

# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

OCTOBER 2015  
VOLUME 39, ISSUE 10

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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.

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## Farm Bureau at the County Fair



Above: These young Apple Pie Baking contestants showed their ability to produce a great pie. (Top L) William Messer, (R) Rachel Ann Huerta and (Bottom L) Youth Division 1st place winner Jordan Biddle



Right: Led by Captain Matt Ryan (Top L), the Opening Day Barbecue was prepared by the Watsonville Firefighters Association

The Santa Cruz County Fair, Country Nights & Carnival Lights, highlighted the month of September. The Opening Day Barbecue sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau was a popular event and brought many fairgoers to the table to celebrate the opening of the county fair. Opening day also featured the arrival of our award winning Santa Cruz County booth which won a silver medal at the State Fair in July and the "Best Professional Commercial Exhibit" at the county fair. The Apple Pie Baking Contest gave bragging rights to Maggie Kasunich for the next year. See page 5 for the recipe and all of the winners.



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# President's Message

DAVID VAN LENEP, PRESIDENT

**"Nothing is perfect and many of the changes could go further, but improvements were made that should help agriculture to maintain viability in Santa Cruz County."**

## New And Improved....At Least A Little

It's not often that you can use the term improved when referring to laws and codes, especially in Santa Cruz County. Our county has for years been among the worst counties in the state to conduct business, with California among the worst in the country. All of this combines to produce a very difficult atmosphere for business of any kind to thrive. Somehow people persevere and become successful, adapting and refusing to give up. If your business relies on discretionary permits through the county, your outlook is even worse. Almost any form of discretionary permit from the county is fraught with uncertainty and wildly differing requirements, sometimes at staggering cost and delay. This is a formidable problem in a heavily regulated county such as ours.

Making changes to some of these problems has been bantered about for years, but with no real desire at the county level to change.

Enter the Economic Vitality Study. This was a look at business, development and economics county wide as part of an overall economic strategy planning effort initiated by the county in 2013.

This process involved public meetings and focused meetings with stakeholder groups such as farmers, which identified a wealth of outdated codes in need of revision to accommodate current business and life within the county. Many of these codes have been on the books since the late 1970's and provided no

relevance when applied to contemporary situations.

Some of these directly relate to agriculture, such as direct marketing, farm stays, farmworker housing, compatible uses and farm related events such as education.

Farmers who have struggled with these issues for many years were quick to point out actual problems and suggest workable solutions. The surprising result of this discussion was some revisions to county code that will be helpful and a direct result of input from farmers and Farm Bureau. Nothing is perfect and many of the changes could go further, but improvements were

**President's Message - Continued on Page 3**

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# ASK LAURA

Steve Tjosvold, Farm Advisor, Environmental Horticulture, UCCE

## What is the UC Master Gardener Program?

### Q: What is the UC Master Gardener Program?

The UC Master Gardener program was started in 1981 to extend research-based knowledge and information on horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to home gardeners of California. The local program was formed in 1995 to provide home gardening education in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. Master Gardeners have provided thousands of hours of educational services to local gardeners through the problem-solving "hotline", public information booths, community and school gardens, and various horticultural workshops and classes.

### Q: How do I get a gardening or home pest control question answered?

The Master Gardener hotline is located at the UCCE Watsonville office. Master Gardeners are ready to answer your questions Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9 AM to noon. Call 763-8007 or stop by with a sample of your gardening problem or example of the pest. You can also look

for local educational events at the Master Gardener website too: <http://mbmg.ucanr.edu/>

### Q: How do I become a Master Gardener?

Applicants must successfully complete a comprehensive training program on horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices. Class topics include botany, composting, integrated pest management (IPM), soils, water management, entomology, plant pathology, fruit and ornamental tree culture and sustainable landscape practices. UC Master Gardeners commit to volunteer at least 50 hours of volunteer work on approved programs during the first year as a Master Gardener, and then 25 hours per year thereafter. Also, they complete 12 hours of continuing education in horticulture each year. Training occurs every 2 years on even years. The training beginning in January 2016 is full, but you can always put your name on the list for 2018!

## President's Message - Continued from Page 2

made that should help agriculture to maintain viability in Santa Cruz County.

The county has met resistance from those concerned about potential for increased development, traffic, water use, insufficient infrastructure and other aspects. Those are real issues.

For Ag, however, modernizing some of the codes will clarify many compatible uses and proven standards for events and

educational tours that have become more popular in recent years. These are small steps in the right direction and Farm Bureau has been supportive of those positive steps.

Not to be overlooked is the effort put forth by the county, their willingness to make positive changes in the codes and our current Board of Supervisors that initiated the Economic Vitality Study.

