

# Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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

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## 47th Annual Pie Baking Contest



2024 Apple Pie Baking Contest Winner, Julie Titus of Aptos. Insert is Keara McNutt, 3rd Place winner of the Youth Division. See more fair coverage on page 8 and 9.

### 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.



# President's Message

## October, Halloween and Brussels Sprouts



Dennis Webb, President

It's October, and Halloween is here. My kids are looking forward to trick-or-treating, which for me always brings back memories of the Halloweens I experienced growing up in Davenport. Davenport is a small town and was always fun to trick-or-treat in as a kid because most of the doors we knocked on were answered by friends and the families of our classmates.

Of all homes we would visit, one on Ocean Street in Davenport always comes to the front of my mind when I think of my childhood Halloweens. That's because every year, the residents of this house would give trick-or-treaters Brussels sprouts instead of candy. Brussels sprouts are obviously a healthier option

than Halloween candy. As a kid trick-or-treating, I don't think I ever appreciated this. But I didn't think it was all that strange, since sprouts were always around me when I was growing up, especially in the fall. The coast between Santa Cruz in Davenport is known as a major Brussels sprout growing region. This was and still is a major industry in Davenport and the far westside of Santa Cruz. This week, I'll share with readers my favorite way to use Santa Cruz County Brussels sprouts:

[See Recipe on Page 9](#)



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**Congratulations to Julie Titus of Aptos, winner of the Apple Pie Baking Contest! Thank you to all who participated in this year's competition.**

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# ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, UCCE,  
Santa Cruz County

## Major Issues in California Strawberry Industry

**Q.** In your view, what are the major issues going forward in the California strawberry industry and are there any ways to address them?

**A.** Thank you for asking this question. The California strawberry industry faces a multitude of serious challenges currently which are briefly outlined below, but since at the same time our fruit enjoys a real demand throughout the world at the same time it brings economic thriving to our communities these things need to be figured out.

**Soil Disease:** The move away from methyl bromide preplant soil fumigation has been accompanied by the emergence of two soil diseases, Fusarium wilt and Macrophomina crown rot that have joined the diseases already here in reducing fruit yield, if not outright killing the plants. While there is resistance in some strawberry varieties to some of these diseases, these aren't necessarily the varieties that consumers find attractive. Crop rotation is another traditional option for managing soil disease, but this hasn't met a lot of success in our intensely farmed soils. Culture in sterile substrate is being tried by some growers, but it is very expensive.

**Labor:** Hand picking is for the foreseeable future the only way to harvest strawberries, but the cost of labor has been rising a lot, so much in some cases that it is impossible for a berry producing operation to continue. There are options being applied by growers, for example stretching their labor force by using harvest assists, retaining workers by offering season end bonuses or bringing in guest workers.

Substituting machines for labor has resulted in real reductions in the need for human labor in many crops such as corn, beans, cotton and rice, but our soft berry crops truly do represent the last mile for mechanization and the delicate manipulation of the human hand continues to defy replication by a machine.

**Regulation:** While most regulation is well intentioned in protecting or furthering some public good such as water and air quality, the amount of work and complexity of compliance in many cases represents a burden that only larger companies with more resources are able to bear economically. One thing that I am keeping a close watch on is the Ag Order 4.0, which could limit the amount of nitrogen, and subsequently potential fruit yield, available to strawberry growers in a season.

**Cold conditioning of transplants:** Weather patterns being what they are, there is considerable fretting during the times that cold in the plant production areas of northern California doesn't seem sufficient. How much cold strawberry transplants actually need is a question that is not fully answerable at this time, but one which I have been addressing over the past year and along the way finding that things are not always what they seem to be.

