

# Small Farm News

SUMMER  
1999

SMALL FARM CENTER • COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

## Agricultural Tourism: Emerging Opportunity

*Excerpted from a presentation by Desmond Jolly, agricultural economist, UC Davis, at the Agritourism Workshop, Walker Creek Ranch, Marin County, May 27, 1999.*

**T**hough agriculture in general, and particularly "heartland" agriculture, is in decline, some parts of agriculture are holding their own. Some specialty crops and more entrepreneurially driven parts of agriculture are not simply surviving, but thriving. We are in a new set of circumstances, and smart people who have the necessary skills and vision are developing a new agriculture. This new agriculture is more consumer-focused, and responds quickly and directly to an emerging set of interests, needs, and demands by consumers. It is also more closely linked to domestic consumers.

This trend started back in the 1970s, with an increased interest in fresh, nutritious, and health-oriented products. During that decade, we also witnessed an upsurge of environmental concerns about protecting natural resources and biological diversity. Along with this increased concern about our biological heritage, a corollary concern has evolved with regard to our social heritage, which includes the institution of the family farm. These concerns gave rise to the development of a host of



*Petting zoo residents await visitors at an agri-tourism farm.*

institutions to address them, including the University of California Small Farm Program.

### The New Agriculture

Opportunities for farmers to respond to emerging consumer needs came in the form of programs like the California Certified Farmers' Market program, which necessitated exceptions to California Agricultural Code requirements to enable the kind of packaging and merchandising that takes place at farmers' markets.

Farmers' markets facilitate a direct exchange of values between consumers and producers. Originally, farmers' markets catered to the emerging demand for farm fresh, diverse, flavorful produce that consumers were beginning to develop. But as importantly, it allowed consumers to have a different kind of food shopping experience, and consumer research shows that consumers increasingly value these attributes. The whole quality of the experience is perceived by the consumer to be of

—CONTINUED PAGE 4

## Successful Agricultural Tourism Ventures

*by Susan McCue, editor, Small Farm News*

**F**rom Christmas trees to apple pies, agri-tourism thrives in unique niches across the state. On a 450-acre parcel purchased by his grandfather in the 1950s, Riverside County farmer Gregg Palmer operates a 50-acre Christmas tree farm that draws customers from 89 zip codes throughout southern California.

Palmer and his brother David established the Live Oak Canyon Christmas Tree Farm in 1980 after seeing many local growers with similar operations who appeared to be doing quite well. "I think both things were illusions," laughs Palmer.

During the past 19 years, the farm has expanded to include three distinct agri-tourism seasons. Lush berries and fresh garden produce lure customers from early June to early July, when berry buyers also get a chance to visit the farm's petting zoo. "Unlike many others, they can actually go in with most of the animals," says Palmer, whose insurance agent gave him approval for this potentially liability-ridden access. Palmer says a claim has never been filed against him.

Pumpkins take center stage during October, when guests include school tour

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Guest Column

## Pea Viner Corners: Farm Community in Retrospect and Prospect

Excerpted from a presentation by dairy farmer James Vincent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agriculture Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, July 12, 1999.

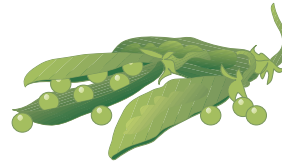
**W**hile driving down the road the other evening, hurrying home from the pea field after delivering some parts to keep the harvest going, I stopped at an intersection. To the west, the sun was setting in a glorious array of amber and red. There stood the old foundation that had appropriately named the town, Pea Viner Corners. That foundation was where, forty years ago, stood the viners that each July held promise and opportunity for that community as the many hardy souls fed the elevators with the vines that yielded those tender peas.

In early July, there would be hundreds of people involved in bringing in the pea crop from the area's farms and vining them out at that corner. It would have involved many tractors with mowing machines, as well as swathers, countless trucks, hayloaders, and a community coming together to harvest nature's plentiful bounty. Together they would accomplish so much because the race between the plow and the stork was dependent upon their effort. That community and American agriculture achieved a dramatic victory in that race.

