

AGRARIAN ADVOCATE



CULTIVATING HEALTHY FARMS, FOOD, & COMMUNITIES

Berry Farmers Make New Sales

BY KARRIE THOMAS

This year, Lo Saetern and Efo Lee earned an extra \$6,000 by selling over 50 flats of strawberries through CAFF's Growers' Collaborative (GC).

Saetern and Lee, both immigrants from Laos, have grown strawberries in the Sacramento area for nearly ten years. Like many small-scale growers, from April through June the Saetern and Lee families sell their berries at small roadside stands. Sacramento residents anxiously await the strawberry season and enthusiastically frequent the farm stands that spring to life around the area. But at the peak of the season Saetern and Lee often found themselves with more berries than customers. Thanks to CAFF's Growers' Collaborative, this year was different.

"At the stand, we can't sell this much. When we have a lot to sell, the more customers the better. But there are not always enough customers at the roadside stand," said Saetern.

Most Southeast Asian growers plant older strawberry varieties like Chandler and Seascape, which are full of flavor but not easily shipped. These berries require careful post-harvest handling and just the right customers.

"We were selective about who we sold Lo and Efo's strawberries to, making sure they were able to move a large volume quickly," said GC's Penny Leff.

Farm stands are known for fresh, field-ripened produce, and Saetern and Lee were accustomed to meeting their customers' expectations by picking their berries at the peak of perfection. Selling to a wholesale market required that they learn to pick slightly less-ripe fruit so the berries would make the journey and still be able to last on the shelf for up to three days.



Efo Lee farms strawberries near Sacramento. Photo by Jenny Broome (UCCE, Sacramento).

Most of Saetern and Lee's berries went to the dining halls at the University of California at Davis or Monterey Market in Berkeley. After their first delivery, Bill Fujimoto of Monterey Market reported that they were some of the best berries he had tasted and immediately ordered more.

The Growers' Collaborative connected with Saetern and Lee through UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in Sacramento County. Farm Advisor Chuck Ingles has

Strawberries - continued on p. 11

IN THIS ISSUE



- 2 CAFF Corner
- 3 Making a Difference
- 4 Biological Farming

- 6 Community Food Systems
- 8 Capitol Report
- 10 Members & Chapters



MISSION

CAFF is building a movement of rural and urban people to foster family-scale agriculture that cares for the land, sustains local economies and promotes social justice.

MEMBERSHIP

CAFF is a nonprofit organization that relies on membership dues and donations. Become a member or donate to CAFF online at www.caff.org or by mail.

AGRARIAN ADVOCATE

The Agrarian Advocate is the quarterly publication of the Community Alliance with Family Farmers. Articles may be reproduced. Please credit CAFF for reproduced materials and send us a copy.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Judith Redmond, Guinda | President |
| George Davis, Healdsburg | Vice President |
| Diane Del Signore, Oakland | Secretary |
| David Visher, Davis | Treasurer |
| Michael Bosworth, Marysville | Erin Derden-Little, Arcata |
| Paul Hain, Tres Pinos | Keri Kimes, Santa Cruz |
| Norman Kline, Riverbank | Cindy Lashbrook, Livingston |
| Preston Maring, Oakland | Richard Molinar, Fresno |
| Stephanie Jo Meckler, LA | Pete Price, Sacramento |
| Carol Presley, Santa Cruz | Sarah Warda, Delhi |
| Stacey Sullivan, Berkeley | |
| Vicki Williams, Woodland | |
| Ex Officio: Poppy Davis, Washington D.C. | |
| Dave Runsten, Davis | |

HEADQUARTERS AT T.S. GLIDE RANCH

36355 Russell Blvd., Davis, CA 95616
 PO Box 363, Davis, CA 95617
 Phone (530)756-8518 Fax (530)756-7857
www.caff.org

FIELD STAFF

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Oakland | (510) 832-4625 |
| Firebaugh | (559) 259-1981 |
| Fresno | (559) 801-7722 |
| Humboldt | (707) 444-3255 |
| Santa Paula | (805) 933-1024 |
| Watsonville | (831) 761-8507 |

VOLUME 29, SUMMER 2008

Copyright © 2008 Community Alliance with Family Farmers



Dave Runsten, Executive Director

CAFF Corner

The Real Promise of the Growers' Collaborative

BY DAVE RUNSTEN

CAFF started the California Growers' Collaborative (GC) in 2004. Our Farm to School coordinator was bringing produce to Ventura schools in his truck, and he thought there should be a more

organized system. Today GC delivers local produce to institutional markets from a hub in Davis that serves Sacramento and Bay Area institutions, and from our Ventura hub which delivers locally and to the Los Angeles basin. Soon GC will source produce from the Fresno and Central Coast regions as well.