The above has been a discussion of the challenges currently facing the California strawberry industry. For questions or comments regarding this subject or any other of the berry industry of the Central Coast, please feel free to contact [mpbolda@ucan.edu](mailto:mpbolda@ucan.edu). ■

# THE WATER NANNY

## Halloween Spirits

Some time ago, well actually prior to 1570 when the church established All Saints' Day, Halloween was the Celtic festival of Samhain. This marked the day when daylight dimmed and nights become longer. On the day of Samhain people could see the gods, and the gods played tricks on mortals, causing great danger, fear and supernatural episodes. We now celebrate Halloween as a time of treats, but the gods still arise to trick, even modern folk.

These tricks seldom result in anyone burning at the stake, now with our overweight celestial bureaucracy, the tricks are hidden in long documents and excessive delays. You may have heard that this year, 2024, marks the commencement of work on the Pajaro levee reconstruction; heard is the verb as seen is not. The Pajaro River Risk Management Project, a \$599+ million program to reduce flooding on the Pajaro River, Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks. Like many infant projects, the goal is to start small and work into more difficult construction in a few years. Let's start with Corralitos Creek between Green Valley and East Lake, up to the bridge. Then on to Salsipuedes up to the Pajaro, with a grand finale, years' long reconstruction of the Pajaro River levees, possibly by 2027. This shouldn't be a problem, as almost no engineers stand behind the flood repairs last year, hope for several mild winters.



So, lets discuss Corralitos, Reach 6, and Salsipuedes Creeks, Reach 5, as only the gods could divine how Reaches 1 – 4, the Pajaro River levees, will be rebuilt.

Reach 6 includes new levees, flood walls and relocation of levees onto farm land, with the loss of an apartment building, a residence and a restaurant. This includes multiple farms along Corralitos Creek, with more along Salsipuedes. Setbacks are between 50' and 75' over 1.8 miles on each side of the creek. Some land will be acquired for construction staging as well, regrettably prime farm land will be lost. The Project assumes that all farm land subject to setbacks and residential relocations will be acquired prior to commencement. Like the Project, your Nanny will assume this has happened, as the fates would never delay government construction.

Maybe, starting in 2025-26 work will begin on Salsipuedes with new floodwalls, that are giant steel barriers placed on top of the existing levee between East Lake and the Lakeview, a new levee on the west side of the creek, including new floodwalls adjacent to the Pajaro Village residential areas This is about three time longer than Reach 6, although the floodwalls don't require property condemnation, the west side levee will.



Between Reach 6 and 5 is the Caltrans 152 East Lake bridge. The Project states: "It is our understanding that Highway 152 will need to be raised in order to provide the proposed flood risk reduction for Reach 6. Information on how the bridge is to be raised through Caltrans has yet to be provided." Caltrans has a slightly different understanding: "Rehabilitate or replace Salsipuedes bridge" (same bridge) to "include complete streets elements and be transformative so a long time is being utilized". Optimistic commencement on a new bridge, 2031. Maybe the deities have cast a puckish spell over rebuilding the bridge, and effective flood control. *"There are three things that I've learned never to discuss with people: religion, politics and the Great Pumpkin."* (Linus) ■

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## Strange But Impossibly True!

Nutella was invented for chocolate lovers. A f t e r World War II, chocolate supplies were low in Italy. Pietro Ferrero knew Italians would still want their chocolate fix. so he came up with a way to stretch what he had by creating a sweet paste made of sugar, hazelnuts, and just a little cocoa.

Excerpts from the Readers Digest



# FAVORITE RECIPES

## “Best of Show” Apple Pie by Julie Titus

### APPLE PIE

#### Pie Crust

4 cups flour  
1 1/2 tsp salt  
1 3/4 cups shortening  
cut into pieces



1 Tbs Vinegar  
1 Tbs sugar  
1 egg  
1/2 cup cold water

Mix together flour sugar and salt. Cut in shortening until crumbly. Beat water, egg, and vinegar together. Add to flour until moistened. Divide into 4 round disc and wrap with wax paper. chill at least 30 min.