### The Victory

I thought of the community as it had existed, with its common goals and enterprising spirit. That community of forty years ago, and so much of rural America, has experienced its own sunset. Forty years ago, there was the general store, hardware store, feedmill, farm equipment dealership, a school house, and the community church bustling with activity at that time of year. They are gone, all gone. This has been a victory so bittersweet for rural America, and has caused me so much anxiety.

I hear the crackle of the two-way radio as the pea harvesters talk to the canning factory. I thought of how those three machines with three people running them around the clock have replaced that row of viners and those hundreds of people. For a moment, I am overcome with guilt. Have I been part of a coup that has led to the decline of rural America, its way of life, and its community? I think of the town, those vacant storefronts, abandoned dairies, and broken dreams. I think of the sons and daughters from those farms for whom economic reality presented no promise, no future, and no more ties to the land. Farming presents so much apprehension and uncertainty. I don't need this darkness, this guilt.



### Prospects for the 21st Century

Can light come from this darkness? Can I keep the victory going? Should I keep the victory going? I think about the challenges. Agriculture and its capacities, that were once held almost holy, are now taken for granted. Will I be able to recognize the new accountabilities as America redefines itself? I have come to recognize that as each generation is removed further from their agricultural heritage, we also have a new clientele. I think of the agents and elements of this change. Even my own sons, with their differences of defining experiences, with less ties to tradition, a desire for an easier life, and a broader perspective of a new world order, are questioning this farming vocation.

### Revitalizing the Community

Again, I think about Pea Viner Corners. It is still a community. It has a diverse agenda, a renewed agenda. It is rede-

fining itself. Its residents have unpredictable political ties, and they question government, business, and even science. It is a community of commuters, commuting because the industrialization of agriculture and its efficiencies have led to no economic or employment opportunities at home. I am frustrated because they don't understand my vocation. I am frustrated because they seem to have a different environmental consciousness. But I have to remember — it is collective responsibility that will make a revitalized community. As a farmer I haven't done enough to understand their diverse perspectives, while dwelling on their inattention to mine.

I reflect on the opportunity that is, perhaps, in our own backyard. Maybe, just maybe, this intermeshing with suburbia is what agriculture needs. My new neighbors' perceptions of quality and freshness, as well as their environmental consciousness, have certainly changed my marketplace. Perhaps there is common ground for understanding. Maybe if I, and all of agriculture, put forth some effort, we can work together again with our neighbors to bring back to rural America everything that makes community.

I think of the void that has been left in rural America. I think about that old foundation at Pea Viner Corners and of foundations all across rural America. Whether or not agriculture is the cause, I feel an obligation to fill that void with meaning.

James Vincent  
Byron, New York

# program news

## *Award*

**Ben Faber**, farm advisor, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, received a 1999 award from the California Association of Farm Advisors and Specialists for his decade-long work with the avocado and citrus industries. During that time, he has developed new cultural practices in pruning design, nitrogen fertilizer management, and cover crops. He also has studied the use of urban waste mulch to control root diseases.

## *Sabbatical*

**Aziz Baameur**, farm advisor, Riverside County, will undertake a four-month sabbatical leave to China. He plans to tour farms and learn about Chinese agriculture-related language in Shanghai, and study soils and fertility as a visiting researcher at Zeh Jiang University in Hangzhou. He returns to the United States in late December 1999.

## *Participation in USDA Regional Session*

As a member of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agriculture Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board, **Desmond Jolly**, agricultural economist and Small Farm Program director, participated in the Regional Listening Session on Northeast Agriculture held at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, July 11, 1999. The northeast region includes states from Maryland to Maine in the eastern part of the United States.

## *Visitors*

**Marianna Alexandryan**, marketing and credit assistant, U.S. Department of Agriculture Marketing Assistance Project in Yerevan, Armenia, visited the Small Farm Center recently to consult on agricultural finance and ways to help Armenian small-scale farmers.

**Anthony Evans**, farmers' market coordinator for the Maryland Department of Agriculture, visited with Small Farm Center staff to gather information about farmers' markets in California and across the United States.