Public schools provided the impetus for GC. But with little money to spend on food, tiny labor budgets that limit fresh food preparation, and summers off, they are a difficult market. Since our underlying motive was to help family farmers sell more produce in local markets, we diversified our customers to include hospitals, universities, museums, corporate cafeterias, and other institutions that have more flexible budgets and year-round demand. Though current market opportunity has led us in new directions, the social mission of providing local food to schools remains vitally important. In conjunction with nutrition education, school gardens, farm field trips, and other programs that improve children's eating habits, access to fresh fruits and vegetables can help reverse the obesity epidemic.

To serve this mission, GC must be a viable distribution business. CAFF relies on sales in other markets to support activities such as delivering local produce to public schools. Other partners can claim that their purchases are in part supporting our efforts to improve our children's food.

On the flip side of our social mission, in Fresno and Sacramento, GC sources produce from limited-resource, minority, and immigrant farmers in addition to long-time CAFF members. As the cover article in this issue demonstrates, sourcing strawberries from Mien farmers in Sacramento or Hmong farmers in Fresno can be beneficial for both the farmers and the buyers.

GC was set up to source local produce for institutions and to provide reasonable returns to family farmers. Until now these distribution connections have been missing. Other distributors are starting to source more from local growers, but they will not be willing to work with very small farms that have little commercial experience. Providing opportunities for all farmers is the real promise of our Growers' Collaborative. 🌱

Oz Farm

BY RONI BEN-DAVID



John and Molly Hooper, owners of Oz Farm.

There is no wizard at Oz. And instead of a yellow brick road, a winding dirt path takes you to a clearing hugged by giant redwoods and the Garcia River. This is Oz Farm in Medocino County—a place where community building and careful tending of the land are the driving values.

Patrick Cordrey is the farm manager here, but his job involves much more. He and his wife, Shauna Boyd, tend three acres of fruit trees, five acres of field crops, and run a retreat center that hosts everything from business retreats to weddings (www.ozfarm.com). Somehow they still have time to coordinate creative events like “Field to Table Dinners”—multi-course gourmet meals composed of seasonal and local ingredients.

Patrick and Shauna don’t do it alone. Most of the year several interns live on the farm, trading work for lodging. Another family lives in one of the farm’s cozy cabins and helps run the retreat facilities.

It is no secret: things thrive on Oz Farm. While Cordrey credits Oz Farm’s productivity to fertile land and coastal climate, he also believes that the size of the farm allows for crucial attention to detail.

“There is no way that you can produce something large-scale with the same quality, taste, flavor, and vitality,” Cordrey says. Owners John and Molly Hooper have been growing certified organic apples, pears and vegetables on the farm since 1990.

Oz Farm protects its natural resources. The farmers practice sustainable forestry through light-impact timber harvesting. The farm is a partner in local efforts to protect the Garcia River watershed from the effects of gravel mining. The farm has always been off the public utility power grid. Oz recently switched to a combined solar-wind system that supplies water and power to their buildings, agricultural fields, and orchards.

Like many small organic farms, Oz has its challenges. “Organic farming is becoming primarily industrial and this trend is driving out small-scale organic farming,” Cordrey says. When working with wholesale buyers, he can’t guarantee the consistency in quantity and appearance that they demand. Moreover, it is getting harder to distinguish Oz from larger organic producers.

“In the face of a capital[ist] model, you have to create something different” Cordrey says.

One look at their orchard of trellised apple trees tells you that their approach is indeed unique. They grow antique “heirloom” apples, varieties that date back to Colonial America. When apple season ends they press their apples into juice and cider.

Cordrey also tries to cut costs by keeping business close to home. Since joining the farm seven years ago, he has sold its produce at local farmers’ markets and restaurants, and launched a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. “People don’t always know the term CSA,” Cordrey says, “but they love to get their ‘Oz bags!’”

‘Relationships are the key element to the success of organic farming and a healthy community,’ Cordrey says. ‘This is food with a face.’

Oz farm does more than keep the local community well fed. They host an annual Harvest Festival which raises money for local charities. They also host school visits and workshops. “Relationships are the key element to the success of organic farming and a healthy community,” Cordrey says. “This is food with a face.” 🌱



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CAFF works with many farms, individuals, businesses, and organizations to highlight the role of family farms in caring for the land and providing local and sustainably-grown food and fiber. Making a Difference profiles one of our allies in this effort.