#### Pie Filling

7 cups of Apples  
1 cup Sugar  
2 tsp cinnamon

2 tbsp flour  
Dash of vanilla  
2 tbsp butter  
Sprinkle of salt

Mix together sugar, cinnamon and flour. Mix with apples add a dash of vanilla and mix. Pour in pastry lined 9" pie plate. Dot with butter, cover with top crust. Cut Slits and sprinkle with sugar. Bake 15 min at 425 degrees, then reduce to 375 degrees for 20 min. Finish at 350 degrees until apples feel soft when poked with a knife, about 15-20 min.



# "Agriculture, the Original Green"

## BECOME A FARM BUREAU MEMBER

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](http://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](mailto:sccfb@sbcglobal.net)  
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## Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

### Annual Directors' Dinner

Thursday, November 7, 2024  
Location to be determined

### CFBF Annual Meeting

Saturday, December 7 to Tuesday, December 10, 2024  
Monterey Conference Center & Monterey Marriott



## Come Celebrate Agriculture With Us!

### 28th Annual Farm Dinner

Friday, October 18, 2024  
Land Trust Little Bee Barn

## I support the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau because:



"The Farm Bureau is dedicated to establishing partnerships, such as with Second Harvest Food Bank, to ensure that the entire community thrives through healthy nourishment."

Erica Padilla-Chavez, CEO,  
Second Harvest Food Bank

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## Bird Flu in California Livestock Operations and Public Health



David Sanford

Over the last two months, there has been an increased awareness and concern among public health officials with respect to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza virus (HPAI), otherwise known as bird flu, or technically referred to as the H5N1 virus. With numerous

finds among commercial chicken flocks in multiple counties in California since last year, H5N1 has continued to cause significant issues for livestock producers in the state. Of additional concern is the more recent determination that the virus has crossed over to infect dairy cows and is now impacting California dairy operations. On August 30, 2024, the virus was detected in California dairy cows, and as of mid-September seventeen commercial dairy herds in the state have had animals test positive for H5N1, prompting quarantines and restrictions on how those operations can conduct business.

The highest concern for public health officials is the potential for the bird flu virus to infect people. As of September 15, 2024, there have been 14 reported cases in the U.S. of H5N1 occurring in humans from this current outbreak. Of these, ten were suspected to be the result of workers being exposed to infected poultry, and four from exposure to infected dairy cows. So far, these infections have occurred in Colorado, Missouri, Michigan, and Texas, not yet in California, although our state's public health officials are remaining vigilant and planning emergency response protocols in the event of the occurrence of human cases.

Santa Cruz County is not a large livestock/dairy producer, so the chances for direct impacts to (or from) this industry in our county are relatively low. That being said, it is still important to maintain awareness as to the implications of the H5N1 virus to our farming community and the public at large. There are some excellent sources of current information on the status of H5N1 in the state should you want to learn more about this ongoing situation. With respect to farm animals/livestock, CDFA (California Department of Food and Agriculture) in partnership with USDA (United States

Department of Agriculture) are working together to address response actions in the state. CDFA's Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division ([www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/](http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/)) is a central website to access information on the virus in California livestock. For more regarding human cases, transmission, and symptoms of the H5N1 virus, CDPH (California Department of Public Health) is regularly updating the website with current news and information ([www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)). ■

**FOOD FOR  
THOUGHT**

**"Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that count"**

**Winston S. Churchill**



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**Have a happy  
and safe  
Halloween**



# SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR 2024 APPLE PIE BAKING CONTEST



47th Annual Apple Pie Baking Contest (L-R) London Johnson, 2nd Place winner, Adult Division; Laura Rider, Chairperson; Judges Jake Mann, Judie Block, Erica Padilla-Chavez and David Sanford

The 47th Apple Pie Baking Contest was held at the Santa Cruz County Fair on Wednesday, September 11th. There were over 50 apple pie entries and winners were selected for each of the three divisions, Youth, Adult and Masters. **Julie Titus**, of Aptos, took the top overall prize by winning “Best of Show”. The Apple Pie Contest judges are different every year. This year’s judges were **Erica Padilla-Chavez**, CEO, Second Harvest Food Bank; **Jake Mann**, Five Mile Orchards; **Judie Block**, reporter, Times Publishing Group; and, **David Sanford**, Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner.

