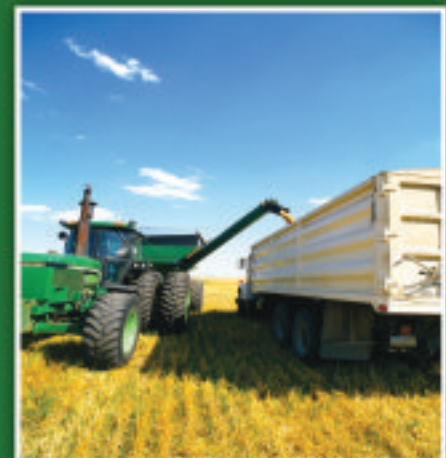


Salute to Agriculture

Spring 2017



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"Let's Go Nuts!"

2017 California Nut Festival Celebrates 11th Anniversary

By Alice Patterson

With a focus on locally grown and produced foods and beverages from the North Valley, the 2017 California Nut Festival promises another phenomenal, upscale food and beverage event. The fun takes place Saturday, April 15, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. outdoors on the historic grounds of the Patrick Ranch Museum in Chico, California. Tickets are on sale now, with proceeds supporting the historic Patrick Ranch Museum.

The festival showcases a wide-array of gourmet food offerings, wine and beer samplings, nut-inspired cooking demonstrations, live musical entertainment on two outdoor stages, an art show featuring local artists and more. Locally grown tree nuts — almonds, walnuts, pecans and pistachios — take center stage for this event that showcases the culinary delights while paying tribute to the region's strong farming heritage in Butte County.

"In addition to enjoying great food and beverages, attendees get a great opportunity to connect with local farmers and growers, and really learn about the region's agriculture," said Kathy Chance, Event Chair.

Chance, who has been an integral part of organizing the event since its beginning, said that the support of the local farmers over the years has been amazing — and an essential part of putting on such a great event. The event has raised more than \$120,000 in donations, both cash and goods, that have gone directly to supporting the Patrick Ranch over the years.

"The generosity of our farming community is tremendous," she said. "I am so grateful and appreciative for each of our Farmers Circle members who continue to contribute to the event year after year."

New this year, the 2017 California Nut Festival will feature a lively and fun "Nutty Chef Competition" in the California Olive Ranch cooking demo area. Festival attendees can sit

back and enjoy watching a culinary contest play out that highlights the ingenuity of three local chefs all competing for the honor of being named the 2017 Nutty Chef.

The California Nut Festival began as a series of events including a blossom tour, spelling bee, book club and chef demonstrations that took place over the course of a two week period, but lacked a single event that brought consumers and local farms together in a meaningful way.

The "new" California Nut Festival (CNF) is the vision of a group of community volunteers who wanted to bring an upscale food and wine event to the North Valley to celebrate the heritage and provide much needed fundraising to the Patrick Ranch Museum. Kathy Chance, committee chair, states,

"We wanted to increase awareness and consumption of our local products as well as bring people together in a fun and festive atmosphere," she said.

General admission tickets to the California Nut Festival are **\$30 in advance (or \$35 the day of the event)** and can be purchased online or at any participating Tri Counties Bank locations. Admission includes a festival goodie bag with tasting glass, six drink and six food tasting tickets. Tickets for children ages 7-12 are \$10 and the event is free for children six and under. Additional food and beverage tickets are available for purchase.

The 2017 California Nut Festival is presented by the Butte Agriculture Foundation and sponsored by Tri Counties Bank, MeadowBrook/Discovery Homes, California Olive Ranch, Asset Management Group, C.F. Koehn & Sons, PG&E, and Farmers' Circle members.

The mission of the California Nut Festival is to connect consumers and farmers, cultivate an understanding of nut production in California and



Delectable food, beer and wine tastings will delight attendees at the 2017 California Nut Festival, now celebrating its 11th year.