A New Kind of Extension on Punjabi TV

BY MARK CADY

*S*quinting at the bright lights in Gian Johl's living room, I watched my colleagues shift uneasily before the camera. Janine Hasey and Franz Niederholzer, University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) farm advisors, were recording a commercial for local TV in Johl's home studio.

Since 2006, CAFF has worked in the Lower Feather River Watershed to reduce the potential for water pollution coming from local farms. CAFF recently organized a series of commercials for Yuba City's local cable station to promote environmentally sound tree crop practices.

The project undertakes outreach on two fronts. With the Yuba City UCCE, we reach out to the agricultural community. Working with farmers and pest control advisors, we demonstrate farming practices like cover crops and low-toxicity pesticides.

Since Punjabi-American farmers are not participating in the standard extension model connecting them to university research, we developed new strategies to reach this community.

Up to 65% of prune growers and 95% of peach growers in Sutter and Yuba Counties are Punjabi-Americans. Yet they make up only a small percentage of participants at workshops and meetings put on by local farm advisors. CAFF works with the farm advisors to tailor outreach strategies to better reach farmers in the region.

To reach Punjabi-American farmers, last year we produced a series of farming fact sheets based on UC research and translated them into Punjabi. This year we turned to mass media to improve connections between farm advisors and their potential clients, including the local Punjabi-American cable network in Yuba City.

Two local Punjabi-language programs, Punjabi Waves and Des Pardes TV (roughly translated as "Home Away From Home") will air short commercials introducing the farm advisors, their services, and essential tree crop production topics.

The farm advisors speak English on the air, but the hosts of each program recap the information in the ads in Punjabi.

Last month our first commercials went on the air eight times. Over the next six months we will broadcast several brief commercials on topics like carefully applying fertilizer, irrigating for healthy trees, and tracking pest insects to reduce pesticide sprays.

The Punjabi-American community laid the groundwork for this approach many years ago. Until the 1980s, there were no local media devoted to this community. Punjabi-language newspapers were not useful since second-, third- and fourth-generation Punjabi-Americans may only speak Punjabi though they read and write in English. First generation immigrants may or may not communicate in English.

For this reason, community leaders focused on broadcast media to get their message out—first radio, and for the last 20 years, television. Now Punjabi language programs air on local television many nights a week.

This is a new direction for CAFF and one we didn't envision even a year ago. We've learned a lot in the process, as have the farm advisors. Our ability to quickly adapt and direct outreach messages appropriate to the target audience is critical to our continued success with all stakeholders in California's family farming community. 🌱

For more information on CAFF's Environmentally Responsible Tree Crops program, contact mark@caff.org

Cotton Makes International News!

CAFF's Sustainable Cotton Project (SCP) was featured in the UK publication *Pesticides News* in June 2008. Cotton is one of the most chemically intensive crops grown in California and SCP is at the forefront of reducing the ground- and water-impacts of this crop. The project does this by implementing biological farming practices on fields enrolled in the program, then helping market this "cleaner cotton" to textile manufacturers. For more information, see www.sustainablecottonproject.org or contact Marcia Gibbs at marcia@caff.org



BIOLOGICAL FARMING

CAFF promotes a whole systems approach to farming that is flexible, maintains long-term profitability and protects water, soil and air resources. Our programs include the Sustainable Cotton Project, Environmentally Responsible Tree Crops, Farmscaping/Hedges, and Almonds: Best Management Practices.

Cotton and Drought

BY JOY NOELLE PALOUTZIAN

The deep Sierra snow pack in early 2008 gave San Joaquin Valley farmers false hope of receiving nearly half of their contracted water allocations. These hopes washed downstream with the runoff from a dry, hot spring, which brought announcements of water delivery cutbacks.

According to a recent Capitol Press article, California's cotton acreage is the lowest it has been since 1934. This year, California has only 280,000 acres planted with cotton, down from over a million acres just five years ago.

Water shortages, changing crop prices, and uncertain markets have caused some growers to abandon cotton in favor of more profitable and permanent crops such as almonds and pistachios, or grains such as wheat and corn.

Some farmers will not grow crops at all. Water supplies are so tight that in some cases cotton growers may sell their water rights to others and fallow their fields, rather than try to produce a crop with the little water available.

CAFF's Sustainable Cotton Project's (SCP) growers face this dilemma as well. SCP works with cotton growers in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley to help them improve soil and water quality while maintaining profitability. SCP participants planted a lot less cotton this year: growers enrolled 25% fewer acres in our Biological Agriculture Systems in Cotton (BASIC) Program than in 2007.

