monterey County, we connected with other organizations such as the California Strawberry Commission to get help in providing translation services, document review and vaccine clinic support. We brought needed "boots on the ground" reporting of what was really going on in the ag worker community to the County Health Department.

By October of 2020, the previous administration was saying they would have a vaccine by the middle of December. Few were taking that seriously. But the Task Force did! And we began asking how we were going to vaccinate our industry. We got a lot of blank looks. So, we began to think about vaccine scenarios and systems... how many, where and how.

In February 2021, the State of California was moving from vaccinating people 75 and older to those 65 and older. That's when we got a call from Dignity Health Dominican Hospital. As the local governments struggled with complex and ever changing State allocation plans, Dignity Health Dominican Hospital decided they were ready to dedicate significant vaccines to the ag worker community. The SCCFB, working with Dignity Health Dominican Hospital, would be the first place in California to do mass vaccination of agricultural workers. We got the call on a Thursday, Dignity Health Dominican Hospital wanted to do 800 vaccines on the following Wednesday and Friday if we could set up a clinic. Our answer was quick and clear; of course the SCCFB could quickly set up and run a mass vaccine clinic in a matter of days. I am not sure if they really believed us!

Due to our previous brainstorming we had a concept

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in mind. Within 24 hours we were accumulating a vaccine candidate list from farms across the County. We acquired a location, the Casserly Hall. We created an allocation system to equitably choose the first 800 patients from a list of thousands that we built in only 3 days. We created a traffic control and flow plan that allowed us to vaccinate 800 people on an appointment system based on 15 minute intervals that was able to process the candidates, using only 35 parking spaces without creating a traffic jam on Casserly Rd. In the end, we vaccinated not 800, but 1300 in that first clinic week.

And then, we did it again and again until the County health care providers could establish mass vaccine sites at the fairgrounds. Your Farm Bureau, working with Dignity Health Dominican Hospital, vaccinated 6000 ag workers before some other farming regions even got started with their programs. We also directed thousands of ag workers to other clinics when we were not able to provide the vaccine.

We worked very hard to distribute limited vaccine supplies in the most effective manner possible. We worked with all commodities, all types of growing systems, Farm Bureau members and non-members, from micro farms to large multi-national operations. We sought to fully vaccinate the smallest farms first, as many of them depend on one or two family units, and they could easily have lost 100% of their labor force if someone got COVID.

While we provided appointment slots to the farms, individual farms were responsible to get their employees to the site, on time, with their registration information, sometimes with only a few hours' notice. And the farmers got it done. Farms had crew leaders on site, guiding their people through the process. Some farms donated staff for multiple days to man the registration tables to the benefit of the whole Industry. People were calm, respectful and helpful through the whole process. It was a tribute to our industry culture here in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

While the SCCFB was able to protect the ag worker community, the benefits of what was done by our industry throughout the COVID experience extended to the whole non-farm community. Particularly in the Pajaro Valley, the shelter in place orders, closure of parks and open spaces, unemployment due to the closure of non-essential industries, forcing people to stay home, combined with our high density housing, created an ideal environment for the spread of COVID. Our ag workers, however, were able to work every day, usually outdoors, and to receive multiple health checks each day. If symptoms appeared, isolation could be quickly arranged. The rate of infection acquired on farms was almost

nil. And when our early mass vaccine program started, many of those people vaccinated resided in these high COVID risk areas. Our early vaccination of ag workers, many of whom were a little older than the average age ag worker, created a group of "vaccine ambassadors" who helped give the greater community and incoming younger workers trust in the vaccine process.

What other organization in Santa Cruz County could have done so much, so quickly, to the benefit of so many, while relying entirely on the voluntary contributions of time and money from the industry it represents?

I want to acknowledge and thank our County Ag Commissioner Juan Hidalgo for coordinating meetings, County Health Officer Gail Newel and her staff, who were really great to work with. Dignity Health Dominican Hospital really stepped up and took a chance and tested our "can do" attitude. We also want to thank the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County for all the support they provided to the SCCFB during the pandemic.