## *Tours*

**Paul Vossen**, farm advisor, Sonoma County, heads up an educational tour of Greek olive oil production and culture November 27-December 8, 1999. Tour participants will spend 12 days in Greece visiting isolated areas that produce hand crafted olive oils, large cooperatives producing high-volume, lower-cost oils, and both of the major table olive production districts.

## *Omission*

**Claudette Cervinka**, photographer, should have received credit for photos that ran in the Small Farm News spring issue on pages 4 and 5. She photographed Dru Rivers, Paul Muller, and Richard Rominger at the Small Farm Program's 20th Anniversary Banquet.



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The Small Farm Center links those who need information on small-scale farming with those who have the information. The Center produces publications and a newsletter; sponsors conferences and seminars; holds a library of periodicals, reports and books; gives referrals; and answers requests for information.

Readers are encouraged to send us information, express views, and contact us for assistance. Mention of a specific product is intended for the reader's information — not as a recommendation of that specific product.



## Agricultural Tourism—FROM PAGE 1

a different sort when he or she buys directly from the grower and can engage in a more primal relationship with the producer. It allows the consumer a kind of vicarious participation in this rich social heritage of the family farm.



Michael Dimock leads a visioning session on the Central Coast.

Community Supported Agriculture has gained a niche in agricultural marketing and has, for many family farms, provided the critical difference in their economic stability and social sustainability. It diversifies and adds stability to their income stream, and provides interest free cash for production. But perhaps as importantly, it forges meaningful relationships between farmers and non-farmers, and between urban and rural people. Many members of Community Supported Agriculture programs spend several days per year camping in tents at the farm, participating in the work, and engaging socially with the farm family.

So, for many in Community Supported Agriculture programs, the benefits are more than just farm fresh produce. The benefits extend to participating in the rural farm experience and knowing that they are choosing to help preserve a vital part of our social heritage — the family farm. This phenomenon leads directly into the area of agricultural tourism. Like direct markets and Consumer Supported Agriculture, it facilitates an exchange of values between the consumer and the farm community. Agricultural tourism takes many forms, including the drive-by, as in those who patronize farm and roadside stands, and farm stays, where people

come and stay for several days on the farm. Agricultural tourism includes educational tours, dude ranches, agricultural heritage festivals, tasting events, ag museums, county fairs, commodity festivals, (such as the Gilroy Garlic Festival), and a host of other events and opportunities for consumers and producers to generate a meaningful exchange of values. Consumers value the ambiance, the experience, the difference, the cultural exchange, and the products. Farmers get a sense of satisfaction from providing positive experiences for people, from relationships that develop with these people, and, of course, from receiving remuneration for their efforts.

At a recent agricultural conference, a member of the panel on direct marketing discussed how she left a mid-career executive position in Southern California, and returned to the family's apple operation. There she grew the business, almost totally based on agricultural tourism, into a \$3,000,000 agritourism business. Others with requisite assets can develop a reasonable livelihood by developing various niche markets.



Ellie Rilla, right, talks with Mark Pasternak, Marin grape grower, at the Marin County agri-tourism workshop.

Important assets are entrepreneurial skills, vision, coordination, people and marketing skills. In addition to knowing what a produce buyer, packer or processor wants in terms of product quality, you need to have some sense of what people want, what they like to do, what kind of interests they have, and how to relate to them. Since you will often have other



At the Watsonville agri-tourism meeting, Nita Gizdich, right, addresses participants including Ramiro Lobo, farm advisor, San Diego County.

people interacting with your clients or customers, you will need to provide good training in customer relations and develop systems for quality control. The business becomes more of a front-line vs. a back-room operation.

## The Role of UC Cooperative Extension

The Small Farm Program received a grant from USDA in 1997 under the Fund for Rural America Program to help foster an educational outreach program on agricultural tourism in California. We know that many agri-tourism activities, such as festivals, tasting rooms, and county fairs, have been going on in California for decades. But there was a need to widen participation by serving as a catalyst for developing the institutional framework to enhance the spread of agri-tourism across the state.