The Pajaro Valley apple producers, growers and pie lovers sponsor the annual event in cooperation with the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. **Laura Rider**, Farm Bureau member, is the chairperson for this very popular opening day event.

## 47th Annual Apple Pie Baking Contest Winners by Division

	<u>YOUTH DIVISION</u>	<u>ADULT DIVISION</u>	<u>MASTERS DIVISION</u>
1st Place	<b>Charlotte Moody</b> Watsonville	<b>Julie Titus</b> Aptos	<b>Maggie Kasunich</b> Watsonville
2nd Place	<b>Danielle Fowler</b> Royal Oaks	<b>London Johnson</b> Santa Cruz	<b>Rita Hewitt</b> Watsonville
3rd Place	<b>Keara McNutt</b> Watsonville	<b>Laura Ortiz Spiegel</b> La Selva Beach	<b>Skeeter Flores</b> Watsonville



# SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR - 2024 OPENING DAY BARBECUE & FAIR BOOTH



The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau President, Dennis Webb, mans the fair booth and talks to everyone about the benefits of the Farm Bureau!



What a great way to open the Santa Cruz County Fair. The Opening Day BBQ had a good crowd, on a beautiful day and a delicious barbecued lunch.



Thank you to the Watsonville Firefighters Association for preparing such a delicious meal!



And thank you to the WFA's dedicated volunteers for making it all happen!

## President's Message - Continued from Page 2

### Sautéed Brussels Sprouts with Bacon

#### Ingredients

- 6 slices bacon
- ½ large white onion, diced
- 30 Brussels sprouts, halved lengthwise
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions

1. Place bacon in a large skillet and cook over medium-high heat, turning occasionally, until evenly browned, about 10 minutes. Drain the bacon slices on paper towels, retaining grease in the skillet. Crumble bacon.
2. Cook and stir onion in bacon grease over medium heat until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add Brussels sprouts; cook and stir until Brussels sprouts are lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Sprinkle bacon over Brussels sprouts mixture and stir. Remove skillet from heat, transfer Brussels sprouts mixture to a serving bowl, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. ■

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# STRONGER TOGETHER

## 2024 Annual Meeting and YF&R State Conference

December 7-10, 2024

Monterey Conference Center and Monterey Marriott

Registration opens in September! Stay tuned for more details

We invite you to join us in beautiful Monterey for the 2024 California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and YF&R State Conference. This year, we celebrate our theme of "Stronger Together," highlighting the enduring value of the Farm Bureau in shaping a prosperous future for agriculture.

At this pivotal gathering, we unite to explore new opportunities, share invaluable insights, and forge lasting connections that strengthen our agricultural community. Together, we'll chart a course towards ensuring your best farm and ranch future, empowered by knowledge, collaboration, and unwavering support.

Join us as we celebrate our successes, champion our shared goals, and embark on new chapters of growth and resilience. Together, we are stronger, and together, we will continue to build a brighter future for California agriculture.

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# Between the Furrows

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## CALENDAR

**THURSDAY - OCTOBER 3**  
Policy & Resource  
Committee meeting

**FRIDAY - OCTOBER 18**  
Annual Farm Dinner

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

**FRIDAY - OCTOBER 25**  
Focus Agriculture, Class 33  
Session 9 / Graduation

**THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 7**  
Policy & Resource  
Committee meeting

**THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 7**  
Annual Directors' Dinner

**THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 28**  
Thanksgiving Observed  
Office Closed

**FRIDAY - NOVEMBER 29**  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
Office Closed

**THURSDAY - DECEMBER 5**  
Policy & Resource  
Committee meeting

**DECEMBER 7 - 10**  
California Farm Bureau  
Annual Meeting  
Monterey, CA

**WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 25**  
Christmas Day Observed  
Office Closed



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