Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

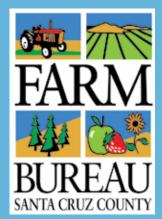
SEPTEMBER 2025 VOLUME 49, ISSUE 9

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

> Mary Walter, Editor Jess Brown, Managing Editor

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President's Message:

County Fairs

"The fair is not

nostalgia, it is

continuity."



Dennis Webb, President

ounty fairs have long been tied to agriculture in the United States. The first one on record was in 1811 in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, where farmers gathered to

compare livestock and share methods. By the mid-1800s, fairs had spread westward, becoming annual showcases for crops, animals, and rural skills. They were designed not just as entertainment but as practical education for farmers and a chance to raise the profile of agriculture in their communities.

California embraced the model quickly. The State Fair was launched in 1854 in San Francisco, and soon counties followed suit. El Dorado held its first fair in 1859. Ventura's began in the 1870s. These gatherings gave each region a place to display its distinctive agriculture.

Santa Cruz County held its first fair in the late 1880s, initially a mix of horse shows and farm exhibitions organized by the 14th

District Agricultural Association. In 1941 the fair settled at its current Watsonville location. Over the years, the event has expanded alongside the county's farming economy. Strawberry fields, apple orchards, eggs, veggies, cut

flowers, and timber have all had their place on the fairgrounds.

Today the Santa Cruz County Fair continues this tradition. It remains one

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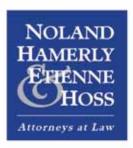
FARM BUREAU

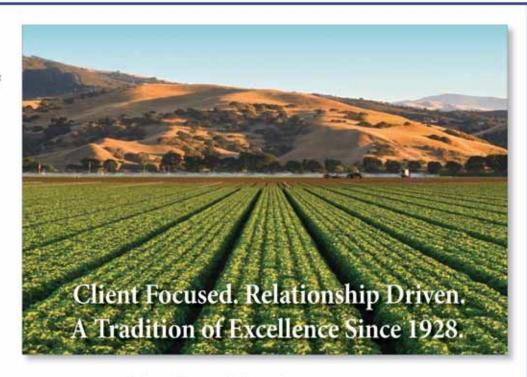


Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau CULTURE

- The SCCFB is firm in its COMMITMENT to provide responsive and effective services to its members, and to be a positive and integral part of the broader community through collaboration, education and social interaction.
- The SCCFB grows on a foundation of TRUST, bringing expertise, experience and good faith action to bear on topics related to agriculture, which can be relied upon by farmers, the agricultural community, and the community at large.
- The SCCFB honors and keeps its TRADITION of service to the diverse people, commodities and production systems that comprise the unique and complex agriculture community in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

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Apple Pie Baking Contest at the Santa Cruz County Fair and the The Opening Day Barbecue at the Santa Cruz County Fair Wednesday, September 10th Be there or miss out on the fun!!

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ASK BAILEY

Bailey Smith-Helman, Community Education Specialist, Climate Smart Agriculture, UCCE

Proposition 4 Climate Bond and Funding for Climate-Smart Agriculture

I keep hearing about a \$10 billion Climate Bond? How and when can I access these funds?

In November 2024, Californians voted to approve a Proposition 4,

a **\$10** billion Climate Resilience **Bond**, to support a variety of projects to promote climate resiliency, safe drinking water, and wildfire prevention. These funds will help farmers, ranchers, and other land managers prepare for changing weather patterns, drought, and fire.

The Bond sets aside almost \$300 million for Climate Smart, Sustainable, and Resilient Farms, Ranches, and Working Lands, and local food systems. Farmers and ranchers can access this funding through a variety of programs, including the Healthy Soils Program (HSP) and the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP). These popular programs will be administered by regional block grant organizations, while other programs will be administered statewide. The Bond also authorizes new programs for farmers' market infrastructure, including mobile farmers' market vehicles, refrigeration, food preparation facilities, wireless point of sale terminals, and all-weather infrastructure for market stalls. Here's a breakdown of the funding:

\$65 million for soil health and carbon sequestration – mainly CDFA's Healthy Soils Program (HSP)

Provides direct funding to farmers

to implement soil health practices like composting, cover cropping, nutrient management, and planting hedgerows.

\$40 million for the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP)

Provides direct funding to farmers and ranchers to improve energy and irrigation efficiency on farms. This includes switching from sprinkler to drip irrigation, utilizing solar energy to power pumps, and other components to improve irrigation system efficiency.

\$20 million for farmer grants that provide year-round farmers market infrastructure.

\$15 million for farmer equipmentsharing programs and cooperatives that will be available statewide.

\$30 million for a new program to protect farmland and improve land access for beginning farmers.

Farmers and ranchers interested in applying for these programs can learn more at the California Natural Resource Agency's **Bond Accountability site** to receive updates on the Climate Bond. You can also contact your local Resource Conservation District or a University of California Agriculture and Natural Resource community education specialist for assistance with future grants https://ciwr.ucanr.edu/Programs/ClimateSmartAg/TechnicalAssistanceProviders/index.cfm.

Strange

But Impossibly True!