# THE WATER NANNY

*"Agriculture, the Original Green"*

## Godzilla Preparedness

*"A few years ago everybody was saying we must have more leisure, everyone's working too much. Now that everybody's got more leisure time they are complaining they are unemployed. People don't seem to make up their minds what they want."*  
Prince Phillip.

If El Niño arrives as predicted we may say the same thing about the drought.

The popular press screams with headlines of the predicted 2015-16 El Niño induced monster rain storms. The *LA Times* prophesizes a Godzilla El Niño. Meteorologists have discovered adjectives; the ridiculous resilient ridge of high pressure prevented storms from reaching our coast last winter, while the eastern Pacific (the ocean off our western coast) has been invaded by the Blob of warm water. So what should we expect, and how do you prepare for Godzilla?



John Steinbeck wrote that droughts were always followed by floods. The last major drought in 1987-1992 was followed by the Pajaro River flood in 1995 and torrential rain caused landslides in 1998, a year when we received 200% of our usual rain. There were prior El Niño winter seasons in 1982-83 (188 % average rainfall), 1957-58 (165%), 1940-41 (162%) and 1915-16 (119%). So how did we do then? The Pajaro River flooded near Watsonville in both 1915 and 1916. The San Lorenzo flooded twice in 1940 and 1941. In 1958 there were floods in February and in April; the Salinas, Carmel Valley and San Lorenzo rivers all flooded. The period from January to April of 1982 was also a gully washer with 10 people killed at Love Creek, the relatively new county building on Ocean Street flooded, the Soquel Avenue Bridge collapsed into the San Lorenzo and extensive flooding in the upper Pajaro River. Seems to be a trend here.

What about the winter of 2015-16? We have done little to prepare. The Pajaro and Salinas river channels are choked with trees and brush. The river mouth is blocked with acres of sand. Just think, a big storm could plug up the San Lorenzo with abandoned homeless encampments alone. Let's not

make things worse with sediment and drip tape washing off of our farms to block culverts and flood local roads. We can anticipate the deluge this winter.

The Monterey County RCD last year published a *Farming Runoff Guide* ([http://www.rcdmonterey.org/pdf/RCDMC%20Hillslope%20Guide-rvsvd%202.11.14%20\(for%20web\).pdf](http://www.rcdmonterey.org/pdf/RCDMC%20Hillslope%20Guide-rvsvd%202.11.14%20(for%20web).pdf)), just in time to prepare for Godzilla. Great ideas, at little cost, even a savings if you count all the dirt not lost. For example, plant the anchor row area between raspberry hoop houses with barley. Seed farm roads and install vegetated filter strips. If you farm on a slope install sediment and storm water control basins.



For a real trifecta look at research by Michael Cahn, Richard Smith et. al on *Low Residue Cover Crops for Winter Fallow Fields* (<http://awqa.org/wp-content/toolkits/Other/11winter%20cover%20crops%20newsletter%20article%20FINAL.pdf>). Turns out a cover crop of rye or triticale reduces sediment loss by 94% to 99% compared to a bare field. It can reduce nitrate losses by up to 92%. Best of all, even planting grass in furrows, reduces total water runoff. Less runoff means more water percolating into our dehydrated aquifer. With a full field cover crop only 3% to 9% of rainfall runs off your farm compared to 48% for a bare field.

As possibly Teddy Roosevelt said: *"The best thing to do is the right thing, the next best is the wrong thing, the worse is to do nothing."*



# FAVORITE RECIPES

## “Best of Show” 2015 Apple Pie Baking Contest

**Maggie Kasunich, Watsonville**

### Crust:

2 1/2 cups flour  
2 sticks unsalted butter chilled  
1 teaspoon salt  
4 to 6 tablespoons ice water  
Refrigerate for one hour

### Filling:

6 – 8 tart apples (I use Jonagolds), peeled and sliced  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon of cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons flour

Mix crust ingredients with pastry blender, add water, one tablespoon at a time, until dough just holds together. Roll out on floured surface. Line pie pan, fill with apples. Rub top crust with milk and sugar (approximately 2 tablespoons milk, sugar to taste). Bake at 450° for 10 minutes, then 350° for 50 minutes until apples are soft.



2015 Best of Show  
Maggie Kasunich

**And the winners are: Maggie Kasunich, Best of Show**

|     | Youth Division              | Adult Division             | Masters Division               |
|-----|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1st | Jordan Biddle<br>Felton     | Monica Corey<br>Aptos      | Maggie Kasunich<br>Watsonville |
| 2nd | Bridgett Titus<br>Aptos     | Jennica Leys<br>Santa Cruz | Tim Vetterli<br>Soquel         |
| 3rd | Sofia Mendoza<br>Santa Cruz | Mary Todd<br>Aptos         | Tyler Kasunich<br>Watsonville  |



2015 Apple Pie Judges (L-R) Jimmy Dutra, Shaz Lint,  
Stacy Philpott, Jimmy Panetta



Thank You 2015 Apple Pie Baking Contest Sponsors



## Consequences of Groundwater Depletion

Governor Brown signed the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Act into law last fall (2014) and it became effective on January 1st of this year. California is the last western state to have groundwater legislation, in fact, this law is the most significant act since the 1914 Water Rights Law in California. The California Water Foundation prepared a report which was released in May 2014, showing 2012-13 groundwater depletion in California exceeding eight million acre feet per year!