In particular, the Small Farm Program has an interest in seeing how family farmers can benefit. To this end, the Small Farm Program has developed a number of partnerships to support pilot projects in different parts of the state — San Diego, Marin, and the Central Coast, in particular. In each area, there is a core of key people taking the lead in organizing steering committees; developing plans; including visions, goals and objectives; and designing an educational program that can empower family farms and rural commu-

nities to meet a growing consumer demand for the rural and agricultural experience.

The Marin effort is being led by Ellie Rilla, UC Cooperative Extension Marin County director. She collaborates with a number of organizations to organize educational programs on value-added products and agri-tourism. The San Diego project, also a collaborative effort, is led by UC Cooperative Extension San Diego staff members Diane Wallace, county director; Ramiro Lobo, small farm advisor; and Scott Parker, program representative. They are completing a strategic plan for agri-tourism education and coordination in San Diego County. The Central Coast effort, similarly a collaborative effort of tourism, agriculture, business, and government participants, is being coordinated by Jeff Rodriguez of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A statewide Agricultural Tourism Working Group meets periodically to define an education and research agenda that can expedite the development of agri-tourism in California. Convened by Desmond Jolly, principal investigator, the Agri-tourism Project is comprised of university research and extension faculty, farm and consumer advisors, and industry representatives.

### Conclusion

The changing demographics and lifestyles of California and U.S. populations offer opportunities for more closely linking agriculture to consumers. Exploiting these opportunities requires a new set of skills that are somewhat different from those typical of more conventional agriculture. Agri-tourism is direct marketing. Educational programs can assist in promoting the transition to this new agriculture, and the University of California, through its Small Farm Program and Cooperative Extension, is contributing to the development of agri-tourism and the new agriculture. ■



*A skyward view of the National Steinbeck Center lobby.*

## National Steinbeck Center Adds Agricultural Wing in 2000

**K**im Greer, chief executive officer of the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California, wants to put your memories on loan. He needs them to illustrate the Central Coast's agricultural history in the center's soon-to-be-built agricultural wing. If you are a Central Coast farmer (Salinas Valley or Monterey County), take a moment to search your family mementos for family farm stories, diaries, pictures, and historical objects.

"People like to see and touch things," says Greer, who will place donated or on-loan family items in the new wing, set to break ground in 2000. The wing is the result of a cooperative effort between National Steinbeck Center supporters and farmers from the area.

Author John Steinbeck was born in Salinas, a town that publicly burned his books on two occasions, but ultimately honored him with many acknowledgments. Steinbeck drew his inspiration from the land and the people who worked it, and through his books he championed and honored the strength of their human spirit.

Built in 1998, the center honoring Steinbeck draws more than 120,000 people annually. Greer expects that many of them will want to experience life on the farm after visiting its new agricultural wing. He invites Central Coast farmers ready for agri-tourism visitors to contact the center with tourist-related farm information. That information will be used to refer National Steinbeck Center visitors to your Central Coast-area farms.

To share your family's Central Coast memorabilia or to provide information about your Central Coast farm, contact the National Steinbeck Center at One Main Street, Salinas, CA 93901; (831) 796-3833; <http://www.steinbeck.org>. ■

## Successful —FROM PAGE 1

participants and families. As many as 1,000 school children per day tour the farm via hay rides, then partake in farm education sessions and visit the petting zoo.

A picnic area with tables placed beneath poplar trees provides a rest area after tours. Children and their parents snack while the latter fill out questionnaires that provide Palmer with tour feedback. Visitors also shop in a gift tent overflowing with fall accessories, or enjoy entertainment, food, and craft fairs.

Christmas season kicks off in mid-November, when people come to reserve trees. To meet customer requests, Palmer purchases 20 percent of his trees from small fir tree growers in Oregon, where the tree prefers the cool climate to his area's hot, dry weather. The firs receive special treatment upon arrival when they are recut and placed in water. Some customers still prefer his on-farm trees, predominantly Monterey Pine, with some Aleppo and Sierra Redwood varieties making up the remainder. All trees bear tags that are pulled off and filled out by customers. The demographic information is later used for the farm's mailing list.

While pumpkin season brings the highest volume of visitors, Christmas season financially "carries us through," says Palmer. In addition to tree selling, he offers a variety of events and reopens his gift tent stocked with Christmas items hand-picked during cross country gift show trips.