The lighter was invented before the match. In 1823, a German chemist created the world's first lighter. Dobereiner's lamp, which was used in industrial settings. It wasn't until three years later that an English chemist made the first friction match.

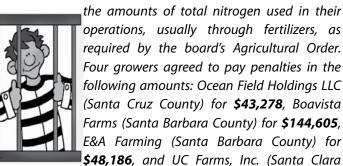
Excerpts from the Readers Digest

True Fines and Penalties

o life is great because the Strawberry market didn't dive, as is usual, in July and August, and you still have employees harvesting lettuce (we won't even talk about the September Apple harvest). But dangers lurk all about, mostly from our friends in the government.

Now, at first, your Nanny was going to write about the increased reporting requirements mandated by the Water Board for Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) and Irrigation and Nutrient Management Plan (INMP). This is very important, and if you don't report your 2025 results by early next year, you too could become an evil, and delinquent, *Discharger*. However, it seems much more noteworthy to outline what could happen if you fail to report. From the Water Board's police blotter:

"The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board has issued penalties against four growers for failing to report



County) for **\$42,348**. Each grower failed to comply with the requirement to submit a total nitrogen applied report for a ranch by the due date, despite numerous reminders and offers of assistance from the board's Irrigated Lands Program staff."

All four farms failed to follow the first rule of regulation: they never responded to the phone calls, texts, emails, letters and certified letters sent by the Water Board over several years after failing to report their TNA in March, 2022. This then brings down the wrath of the Water Board when they finally corner the farmer, and, err, compel them to enter into a Stipulated Order confessing their intransigence, and pay big bucks to the *Waste Discharge Permit Fund*. The prosecutorial staff calculates the significantly large fine using pages of formula to make it fair. For example, Ocean Field paid \$289/ac, Boavista Farms' three farms were fined \$266/acre, while

UC Farms with only 22 acres paid \$1,925/ac.

The Prosecution Team determines the fines with a complex formula including: 1) up to \$1,000 per day of violation, 2) potential for harm and deviation from requirement, 3) degree of culpability, 4) cooperation, and 5) multiple day violation, to determine a base liability (i.e. 44 days x .055 x \$1,000 x 1.3 x 1.0 x 1.3). One factor is the ability to pay based on the crop type. This is interesting as it has no basis in reality. UC Farms grows 22 acres of beans,



with a theoretical market value of \$4,899 per acre, so a fine of \$1,925/ac seems appropriate, given that beans are soooo profitable.

The above true crime stories were for failure to report the 2021TNA. Now growers in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys need to report the 2025 TNA and INMP before March, 2026, or the same could happen to you. You will have to report nitrogen applied by acre, irrigation volume, each crop type and harvest weight, and calculate how much nitrogen left the field at harvest. The cost of calculations is significant, however, since it is more complex the formula used to calculate liability will also rise exponentially if the report is late. On the other hand, "Life is short, Break the Rules. Forgive quickly, Kiss slowly. Love truly. Laugh uncontrollably. And never regret ANYTHING that makes you smile." (Mark Twain)



FAVORITE RECIPES

Zucchini - Spinach Soup

Zucchini and spinach create a palate-pleasing combination. Serve this soup either warm or cold with a good crusty french bread or toast. This recipe was given to me by a friend and it was declared a winner. It makes 7 cups or 6 servings.

3 zucchini 3 potatoes, cubed

1 bunch spinach 6 cups vegetable broth

2 Tablespoons oil 1 Tablespoon kosher salt

2 onions, diced 1/4 teaspoon pepper

- 1. Slice zucchini into 1/4 inch thick circles. Thoroughly wash spinach, place in salad spinner and spin dry or on towels and
- 2. Heat oil in a 3-quart saucepan. Add onions and cook for 6 to 8 minutes. Add zucchini, potatoes and vegetable broth, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 35 minutes. Add spinach, salt and pepper, and cook 5 minutes more. Place half of the soup in blender or food processor and puree. Repeat with the other half. Reheat if needed and serve.

Here is a popular method to make a savory chive butter to spread on toasted bread as an accompaniment to this soup.

- Rustic bread, sliced (such as a ciabatta, baquette or sourdough).
- Unsalted butter, softened
- Fresh chives, finely chopped
- Sea salt to taste

Prepare the chive butter: In a small bowl, combine the softened butter with the finely chopped chives and a pinch of salt. Mash with a spoon until the mixture is well blended. For best flavor, you can refrigerate the butter for at least an hour to let the flavors meld.

Toast the bread: Preheat your oven to 400°F. Place the bread slices on a baking sheet and toast for 10-12 minutes, or until golden and crispy. Alternatively, you can use a toaster or skillet. While the toast is still warm, generously spread the chive butter over each slice. Garnish with a sprinkle of extra chives or sea salt flakes and serve immediately.

President's Message Continued from page 1

of the few times when agriculture is brought forward in a county better known for beaches and redwoods. 4-H and FFA members show animals, families walk through produce exhibits, and local growers meet with the public. The Junior Livestock Auction sustains youth projects while reminding buyers that raising animals still has a home here.