Approximately 90% of the water used for irrigated agriculture in Santa Cruz County comes from groundwater supplies unlike many other areas of the state that rely on surface water as well or as their primary source of water. The Pajaro Valley groundwater aquifer in South Santa Cruz County and North Monterey County has a 12,000 acre foot/year deficient. This is an area with over a \$900-million annual farm revenue.

There are some real consequences and damaging effects associated with the lowering of groundwater levels by user rates greater than what can be replenished naturally and/or by conservation/recharge practices. Some of the more profound effects include: permanent loss of water for agriculture and other uses; degraded water quality; increased costs of water through higher energy/pumping costs; ground subsidence and related damages to wells and infrastructure; seawater intrusion polluting groundwater supplies;

negative impacts on local and state agricultural economy; stream flow depletion; impacts on water rights and eco systems; increased coastal and inland flooding and; reduced conveyance capacity of water delivery systems.

The Pajaro Valley Community Water Dialogue is helping to prevent and/or reduce the effects of groundwater depletion in the Pajaro Valley. To learn more visit: [www.communitywaterdialogue.org](http://www.communitywaterdialogue.org).



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## Interpreting the Legislature Using the Dictionary, Google and COCA



**A**n August, 2015 Utah Supreme Court case decided discusses whether a judge can rely on information other than a dictionary to interpret words in a statute. One important role of courts is to say what words in laws mean. In *Utah v Rasabout*, the

Utah Supreme Court had to define the word "discharge." A criminal defendant fired twelve shots from a semi-automatic pistol at a rival gang member. He was charged with twelve counts of the crime of unlawful discharge of a firearm.

The Utah Supreme Court had to decide whether twelve shots meant twelve discharges and therefore twelve crimes were committed or whether the twelve shots were really only one "discharge" and therefore only one crime was committed. Twelve crimes would be punished more than one.

Relying on the dictionary interpretation of the word "discharge", a majority of the Utah Supreme Court found that each of the twelve shots was a discharge, that is, twelve crimes occurred, not one, and twelve punishments should be imposed, not one.

But one of the Utah judges, a former law professor, wrote a thirty page concurring opinion reached the same conclusion but argued the majority's choice of definitions of the word discharge was "linguistic intuition". He criticized the majority use of what he called unsupported "intuition" and argued the majority should have acknowledged they relied on intuition and therefore should double check their "intuition" against other publicly available sources for determining the meaning of a word or phrase used in a statute.

This one Judge looked at two additional sources to double check the definition of "intuition": (1) Google News" and (2) the Corpus of Contemporary American English" (COCA)

The Judge acknowledged that the "Google News" search was flawed if used alone because, among other things, modifiers or other terms searched with the word or phrase to be defined could alter the result and make the outcome unreliable. Also, Google News results rely on underlying

documents which are unknown to the Court and Google's search algorithm itself is also unknown to the Court. He found fault with this. So the Judge recommended a COCA search also be conducted.

COCA is a database maintained by a linguistics professor at Brigham Young University in Utah. It may be the largest collection of English in the world with 410 million words. The Judge explained some advantages of COCA over Google and wrote that an analysis of COCA confirmed the Court's interpretation of "discharge" on the basis of a "transparent database that is publicly available, created by linguists and subject to replication by anyone seeking to confirm or reject the interpretation."

The rest of the Court argued against using anything more than the dictionary and said that judges are not expert linguists and therefore may be unable to engage in a proper linguistic analysis. The other judges also said that such linguistics searches placed too great a burden on the Court. Use of linguistics might require "dueling linguistics experts in each case". They thought this would be costly and time-consuming.

Could these arguments arise in California where there are difficult questions of complicated statutory construction? It seems likely. And if so, California courts may be challenged in the future to look beyond the dictionary for statutory interpretation. This is especially true here, the home of Google.



### *Smile!*

Haven't verified this on Snopes but it sounds legit. A recent study found that women who carry a little extra weight live longer than the men who mention it.