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how California nuts fit into a healthy lifestyle. Proceeds are dedicated to the development of the Patrick Ranch Museum to preserve and interpret the agricultural history of the Sacramento Valley.

For more information about the California Nut Festival, visit www.californianutfestival.com.

Getting to the Festival

Want to leave your car at home? Ride the Festival Shuttle with local farmers as your tour guides! Catch the shuttle at the Chico Transit Center, located at W 2nd and Salem Streets in Chico on the hour starting at 11am, return on the half hour. The last shuttle leaves the Patrick Ranch at 4:30pm. For bicyclists, a secure



Enjoy local, farm-fresh food and beverages at the 2017 California Nut Festival.

bike valet is available at the event. Ride your bike along the beautiful For those driving, please keep in mind that parking is limited: carpooling is encouraged.

Tips For A Great Festival Experience

- Tickets are required for everyone attending the event (including any children and non-drinkers/samplers)
- If you plan to purchase extra food and drink tickets (cost is three for \$5) or buy locally-made goods from vendors, cash is preferred as some do not take credit cards and there is not an ATM on-site
- Parking is limited please carpool
- Avoid the parking fee by riding the convenient shuttle complete with local farmers as your guides
- Bike riding is encouraged on the bike path that runs right by the Patrick Ranch Museum (bike valet available for secure parking)
- No outside food or beverages, except water
- Seating is available but you may want to bring a chair or blanket to relax and enjoy the music
- The "rain or shine" event is primarily outdoors so be prepared and remember hats and sunscreen are encouraged
- Children and strollers are allowed at the event but please be advised, there are no activities designed for children
- No pets are allowed at the culinary-focused festival

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Range & Natural Resources Camp for High School Students

Scholarship Application now Available - DUE April 14th!

Glenn County Resource Conservation District seeks applications from high school students interested in attending "Range Camp".

Range and Natural Resources Camp is a week-long event that immerses students ages 15-18 in science and management topics related to the use and conservation of rangelands, forests and riparian areas in California. Conducted by the California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management, students learn plant identification, as well as principles of livestock and wildlife management, forestry, fire ecology, hydrology and water quality, geology and soils, and management of stream and river habitats. Field activities include learning wildlife tracking methods, outdoor navigation using maps, compass and GPS, and participating in a tour of a working ranch. Sessions are led by faculty from the University of California, members of ranching families, staff from state and federal agencies, and private range management professionals.

This is a unique opportunity for students considering college to learn about fields of study in natural resources, or for students looking for job opportunities. Students are also able to talk with people working within the field of natural resources.

Interested Glenn County high school students must complete a



two-part application process for a chance to earn a scholarship to attend Range Camp.

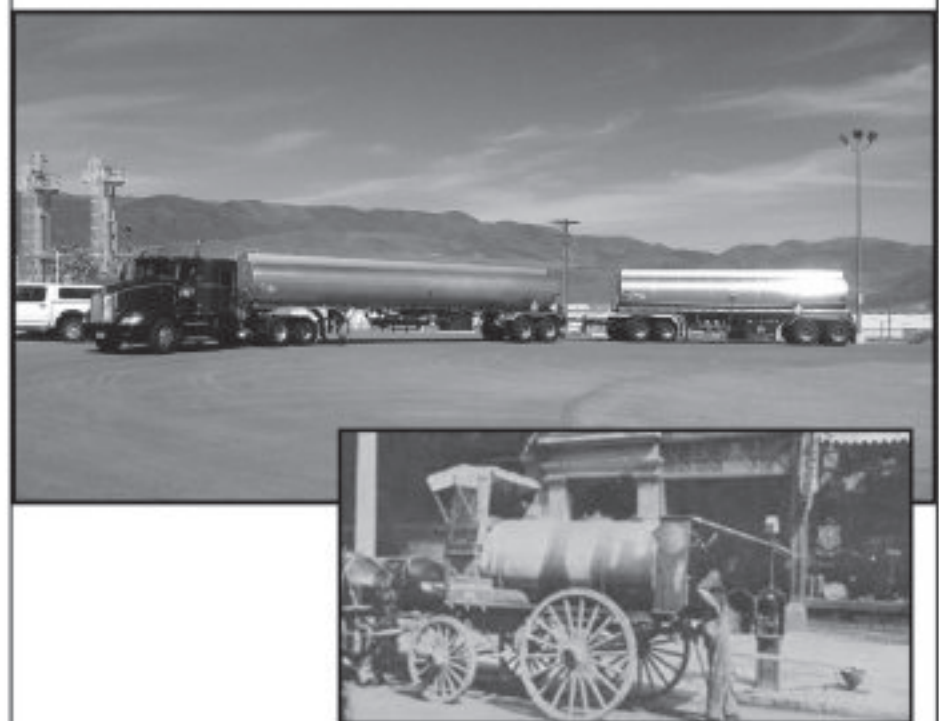
1) Fill out application, RCD commitment form and return to the RCD office by 4:00 p.m., April 14th and