## Marketing

Palmer knows the value of word of mouth advertising, and asks himself before each season begins, "What can we do this year that will make them tell their neighbor?" This season, he introduces a train ride that ferries children around the farm.

Other marketing methods include a direct-mail pumpkin newsletter with a 15,000-reader distribution culled from the Christmas tree tag list, and a Christmas opening weekend invitation and newsletter. Palmer also buys newspaper advertising, trades with radio stations, runs radio spots, and submits press releases and calendar items to 70 newspapers and televi-

sion stations in the area, with reportedly excellent coverage results. He also puts his 3,000 feet of freeway frontage to good use by putting up many freeway signs.



Riverside County Farm advisor Aziz Baameur, left, visits regularly with Gregg Palmer, right, on Palmer's farm, where Baameur advises on farm-related issues.

## Moving Forward

Palmer's prime Christmas tree farm location prompts regular bids to buy the land he co-owns with other family members. "We have current offers from the biggest retailers in the U.S.," says Palmer, who adds that a deal is likely in the next few years. "I have some say in it, but for the good of all, I would have to agree with them that it's the thing to do."

But Palmer believes there is a need for small farms. "A place where consumers can connect to farmers is a good thing," says Palmer. Look for his operation elsewhere, either on another area of his family's property or a new patch of ground where Christmas trees and pumpkin patches can peacefully coexist. □

## Rita Cardoza

Rita Cardoza lives in a big valley just off one of Sonoma County's busiest roadways, Lakeville Highway. Years ago, she taught school, worked on the family ranch with her husband, and raised two children. "I think it was about the time number three came along that it was clear that something needed to change," says Cardoza, who needed additional on-farm income to stay home with her children.

The Cardoza ranch has a sub-irrigated lake bottom where her family has always grown a larger-than-ordinary farm garden. In the past, they often gathered family and friends for a hay ride to the lake bottom where they picked garden-fresh produce. Friends often suggested the Cardozas invite the public to share their garden bounty. "But we live about two miles off the road and I thought, 'Who's ever going to drive all the way back in here?'" says Cardoza. "Being a big broad valley, it isn't the scenic little farm of your imagination."

Instead, she started growing and selling produce to local stores, then opened a small farm stand just off the highway on her neighbor's property. "People will go anywhere for good tomatoes, corn and mel-



Rita Cardoza speaks at the May 27 Marin County agritourism workshop.

ons," says Cardoza. And they did come, in such large numbers that she had trouble with traffic, county regulations, and even a farm stand robbery.

She and her family realized the operation was not what they intended. So they sought an enterprise to entice people to travel two miles back to their farm. A pumpkin patch seemed ideal. "But I knew that people wouldn't just come for the product," says Cardoza. "We realized what they're coming for is to touch us ... to get a piece of what they believe country life is all about."

The idea succeeded. For seven years, the Cardozas have opened their pumpkin patch during October, when up to 6,000 people visit daily to experience country life. That figure includes up to 200 school children per day, who visit the haunted house, play in the children's garden and a hay bale maze, and check out the discovery room



— a playhouse with rubber vegetables and a cook stove in it. The site also includes a farm museum, a play area, a pond and picnic area, and a petting zoo where actual animal petting is limited to goats since the turkeys were caught stealing children's lunches.

When Cardoza notes a need among her visitors, she addresses it. "We have by nature created a society that is less self directed, so we have learned to give out little maps and have a program of activities," she says.

To keep things lively, she also added entertainment. "Elvis appeared out of the cornfield last year," she reveals.

Part of her success comes from her ability to find agri-tourism support from local groups. "We have hay rides with docents that go out into the valley floor and tell them about the history of the ranch and talk to them about farming," she says.