The BASIC program provides critical services to those farmers who will continue to grow cotton in 2008. Many of them have been with BASIC for over five years and recognize the value they receive when they enroll a field in our program. With the increase in fuel and growing costs, the cost savings offered by the BASIC program become more important.



This habitat planting includes corn, sunflowers, and buckwheat—all of which lure pests away from cotton.



This cotton field is bordered by a habitat including sorghum, buckwheat, and sunflowers.

Despite lucrative offers to sell his water, one of our growers opted to grow 150 acres in 2008, though his original plan had been not to grow any cotton. He realized that SCP's support and services, along with the possibility of higher cotton prices, made good economic sense for him. This long-time BASIC grower has seen firsthand that making ecologically sound growing decisions can save money.

The BASIC Program encourages growers to adopt ecologically friendly practices such as planting beneficial insect habitat. A few rows dedicated to corn, sunflower, mustard, or buckwheat attracts good insects to the field including big-eyed bugs, ladybugs, minute pirate bugs, and lacewings. SCP provides the seed and our field scout, Luis Gallegos, assists the farmers with planting.

Weekly field scouting is an essential element to any good production system. Gallegos closely monitors all enrolled fields. Growers receive a written report outlining the pest and beneficial insect populations found in each field, and a record of any problem areas.

When Gallegos notes a problem, he contacts the grower and helps them find a solution. For example, aphids can be combated with lacewings or ladybugs (purchased by SCP), which saves the growers the time and expense of spraying. It also helps preserve the natural balance in the field while minimizing the use of chemicals.

In their SCP year-end evaluations, most growers said that participation in BASIC saved them money, sustained their yields, gave them good information about the use of natural enemies in their fields, and provided an opportunity to share information with other local growers. 🌱

For more information, or to view the BASIC Cotton Manual, go to our website at www.sustainablecotton.org or call Marcia Gibbs at 530-756-8518 Ext. 34.

Fresh Food For Bayview-Hunters Point

BY ALIZA WASSERMAN

Until the Bayview Farmers' Market opened three years ago, fresh local produce was largely absent from one of San Francisco's fastest growing, ethnically diverse and poor neighborhoods. "The market has seen usage increase each year," said Takai Tyler of Hunters Point Family, a community group that helped start the market. However, low sales volumes make it hard to keep farmers coming back every week.

This summer, CAFF opened a stall in the market and began bringing in produce from farms involved with the Growers' Collaborative, a consolidation and distribution company owned by CAFF. Nectarines from Twin Peaks Orchard, carrots from Happy Boy Farm, strawberries from Montdragon Farm and Rodriguez Ranch, cherries from EGB Farms, baby mixed greens from Riverdog Farm and honeydew melons from Capay Fruits and

Vegetables have been featured at the stall. Buyers also get farm profiles, recipe cards, and discount coupons.

Last week three school groups visited the market to learn first-hand about fresh food and healthy eating. "It's great seeing children wander through the market," said CAFF's booth attendant Josh Edge, "I'm sure they think farmers' markets are amazing." There's more to come: CAFF plans to bring cooking demonstrations and livemusic to its stall, and is working with interns and community groups to increase foot traffic through the market and to set up a farm tour.

These efforts have been appreciated. One shopper told us, "I'm ecstatic to see the farm stand each week. I only wish it would come more often!" 🌱

This project is made possible by a grant from the San Francisco Department of the Environment. For more information on CAFF's project in Bayview-Hunters Point, contact josh@caff.org. The Bayview Farmers' Market is open Wednesdays, 9 am - 1 pm, from mid May through October.



Farm profiles and Buy Fresh Buy Local marketing materials adorn the Bayview Farmers' Market stand.



CAFF Associate Josh Edge overseeing a stall of Growers' Collaborative produce at the Bayview Farmers' Market.



Native Grassland Seed Production
Transplant Nursery
Native Grass Straw
Farmland Habitat Design
Ecosystem Management
Research & Education
Consulting

California Habitat Restoration

21740 County Road 88 Winters, CA 95694
PH: (530) 662-6847 ♦ FAX: (530) 662-2753
hedgefarm@aol.com ♦ www.hedgerowfarms.com



COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

CAFF connects consumers to food producers by providing information, access and education through its Buy Fresh Buy Local, Farm to School, Farm to Institution programs, and the Growers' Collaborative.