2) Participate in an interview. Applications available at www.glenncountyrcd.org.

In addition, if the opportunity arises, the Society for Range Management will sponsor the 'top two' campers to attend its annual conference in Reno, NV - January 28 - February 1, 2018 (all expenses paid).

What a fun experience!

The 33rd Annual Range and Natural Resources Camp will be from June 18-23, 2017 at the University of California's Elkus Youth Ranch just south of Half Moon Bay. Application forms and more information are available by visiting www.glenncountyrcd.org "RCDConnects with Kids" or at the RCD office: (530) 934-4601 x5 or 132 North Enright Avenue, Suite C, Willows, CA 95988.



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Young Farmers & Ranchers: Leading the Way for Agriculture's Future

By Alice Patterson

With a passion for agriculture, service and leadership development, members of the Butte County Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) program are active agriculturists between the ages of 18 and 35 involved in production, banking, business, and many other areas of the industry. Young Farmers & Ranchers develop leadership skills while volunteering time as active, vital members of the county Farm Bureaus across the



nation. I recently had an opportunity to connect with Grey Foster, 2017 Butte County YF&R Committee Chair and Paige Bush, Past Chair to learn more about the group.

"We are a welcoming, open-armed organization," said Foster. He said there are a number of benefits to the individual members of YF&R, including great networking, leadership training and experience. Committee events such as the annual Clay Shoot and Annual Dinner/Dance provide social and fundraising opportunities. Two other key areas of participation, he said, are the annual California YF&R Leadership Conference and "Harvest for All" national food drive. This year's conference was particularly rewarding for the Butte YF&R group.

The California YF&R Leadership Conference was held February 23-25, 2017 in Modesto. This two-day

conference is attended by more than 200 YF&Rs from across California and neighboring states, and provides an opportunity to network with other YF&Rs, gain insight and ideas for building a better local YF&R program and receive updates on key issues and topics affecting the agriculture industry and young agriculturalists in California.

This year's event was a huge success for the Butte County YF&R, said Foster, as Past Chair Paige Bush was awarded the prestigious Member of the Year Award, and the Butte YF&R received designation as Committee of the Year for all of its hard work and involvement.

"Needless to say, we were an extremely proud group," said Foster.

"YF&R has given me a network of local agriculturalists in the community, as well as introduced me



The Butte County Young Farmers & Ranchers took home Committee of the Year Award at the February, 2017 Leadership Conference.



The 2017 Butte YF&R Executive Team, pictured left to right: Allie Honig (2nd Chair), Margaret Pekarek (1st Chair), Grey Foster (Chairman), Shay McChuskey (3rd Chair).

to local and statewide Ag advocates," said Bush. "YF&R is more than social and networking. I have grown personally by holding leadership roles within our committee.