The agricultural community in Santa Cruz County, really everyone in the County, should be thankful for what the SCCFB Board of Directors has done to build an organization that brings so much value to our industry and community. And we are all appreciative of the hard work that the SCCFB staff puts in every day, but especially during an event such as COVID.

We must thank and acknowledge the ag worker community itself. Those are the folks who showed up to work every day, following the protocols and showing leadership in getting the vaccine. Can you imagine what would have happened if our industry had stumbled, even for a day, in filling the food supply chain of the nation?

In closing, the industry needs to heed the lessons we learned during COVID. One thing that became clear during the experience is that there is a vacuum of leadership at many levels in California. That leads to chaos or the ability of a very strong willed personality or special interest group, not necessarily looking at the common interest, of being able to dominate policy formation.

The SCCFB, because of its long history and stable and diverse membership is the one check and balance locally that we have against potential extreme policy decisions. A strong County Farm Bureau protects the whole community but it is only as strong as the time, effort and financial support that we all put into it. Let's keep the Santa Cruz Farm Bureau strong!

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President's Message

Holiday Connections



ARNETT YOUNG, PRESIDENT

Fall is in full swing, Halloween has passed, and we are preparing for the holiday season, looking forward to Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and/or New Years. Whatever

holidays you observe, they usually have something in common; a time in which we share a meal with family and friends. During these meals we recant old and new stories, catch up on family gossip, or just quietly enjoy the food and company of others. For myself, it is also a time I reflect on where our meal has come from.

In Santa Cruz County, we are fortunate to have abundant access to food grown and produced locally. We can buy directly off the farm, through CSAs, farmers markets, and locally owned grocery stores. Often we have passed by the field, vineyard, or orchard where the ingredients for this meal were produced. Last year I took note that nearly 80% of my family's holiday food came from Santa Cruz County, about 99% came from California, and only about 1% from out of state (I love cranberries). Most communities

do not benefit from such an immediate connection to their food sources.

This connection to community food sources has many advantages. The obvious environmental benefit of a reduced carbon footprint as well as the economic benefits to the consumer and community are often the ones discussed. And these are very real and important. However, they are not the only way to value local agriculture. Local agriculture has an intrinsic value which is not easily calculated. When I offer a locally grown apple to visiting family, I feel a sense of pride sharing where that apple was grown. When mixing a salad, I take pleasure in knowing where the berries and vegetables came from. It feels as if the ingredients are fresher, healthier and better. I believe that locally grown ingredients are in fact more valuable, because they personalize the meal in ways I may not know how to express, but we can all understand - a value that goes beyond any economist's figure or measure of carbon footprint.

This holiday season let's all remember our community connection to our meals. When entertaining guests, highlight your meal's roots (ok, pun intended) and if visitors are bringing a dish, ask where its ingredients were grown. Chances are if any of their ingredients originate from their community,

you may see the same joy you feel when sharing something from your community. Or you might discover it was grown right down the street. Either way, Happy Holidays!

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A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

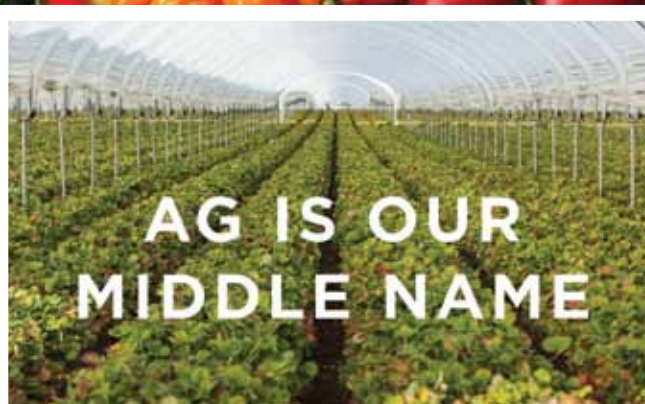
CALENDAR

THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 4
Annual Directors' Dinner

THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 25
Thanksgiving Day Observed
Office Closed

FIRDAY - NOVEMBER 26
Office Closed

DECEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 9
CFBF 101st Annual Meeting



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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