Humboldt State Buys Fresh & Local

BY MICHELLE WYLER

Thanks to their green campus policy and a partnership with CAFF's Farm to Institution Program, Humboldt State University (HSU) purchased about 20% of the produce for their cafeteria directly from local farmers in 2007. This year, CAFF hopes to increase this figure to 50%—and Melanie Patrick, who coordinates CAFF's Farm to Institution program in the region, spent the winter recruiting new growers to participate. She has been telling farmers about HSU's purchasing in order to aid farmers in crop planning.

Over the past year, farms of all sizes have delivered their products to HSU. Julie Ayers-Williams, formerly of the Arcata Educational Farm, sold a couple of boxes of bok choy; farmer Johnny Gary sold large enough quantities to declare HSU his "best wholesale account." Although wholesale markets typically yield lower prices than direct markets, growers save on time and labor costs by making a consolidated drop off rather than spending several hours standing at the farmers' market. "A diverse marketing approach can really help a farmer survive," says Patrick.

Not only is the partnership between CAFF and HSU boosting sales for family farmers, students and staff now find more healthy and fresh food choices when they stop by The J at Humboldt State. 🌱

For more information on CAFF's Farm to Institution program in Humboldt County, contact michelle@caff.org

Bienvenido Buy Fresh Buy Local

BY TEMRA COSTA

Compre lo fresco de nuestra región is just another way of saying Buy Fresh Buy Local, but it gets the point across far better to the 60% of Salinas, California residents whose first language is Spanish. This summer, Buy Fresh Buy Local banners, stickers, and signs were translated into Spanish and displayed in 12 restaurants and stores. Next time you're in Salinas, check out the colorful displays in eateries like Taquería El Grullense, Adelita's Ricos Tacos, and El Lugarcito Frutería, and in markets like La Esperanza, El Guro Tiendita y Dulcería, and Gins. 🌱

This project was made possible by a grant from the Agricultural and Land-Based Learning Training Association (ALBA). For more information on CAFF's Buy Fresh Buy Local program, see www.buylocal.org or contact temra@caff.org

The New Farmer Class

BY JENNY HANSEN



From left: Watsonville High School students Jorge Ponce, Arnold Precedado and Ismael Rosales examine artichokes in the school's garden. Photo by Tarmo Hannula (Register-Pajaronian).

“Today I fell in love with my crops,” proclaimed a Watsonville High School student and inaugural participant of CAFF's farming internship for older youth. For eight weeks, six teenagers worked a plot of land provided by the Watsonville High Agricultural Academy, nourishing the soil, tilling the ground, and plowing rows that would later yield radishes, peppers, tomatoes, lettuce, chard, onion, squash, flowers, and artichokes.

Supported by the Stewardship Council and implemented in collaboration with the Homeless Garden Project; Agricultural, Land Based Training Association (ALBA); and Life Lab/Food What?! Farm; CAFF's high school internship program is designed to encourage leadership and environmental stewardship. The project provides youth with meaningful interaction with the outdoors and agriculture. But other, unexpected results have cropped up as well, most notably business and entrepreneurial skills. Some interns have begun selling their fresh vegetables to friends, family, and school staff—and this summer, all Watsonville residents can find that lovingly grown produce at the Friday farmers' market. 🌱

For more information on CAFF's Farm to School program on the Central Coast, contact jenny@caff.org

Wish List!

A refrigerated, 12 foot or larger transport truck in good working condition. Your donation would help a very worthy cause. Contact penny@growerscollaborative.org or call (530) 756-8518 Ext. 14.



Pete Price, CAFF
Legislative Representative

Capitol Report

BY PETE PRICE

In recognition of the new and improved Agrarian Advocate, the Capitol Report steps back to give an overview of CAFF's role in state policymaking on sustainable agriculture.

CAFF is the only sustainable agriculture organization with a daily presence in the California state capitol and we are involved with many important and controversial issues. Just this year we've seen legislation and ballot measures dealing with aerial spraying of pesticides, agricultural water supply, agricultural biotechnology, farmland protection, food safety, and the humane treatment of animals. These issues often pit a defensive agricultural industry against a largely urban population with decidedly pro-environment and pro-consumer views.

As a membership organization that includes urban and rural residents, farmers and non-farmers, CAFF is often in between mainstream agricultural organizations and environmental groups on controversial issues. And that's just where we want to be. CAFF and its members are pro-environment and pro-farmer. We deliver hard truths to farm and environmental organizations about the interests and views of each side.

CAFF's voice in promoting progressive, sustainable agriculture in Sacramento is smaller than that of organizations like the Farm Bureau, but it is unique, valuable, and an essential component of our mission to promote an agricultural system that is environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially just.

Genetic Engineering—CAFF is a member of the Genetic Engineering Policy Project, which seeks policies to protect farmers from the economic consequences of unintended contamination by genetically modified plants. The Project is sponsoring **AB 541 (Huffman)**.