Being part of YF&R is larger than just our monthly county meetings: the program gives an opportunity to be a part of something bigger. Whether it's statewide or nationwide, there is a lot of room to grow within YF&R, with the assumption that we will continue (participation) by being actively engaged in Farm Bureau," she said.

Both Foster and Bush reiterated involvement in the Harvest for All campaign. Since Harvest for All began in 2003, Farm Bureau members across the nation have gathered nearly 65 million pounds of food, logged more than 30,000 volunteer hours and raised more than \$778,000 in donations to local food banks. the year, farmers across the nation,

including the Butte County Young Farmers & Ranchers, said Grey, will be donating food, funds and volunteers to create a hunger-free America, with one primary goal in mind: making sure every American can enjoy the bounty produced on our farms and ranches.

"Our goal for the past few years — and going forward — will to become a more active participant in the Harvest For All campaign. We do this by donating food to local shelters, volunteering time and doing food drives. We also are reaching out to the community for their support and to educate people about agriculture," Bush said.

In the coming year, according to Foster, members of the YF&R will focus on more community outreach, including a school gardening program.

"Our goal is to establish or restore one school (garden) program per year," Foster said. He said

that by offering this type of agricultural outlet for elementary school students, an early interest in Ag is sparked.

Participation in the YF&R group is free, and open to individuals aged 18-35. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month. Grey encourages those who are interested to become part of the Butte YF&R Facebook page online to keep up to date with most up-to-date happenings, or contact the Butte County Farm Bureau office at butteyfr@gmail.com, by phone at (530) 533-1473 or in person at 2580 Feather River Boulevard in Oroville.

"There is strength in numbers," he said. "We welcome all!"

Visit Butte Young Farmer and Ranchers on Facebook at www.facebook.com/buttecountyyoungfarmersandranchers.

Regional county fairs offer agricultural lessons nearby

Get out those family calendars, and plan a road trip to learn about agriculture at county fairs going on throughout the area.



Glenn County Fair

"There's No Place Like Home" is the focus of the 2017 fair at 221 E. Yolo St, Orland. Dates are May 18-21, for details call 865-1168 or visit www.glenncountyfair.org. Activities include the Miss Glenn county pageant, the Orland Raceway activities, and the Destruction Derby.

Silver Dollar Fair

This year's Silver Dollar Fair is May 25-29 at the Silver dollar Fairgrounds at 2357 Fair Street in Chico. For details, call 895-4666, and log on to www.silverdollarfair.org. Free shows in the grandstand include X-treme Motocross, the 200-Lap Enduro Race, Civil War Sprint Car Races, and Demolition Derby.

Colusa County Fair

June 18-11 are this year's dates for the Colusa County Fair. The fairgrounds are at 1303 10th St. Highway 20 in Colusa. Visit www.colusacountyfair.com for a complete lineup of events or call 458-2641.

Tehama District Fair

This year's 97th annual Tehama County Fair is July 13-17. The fairgrounds are located at 650 Antelope Blvd in Red Bluff. Call 527-5920 or visit www.tehamadistrictfair.com for more information.

Nevada County Fair

Aug. 9-13 are the dates for this year's Nevada County Fair. The 2017 theme is "Sea you at the Fair" The fairgrounds are at 11228 McCourtney Road in Grass Valley. More information can be reached by calling 273-6217 or visiting www.nevadacountyfair.com.

Butte County Fair

Aug 24-27 are the dates at 1919 East Hazel St., Gridley. Children 5 and younger are admitted free each day. For details call 846-3626 or visit www.buttecountyfair.org.



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Farm to table businesses booming



Consumers' appetites for local foods are growing, and restaurants have taken notice. Today, many local businesses, including farms and restaurants, have mutually exclusive relationships that make it possible for local residents to enjoy nutritious, locally produced meals.