The fair is not nostalgia, it is continuity. From its beginnings more than a century ago to the modern version in Watsonville, the county fair has been the intersection where farming meets the broader community. Agriculture gives the fair its content; the fair gives agriculture its visibility. That balance is what makes it endure.

Being a Member Pays Off!



Join the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau



The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau is an important voice for the Santa Cruz County and Pajaro Valley agriculture industry. Everyone is eligible to be a member and receive the many benefits and services available. By joining the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau you help support agriculture in Santa Cruz County and the Pajaro Valley.

How to Join

Go to www.cfbf.com and click on the "JOIN" button. No need to log in on this page. Go to the bottom of the page and click on NEVER BEEN A MEMBER to set up a new account.

Questions? Contact the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau sccfb@sbcglobal.net (831) 724-1356 (831) 818-1193 - Text



"I joined the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau because I wanted to become a part of the collective group of farmers in this community and support their efforts in any way I can."

Edgar Lopez JAL Berry Farms



Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

Santa Cruz County Fair

Wednesday, September 10 to Sunday, September 14, 2025 Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Annual Directors' Dinner

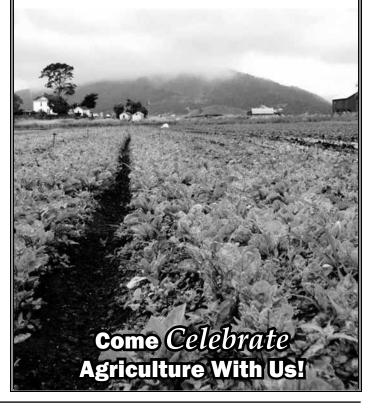
Thursday, November 6, 2025 Location to be determined

CFBF Annual Meeting

Agri-Culture

29th Annual Farm Dinner

Friday, October 10, 2025 Land Trust Little Bee Barn



Protecting Santa Cruz County Agriculture from Invasive Pests



David Sanford

n 2017, the Santa Cruz County
Agricultural Commissioner's
Office detected both European
Spongy Moth (ESM) and Asian
Spongy Moth (ASM) through our
seasonal monitoring program,
conducted in partnership with
the California Department of Food
and Agriculture (CDFA). These pests

are serious threats to agriculture and forestry, and their detection triggered an intensive delimitation effort—placing hundreds of additional traps within a four-square-mile radius to determine the extent of the infestation.

A second ASM was found in July 2018 near the original detection site, resetting the USDA's three-year pest-free requirement. Fortunately, no additional detections have occurred since then, but this type of scenario is always a threat, and climate change coupled with the commercial movement of plant material both nationally and internationally increases the risks of invasive pests finding ways into our county.

Why does this matter to our agricultural industry and our community as a whole?

- Invasive agricultural pests can precipitate quarantines which limit and restrict the commercial movement ag commodities. (Currently, for example, there is a quarantine area of over 100 square miles in Santa Clara County due to recent detections of Mediterranean fruit fly near San Jose.)
- Often, they can move and spread quickly, making containment extremely difficult. (Asian Spongy Moth, for example, can fly up to 25 miles per day.)
- If established, these pests could cause severe economic damage to crops, trees, and the broader agricultural economy.

Another pest of growing concern is the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF), first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014, it has now spread across the eastern U.S. to 18 states. Though not yet found in California, CDFA and County Agricultural Commissioners are preparing for its potential arrival.

What can you do to help mitigate the risk of invasive agricultural pests?

- Inspect incoming shipments of plants, nursery stock, and equipment—especially from out of state.
- Avoid moving outdoor items (e.g., furniture, tools, pallets) from infested areas without inspection.
- Report anything unusual—egg masses, larvae, or adult insects—to our office immediately.
- Educate yourself and people you know about pest identification and best practices for biosecurity.

With warming temperatures and increased movement of goods, the risk of pest introduction is rising. Santa Cruz County's climate is especially hospitable to many invasive species, making early detection and prevention essential.

Together—with your vigilance and our monitoring—we can protect our crops, our economy, and our environment.

You Are Invited to Join



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*Must be a valid member of Farm Bureau for 30 days. A valid member email address is required for eligibility

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"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas A. Edison

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You're Invited to the 29th Annual Farm Dinner

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29th Annual Farm Dinner

Friday, October 10, 2025



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5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Guest Reservations: \$150 per person Reserve now! This event sells out early!

Reservations are available through:

www.eventbrite.com - search for 29th Annual Farm Dinner in Watsonville or contact

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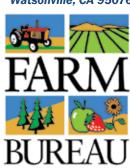




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CALENDAR

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 4
Policy& Resource
Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - SEPT. 10 - 14
Santa Cruz County Fair

WEDNESDAY SEPT. 10 Opening Day Barbeque

WEDNESDAY - SEPT. 10
Apple Pie Baking Contest

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 25
Board of Directors' meeting

FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 26
Focus Agriculture, Session 8

THURSDAY - OCTOBER 2
Policy & Resource
Committee meeting

SATURDAY - OCTOBER 10 Agri-Culture's Farm Dinner

FRIDAY - OCTOBER 24
Focus Agriculture, Session 9

THURSDAY - OCTOBER 30
Board of Directors' meeting



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