As introduced in 2007, this bill would have held manufacturers of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) liable for damages if their product contaminated a farmer's crop. It would have protected innocent farmers from patent infringement charges if their crops were contaminated

by rogue genetically engineered (GE) material. (That's right: GMO manufacturers add insult to injury by charging farmers with patent infringement when their product contaminates unsuspecting farmers' crops.) Finally, the bill would have required GE plants produced for pharmaceutical purposes to be grown in greenhouses.

The Farm Bureau and other organizations vigorously opposed the bill, making its passage out of the Assembly Agriculture Committee impossible. But the bill raised enough concern among conventional farm organizations that they agreed to a series of meetings last fall to search for common ground.

Many were skeptical, but after three meetings and many drafts, all parties agreed to language that protects innocent farmers whose crops have been contaminated by GE material, establishes a protocol for whenever a GMO manufacturer wants to enter a farmer's land to sample for the presence of their product, and gives farmers the right to refuse to allow such entry. In other states Monsanto has made a practice of entering private farmland unannounced. If entry is allowed, the farmer can be present when the sampling is conducted. Finally, the bill protects farmers from liability for GMO patent infringement if the presence of the GE material was unintended or at de minimus levels. With this new language, AB 541 passed the Senate Agriculture Committee in early June with no opposition. If enacted, California will be one of only a few states with such protections.

Farm Stands—In the spring Agrarian Advocate, we reported that **AB 2168 (Jones)** would allow farmers more freedom to sell prepackaged processed food (jams, oils, bottled water and soft drinks) at their farm stands. Currently, they can only sell eggs and fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown on or near the farm. Yet many farm stands do sell value-added products. AB 2168 would legalize this without defeating the purpose of farm stands to improve local markets for produce grown on or near the farm where the stand is located.

While CAFF supports more direct market opportunities for farmers, we were concerned about unintended consequences of allowing farm stands to sell value-added products with no restrictions. After negotiations with the Farm Bureau and local health officers (who oversee food safety at farm stands), AB 2168 will be amended to exclude sales of prepackaged processed foods (except



PUBLIC POLICY

CAFF works with state and federal legislators and government agencies to create policies and practices that promote local food systems, reduce air and water pollution, foster family farming, and preserve farm land. See CAFF's policy positions at www.caff.org.

for water and other prepackaged drinks) unless the farm stand operator can show that the foods were made from crops grown on or close to the farm. In its current form, the bill ensures that products sold at farm stands, whether fresh or processed, come from local farmers. AB 2168 is pending a hearing in Senate Agriculture Committee, where CAFF will testify in support.

Water—Declaration of a statewide drought emergency resulted in actions to reduce water use and increase its supply. The northern Sierra Nevada experienced its driest spring in 70 years and Sacramento had its driest spring since 1849. Added to dry weather is recent court action to hold more water in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to protect the Delta smelt. Some criticized the declaration for not requiring water conservation measures, instead directing the Department of Water Resources to speed up water transfers to needed areas, help water districts conserve, and assist farmers suffering drought-related losses. Legislation is pending in the state Senate that would require a 20% per capita reduction in water consumption by 2020.

But the issue bubbling just below the surface is dams and reservoirs. The Governor proposed a massive water bond last winter that included billions of dollars for new dams and reservoirs. Environmentalists and Democrats objected, calling dams the most expensive way to develop new water supplies and pointing to conservation and underground storage as quicker, less expensive options. Senate President pro tem Don Perata put forward a competing bond measure with everything the Governor wanted for improving water infrastructure except funding for new dams. Republicans refused to vote for the Perata bond, which needed a 2/3 vote to be placed on the ballot. The Governor's declaration of a drought emergency is seen by many as simply a precursor to another call for new dams and reservoirs.

Humane Treatment of Animals—The California Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act will be on the November ballot and promises to be controversial. The initiative's language prohibits raising calves for veal, caging egg-laying hens, and tethering or confining pigs during pregnancy in such a way that they cannot freely turn around, lie down, stand up, or extend their limbs. The initiative was placed on the ballot by a coalition that includes the Humane Society of the U.S., Farm Sanctuary and others. Proponents and opponents of the initiative have asked CAFF to support their position. CAFF's Policy Committee will study the issue and make a recommendation to our full Board of Directors. 🌱

An Ally on Policy Advocacy

BY HEATHER FENNEY



Alliance is CAFF's middle name, and the California Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) is one organization that we work with to promote local food & family farms.