According to the market research firm Packaged Facts, local foods generated \$11.7 billion in sales in 2014 and will climb to \$20.2 billion by 2019. Farm-to-table remains a growing trend that benefits farmers, restaurateurs and consumers. This is evidenced by the rising number of farmers markets cropping up in neighborhoods all across the country, as well as the niche offerings by regional food purveyors. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says that, in the last 20 years, the number of farmers markets has grown by more than 350 percent. Many consumers are now choosing "local" for dining at home and when dining out, and this is making a major impact on the nation's food systems.

Foodies as well as industry experts predict that the local foods movement is a permanent and mainstream trend. In 2014, the National Restaurant Association found the desire for local foods dominated its "Top Food Trends."

The most in-demand foods include locally sourced meats and seafood as well as locally sourced produce. Consumers also are interested in farm/estate-branded foods. Some restaurants are even producing "hyper-local" food, or herbs and produce grown right on the property.

As the demand for local foods has evolved, so has the term "local foods." "Local" can be a wide-ranging term that refers to foods produced in a particular town, state or even region.

The 2008 Farm Act defines a "locally or regionally produced agricultural food product" as one that is marketed less than 400 miles from its origin. However, a few states have established more stringent rules that indicate "local" consti-

tutes food produced within the borders of a state or within a small perimeter of the state.

The growing preference for locally produced foods is great news for the farmers and small food producers that have long fought for footing among the mega-importers. According to the trade publication Produce Business, even though "local" does not place limits on the size of the farm, the growing desire among consumers to go local is benefitting many small and mid-sized farms, as consumers are increasingly buying foods grown closer to where they live.

In addition to meats, fruits and vegetables, consumers can find many locally made items that expand the potential for farm-to-table. These include, but are not limited to, artisanal cheeses, wines, beer, baked goods, milk and other dairy, and honey.

Local, sustainable foods are in demand, helping not only local restaurants and merchants, but also the small and medium farms that service these establishments.

Challenges facing farmers today and tomorrow

Though farming was once big business in the United States, by 2012 less than 1 percent of Americans were professional farmers. Many challenges face today's farmers, many of which are largely unknown to the general public.

Many people have an outdated view of a farm as a small, family-owned and operated parcel of land where livestock is raised in open pens and crops are hand-harvested when ripe. The reality is that modern-day farms have had to overhaul operations to meet demand and remain competitively priced while adapting to the ever-changing ways technology infiltrates all parts of life. Each of these factors present obstacles for today's farmers.

Technology

Rural farming communities are expected to make an effort to integrate modern technology into an industry that has been around for centuries. But such a transition in rural areas, where communications systems may not be as up-to-date as those in urban areas, is not always so easy.

According to the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, a shift from a resource-based to an information-based economy, compounded by the rapid introduction and expansion of new technology in the workplace, has altered farm operation and the skills in demand. Older workers who have been schooled in one way of agriculture may have a significant impact on labor supply and the vitality of farming as a career. Younger adults who are knowledgeable in technology may no longer seek out agricultural careers.

Decrease in farming as an occupation

The United States Environmental Protection Agency says that only about 960,000 Americans claim farming as their principal occupation. As that figure has dwindled, the

average age of farmers continues to rise, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics notes that roughly 40 percent of the farmers in this country are 55 years old or older. This has led to concerns about the long-term health of family farms throughout the United States.

Environmental concerns

Many farmers have come under scrutiny for how farming impacts the environment. A growing emphasis on sustainability and conservation has led many people to protest certain farming practices. Protesters claim that certain practices, such as raising livestock, can pollute water, while the use of fertilizers and chemical pesticides is bad for the environment. Many farmers, however, have altered their methods to be more environmentally friendly and self-sustainable in the process.

Climate change is another environmental issue farmers must deal with. Strong storms and severe droughts have made farming even more challenging.

Though it can be easy for those who do not work in the agricultural industry to overlook the struggles facing today's agricultural professionals, a greater understanding of those struggles and the challenges that lay ahead can benefit the industry and its employees down the road.



Greater public awareness of agricultural challenges could help the industry in the future.



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