But large crowds also have drawbacks for Cardoza, who genuinely enjoys working with the public. "We want to have more personal rapport," says Cardoza. "But I have to tell you, that month pays the bills." Speaking recently at an agritourism workshop in Marin County, Cardoza advised farmers considering agricultural tourism to ask themselves what they must do to honor their lifestyles. "Most of you are in ag not because you're getting rich, but because you like what you do," she says. She urges farmers to view their agri-tourism plans in that context. □

## Nita Gizdich

by Jeannette Warnert, public information representative,  
University of California

When Nita Gizdich posted signs on a highway near her farm offering U-pick olallieberries, the curious few who turned off the road all had one question: What are olallieberries? When the sign was changed to "blackberries" and the customers began flowing in, a concept vital to her success in agri-tourism was driven home. "Always listen to your customers," she says. "They'll tell you exactly what to do."

The wishes and whims of her customers have been the force behind changes, additions, and improvements that transformed a sleepy 50-acre family farm on the outskirts of Watsonville 18 years ago to a thriving business. Gizdich and staff now serve up fresh apple juice and apple pie,



Nita Gizdich shares tips at the June 28 Watsonville agri-tourism workshop.

apple-themed gifts, and antiques to suburbanites who've dropped by to enjoy a day in the country picking apples or berries.

Ranch matriarch Gizdich toiled for years alongside her husband, Vince, whose parents established the farm in the 1930s. With her husband now ill, farm management has been passed on to the next generation, sons Mitchell and Vince, but Nita is still one of Gizdich Ranch's hardest workers and fiercest promoters.

"We would never have survived just by growing berries and apples," Gizdich says. "There used to be 10 big pack-out places in Watsonville. Now we're down to one." Instead of rushing the fruit to market, Gizdich busies herself attracting the market to the ranch, starting with apple blossom viewing in April and continuing through the spring and summer with U-pick strawberries, olallieberries, boysenberries, and raspberries. In September, the apple trees attract pickers. Hay rides and thousands of school children on field trips to the farm round out the fall. All year, the bakery serves pies and deli sandwiches.

Gizdich never stops marketing. She even brings flyers on vacation to pass out to fellow tourists. She advertises in parenting magazines, sends postcards to regular customers, pays for highway signs on her neighbor's property with all the homemade pie they can eat, and is always

available for the news media. "I don't care when. It's free," she says.

Gizdich's voice turns sad when she talks about liability insurance. "That will close us one day," she says, telling of a U-pick neighbor that went out of business after two visitors tripped and fell on the farm, sustaining minor injuries. Following their lawsuits, future liability insurance was denied. "We've got an umbrella (insurance policy) that is so heavy now it's going to cave in," she said. "We are just hoping everything will go smoothly."

But her enthusiasm is not dampened. In June, Gizdich hosted the 33-member Small Farm Program agri-tourism working group with much pride, sharing the secrets of her success — "Hard work, sweat and no loans" — as generously as the farm-pressed, crisp apple juice she poured into paper cups. ■

## Location, Location, Location

Poor location is one of the major causes of on-farm venture failures. If your farm is on a state highway, you may obtain an estimate of the number of motorists who drive by your farm by calling the California Department of Transportation at (916) 654-3072.

Most people will drive only 10-25 miles to a farm. If your farm is not within a 25-mile radius of an urban population or tourist attraction, consider joining a farm trail organization to bring visitors to your farm.

**Signs and parking.** Check with the highway department regarding parking and entrance requirements and outdoor advertising signs. Check with your county's planning commission for information on sign construction.

**Zoning and buildings.** Contact your local county planning commission. Building permits may be required if you plan to add structures to house your agritourism enterprise.

Source: Small Farm Program's *Small Farm Handbook* (See page 9).

## Liability Insurance Available Through NAFDMA

One of the major constraints we have encountered in the development of an agri-tourism thrust in California relates to the level of risk and liability engendered by a farm land operation. Either farmers do not know where they can get coverage for liability, or they feel they cannot afford coverage. We have been attempting to identify bottlenecks as well as affordable policies that could enhance agri-tourism access by small-scale farmers.

While visiting Charlie Touchette of the North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA), I was informed that NAFDMA has recently joined forces with an insurance carrier and will make insurance available to members of NAFDMA. To benefit from this insurance, those interested can join NAFDMA for \$75 per year. Liability coverage is provided by the Scottsdale Insurance Company, a member of the Nationwide Insurance Group.