Farm Bill—In 2007, CFJC mobilized many people in support of funding for regional food systems, access to healthy affordable food, and opportunities for small, beginning and minority farmers. It also pushed for reform of commodity programs that harm family farmers, the environment, and public health. CFJC now focuses on ensuring that implementation of the bill will support its priorities.

Future Priorities—CFJC held meetings across the state to get input from members and allies on future priorities. They found strong support for work to: increase access to land for farming, healthy food in underserved communities, promoting local food-based enterprises, and for food system localization as a strategy to address climate change. 🌱

For more information, see www.CAFoodJustice.org or contact Heather Fenny at heather@CAFoodJustice.org

Water Crisis Spurs Action

Agricultural water stewardship is key to managing the state's dwindling water resources, argues a report recently released by several agricultural groups, including CAFF. *Water Stewardship: Ensuring a Secure Future for California Agriculture*, includes principles for agricultural water stewardship and proposals for research, on-farm practices, policies, and collaborations necessary to implement water stewardship across the state. The report was released by the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, the California Institute for Rural Studies, CAFF, the Ecological Farming Association, the Polaris Institute, and the WATER Institute of the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. See the report at www.agwaterstewards.org

For more information on the report, contact Katy Mamen at katy@polarisinstitute.org

Central Coast Chapter

This is 12th year the Central Coast Chapter will participate in the Santa Cruz County Fair. Stop by our booth to see photos of Buy Fresh Buy Local farms and farmers, Farm to School field trips, and local hedgerow and grassed waterway plantings. CAFF staff and volunteers will greet visitors and hand out copies of the Local Food Guide and materials from the Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign English or Spanish. You will also find other chapter publications and information on partner organizations like the Ecological Farming Association and Wild Farm Alliance. CAFF is working with Gina Locatelli of the County Fair Agriculture and Horticulture Committee to highlight Pajaro Valley Farm to School programs and to involve CAFF farmers in County Fair programs. The fair, which takes place September 9–14, is a unique opportunity to celebrate the region's agricultural heritage 🌱

For more information on Central Coast Chapter activities, contact Ken Kimes at kenkimes@charterinternet.com, or Paul Hain at paulhain@hotmail.com.

North Coast Chapter

The North Coast Chapter has launched a new series of farm tours. Our first tour was at Clark Summit Farm near Tomales, where Liz Cunningham and Dan Bagley raise free-range pigs, chickens (and eggs), beef cattle, and turkeys. The second took place at Bodega Goat Ranch where owner Patty Karlin raises goats, makes cheese, and operates a “team farming” enterprise with St. Benoit Yogurt; a vegetable farmer with a 30 member CSA; and two other couples raising pigs, chickens and ducks. Self-sustaining efforts include solar energy generation, rainwater catchment, and permaculture design elements. Four more tours are planned over the next year and we hope to collaborate with other organizations to broaden participation and increase CAFF membership. Stay informed about the tours and other chapter activities by providing your email address to Shelley Arrowsmith at arrowfarms@vom.com.

We will participate in the 2nd annual Tolay Fall Festival October 12–14 and 19–21 in Petaluma. The

Humboldt Chapter

The Humboldt Chapter is weighing in on the General Plan Update to ensure that preservation of agricultural lands remains a priority. We aim to strengthen local zoning ordinances to discourage conversion of farmland, provide support for local farmers as an economic development opportunity, and include local agriculture in the county's efforts to address greenhouse gas emission and comply with AB 32 (the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006).

The Planning Commission will hold hearings this summer and fall to finalize the language in each of two plan alternatives before sending the package to the County Board of Supervisors. We look forward to helping craft a General Plan Update that reflects our community's rural values and preserves land for family farming for generations to come. 🌱

For more information on agriculture in the General Plan, contact Shannon Tracey at setracey@yahoo.com. For more information on Humboldt Chapter activities, contact Erin Derden-Little at derdenlittle@gmail.com.

festival highlights the area's natural, agricultural and cultural heritage through recreation, farm food, fun and pumpkins.

We support efforts to locate a meat slaughtering facility in our area. A Cooperative Extension office has set up a meat buying club to build consumer interest in local lamb, pork, and beef while surveying ranchers to determine interest in selling locally. We need an interested rancher member to follow this project, attend occasional meetings, and keep us informed. We are also working with other organizations on a local cold storage facility for farmers marketing locally.

Finally, Partners for Sustainable Pollination (PFSP) is looking for farmers to participate in their efforts to improve and increase healthy honey bee and native pollinator populations. To learn more, see www.partnersforsustainablepollination.org or call Kathy Kellison at (707) 321-4711. 🌱

For more information on North Coast Chapter activities, contact Terry Harrison at fresh@hughes.net or (707) 433-6802.