# FROM THE AG COMMISSIONER

By Mary Lou Nicoletti, Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner

## Pests in Santa Clara County



**T**here are currently two insect pests of interest in neighboring Santa Clara County, and we want to keep them there, out of our county! One is the Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF), a pest of great concern to the agricultural industry. The larvae of fruit flies

can damage most of the fruits and vegetables grown in California. Smuggled and/or illegally imported fruit is the most common pathway entry of fruit flies into California. Two flies were trapped this summer, resulting in a quarantine of approximately 84 square miles in the Cupertino area; the movement of host commodities is restricted from the quarantined area. In addition, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) employs a male attractant technique in a 1.5 mile radius around each fly find site to eradicate infestations of these fruit flies. About 600 gel-like "bait stations" per square mile are applied to utility poles and street trees on public right of ways. The bait stations contain a powerful male attractant pheromone along with a small amount of pesticide to kill the male flies. In the absence of males, the females cannot reproduce and the infestation is eliminated. The attractant is very specific to this group of flies; other insects, such as butterflies and bees are not harmed because they are not attracted to the lure. Part of the quarantine is just across the summit area from Santa Cruz County. There are specific requirements for movement of commodities. For example, there are 20 vineyards within the quarantined area. In order for grapes to move from those vineyards into our county, both the vineyard and receiver must follow the requirements of Compliance Agreements with the Agricultural Commissioners. Our pest detection trappers are aware of the quarantine, and take extra care when inspecting traps near the border with Santa Clara County. Other staff members inspect parcels at points of entry such as Federal Express and UPS to ensure only properly inspected and certified fruit is permitted entry into the county.

The other pest found recently in Santa Clara County is the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP). Multiple psyllids were found near the city of San Jose, resulting in a quarantine of 180 square


miles. The ACP is an invasive species of grave concern because it can carry the disease huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening. All citrus and closely related species are susceptible hosts for both the insect and the disease. There is no cure once a tree becomes infected-- the diseased tree will decline in health and produce bitter, misshaped fruit until it dies. The psyllid has been found in many counties in the southern part of the state; these areas are under quarantine. The disease HLB thus far has only been found in Los Angeles County. It was detected in 2012 on a single residential property in Hacienda Heights. In July and August of this year, ten trees on seven properties were found positive for HLB in a San Gabriel neighborhood about ten miles away. Infected trees are removed to prevent spread of the disease to other trees. So far the disease has been limited in California to residential neighborhoods, and has not been found in commercial citrus. This plant disease does not affect human health. But it is of grave concern for backyard citrus trees, as well as the California citrus industry, valued at two billion dollars. Since the HLB disease was discovered in Florida in 2005, it has spread to all citrus growing areas in that state, shrinking land planted to citrus by about one third. The disease has caused nearly three billion dollars in damage to the citrus industry in Florida. Here in California, officials perform inspections and in some areas, are also releasing a biological control agent in affected neighborhoods. The tiny stingless wasp called *Tamarixia* is a natural predator of the Asian Citrus Psyllid in other parts of the world.



"See the world like a big wardrobe. Everybody has his own costume. There is only one that fits you perfectly."

*George Harris, Don't Wait For Your Life To Start*

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# Nationwide Safety Tips

## Reduce Your Wildfire Risk: Create Defensible Space

As many as **90% of wildfires are caused by humans** – leaving campfires unattended, discarding cigarettes carelessly or other negligent acts. Safeguard your home from wildfires by fireescaping your property. Learn what precautions to take within each of the three defensible zones around your property, as well as how to create an ember-resistant home.

### KNOW YOUR ZONES



- Choose noncombustible materials, such as rock or gravel. For walkways, use brick or concrete.
- For vegetation, select low-growing plants, like irrigated flowers, or a lawn.
- Never store firewood, lumber or other combustibles under an attached deck.
- Remove shrubs from beneath trees. Space trees at least 10 feet from each other; more on sloping areas. Clear dead vegetation and trim branches overhanging your home. Keep plants healthy.
- Move RVs/trailers into the 30- to 100-foot zone or create a defensible space around each. Create defensible space around each structure as well.
- Remove dead trees, shrubs and other dry vegetation.
- Thin and separate trees and shrubs. Trim trees and remove shrubs to eliminate ladder fuels under trees. Branch removal from the trunk should not exceed more than 1/3 of tree height.
- Extend zone to 150-200 feet if your home is near or atop a steep slope.

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**OCTOBER, 2015**  
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Commission

**SATURDAY - OCTOBER 24**  
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**THURSDAY - OCTOBER 29**  
Board of Directors' meeting

**FRIDAY - OCTOBER 30**  
Focus Agriculture, Session 9  
and Graduation

**SUNDAY - NOVEMBER 1**  
Daylight Saving Time Ends

**TUESDAY - NOVEMBER 3**  
Election Day

**WEDNESDAY - NOVEMBER 4**

- Legislative Committee meeting
- Executive Committee meeting
- Membership Committee meeting

**THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 5**  
Annual Directors' Dinner

**MONDAY - NOVEMBER 9**  
Public Relations & Information  
Committee meeting


**WEDNESDAY - NOVEMBER 11**  
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meeting

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