MEMBERS & CHAPTERS

CAFF's members and chapters are key to our success in promoting family farms and local food. CAFF chapters are run by volunteers in the Central Coast, Humboldt County, the North Coast, and the Northern San Joaquin Valley.

Paicines Ranch Processing Plant

Paicines Ranch, a grassfed beef producer and member of CAFF, has opened a multi-meat processing plant called Cutting Edge Meat, Inc. for small- to medium-sized meat producers. This USDA certified plant is located in Newman, California in the Central Valley. Paicines Ranch has been a working ranch since the mid-1800s and all of its pastures are certified organic. The ranch breeds Angus cattle. All of its livestock are free-range, never administered growth hormones, or routinely fed antibiotics. The mission of Paicines Ranch is to continue as a working ranch and open space for future generations to enjoy. For more information about the new processing plant, see www.cuttingedgemeat.com or www.paicinesranch.com. 🌱



Strawberries - continued from p. 1

worked with Mien and Hmong strawberry growers in the Sacramento area for about eight years and plant pathologist Jenny Broome has participated for the past two.

While UCCE primarily helps growers improve their production practices, they recognized the opportunity for growers to expand their markets, helping them adjust their post-harvest handling to deliver a saleable product.

“It’s crucial to help them find new markets.

At peak times they have berries left rotting in the fields,” said Broome.

Saetern and Lee are interested in learning what other crops they could plant and sell to GC customers. Recently GC’s Mary Vincent spoke to a group of Southeast Asian growers at a UCCE meeting about selling to GC and other possible marketing opportunities. With GC support small-scale growers will be able to diversify, increasing their economical and ecological sustainability. 🌱

For more information, contact David Levin at (530) 756-8518 Ext. 18 or david@growerscollaborative.org.

FOOD FILMS

Two outstanding films have recently been released by long-time supporters of family farmers and CAFF.



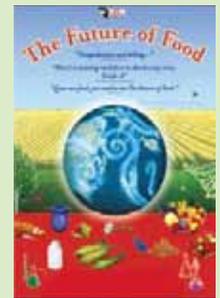
Eat at Bill's: Life in the Monterey Market

This film profiles this family-owned produce market in Berkeley, CA. Creator Lisa Brenneis, a former CAFF Board member, explores how,

Monterey Market owner Bill & Elaine Fujimoto have supported dozens of local family farms. Find out about upcoming screenings or purchase the DVD at www.tangerineman.com.

The Future of Food

Created by Deborah Koons Garcia, this film explores the industrialization of agriculture, from the green revolution to the gene revolution. An award winner! Find out more or purchase the DVD at www.thefutureoffood.com.



Growers' Collaborative

The choice of institutional kitchens for fresh, family-farmed fruits and vegetables!

Our produce is picked at the peak of ripeness and arrives within 48 hours of harvest.



Fresh, local produce tastes great and is good for people, communities, and the environment. It's also good for business!

To sell to, or buy from, the Growers' Collaborative, see our website at www.growerscollaborative.org or contact:

*Sacramento/Bay Area
NorCal@growerscollaborative.org*

*Southern California
SoCal@growerscollaborative.org*



Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 25
Auburn, CA

Community Alliance with Family Farmers
P.O. Box 363
Davis, CA 95617



An on-farm benefit for sustainable agriculture

HOES DOWN HARVEST FESTIVAL

Celebrate Rural Living



Saturday, October 4th, 2008
11 a.m. - 11 p.m.

Fully Belly Farm • Capay Valley • California
FARMERS' MARKET • CHILDREN'S AREA • FARM TOURS
FARM WORKSHOPS • CRAFTS DEMONSTRATIONS
LIVE MUSIC & DANCING ALL DAY! • TASTY ORGANIC FOOD & DRINKS!

Info: (800) 791-2110 www.hoesdown.org

By revamping how the Agrarian Advocate is produced, we cut costs 50% even after going to full color. We hope you like the changes. Please send comments or suggestions to anne@caff.org



Nominations Open for CAFF Board

CAFF's Board of Directors seeks nominations for new Directors. We are looking for candidates with a sincere interest in sustainable food and family-scale farming. Board members attend quarterly board meetings in Davis, California, and serve on board committees that meet by phone between general meetings. Attorneys or those with legal experience are particularly needed. If you would like to serve on CAFF's Board of Directors, or would like to nominate someone, please contact Erin Derden-Little at derdenlittle@gmail.com by September 15.