### Coverage

The basic liability plan would cover activities such as farm stand sales, hay rides, petting zoos, U-Pick operations, school tours, festivals, entertainment, farm activities, baked goods, and farmers' market sales.

### Rate

The basic rate is \$3 per \$1,000 of gross receipts for coverage of \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and \$2,000,000 maximum per year. Additional coverage also is available.

### For more information

Contact Charlie Touchette, Executive Director, North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association, (888) 884-9270, e-mail [nafdwa@map.com](mailto:nafdwa@map.com).



### Publications



*Understanding the Farmers' Comprehensive Personal Liability Policy* is a guide on personal liability policy put out by the National Center for Agricultural Law Research and Information. Cost: \$15 plus \$3 shipping. Contact: National Center for Agricultural Law Research and Information, 147 Waterman Hall, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701; (501) 575-7646.

The *Direct Farm Marketing and Tourism Handbook* from the University of Arizona is available on the web at <http://ag.arizona.edu/AREC/dmkt/tabcontents.html>, and also may be available in print in limited quantities. Check the web site or call about available hardbound copies. Cost: Web site is free; hardbound version is \$25 including shipping. Contact: Shoshana Mayden, University of Arizona Agricultural and Resource Economics, P.O. Box 210023, Tucson, AZ 85721-0023; (520) 621-6264.

*Cultivating Farm, Neighbor, and Community Relations* is designed to help farmers and their nonfarm neighbors maintain good relationships in areas where conflicts over land-use issues may arise. Cost: \$5 plus \$3 shipping and handling. Contact: Cornell Instructional Materials Service, Department of Education, 420 Kennedy Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-1837.

The *Local Visitor Impact Model* from the California Division of Tourism provides steps and sample survey forms for a do-it-yourself visitor profile and impact study. Cost: Free. Other publications available from the California Division of Tourism include the *California Welcome Center Survey Report*, which provides the results of a survey of visitors to California Welcome Centers. Cost: Free. Contact: Research, California Division of Tourism, 801 K Street, Suite 1600, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 322-2881.

*U-Pick Blueberries: An Alternative Enterprise Guidebook* is a short guide for those interested in setting up a u-pick enterprise. Cost: \$7.50 (shipping included). Contact: Yellow Wood Associates, Inc., 95 South Main St., St. Albans, VT, 05478; phone: (802) 524-6141.

### Resources

### Web Sites

Australian Office of National Tourism's Bookshop  
<http://www.tourism.gov.au/Bookshop/index.html>

California Division of Tourism  
<http://gocalif.ca.gov>

California Trade and Commerce Agency: Business 101  
<http://commerce.ca.gov/business/small/>

Links to National Tourism Extension Faculty  
<http://www.montana.edu/wwwcommd/faculty.htm>

University of Arizona Agricultural and Resource Economics Direct Farm Marketing and Tourism Handbook  
<http://ag.arizona.edu/AREC/dmkt/tabcontents.html>

Oregon State University Western Rural Development Center Publications  
<http://www.orst.edu/dept/WRDC/editor.html>

Michigan State University National Database of Extension Tourism Materials  
<http://www.msue.msu.edu/msue/imp/modtd/mastertd.html>

National Extension Tourism Conference  
<http://www.cas.nercrd.psu.edu/publications/ntc.html>

Unique Niches: Agritourism in Britain and New England (a publication)  
<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism/insidecov.html>

Tourism Policy Council  
<http://tpcnet.doc.gov>

Visit the Small Farm Center's Agricultural Tourism site at  
<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism/agritour.html>

You'll find agricultural tourism definitions, a unique 64-page publication, and links to other sites.



## The Specialty and Minor Crops Handbook

Updated and expanded from the first edition, the *Specialty and Minor Crops Handbook* contains 63 crop profiles, a comprehensive bibliography, a glossary of Asian vegetables, and an index to common and scientific crop names.

To order, call the Small Farm Center at (530) 752-8136. Cost: \$35 plus tax and shipping.



## The Small Farm Handbook

This practical guide covers topics including livestock and crop production, buying property and equipment, dealing with taxes and regulations, and marketing.

To order, call the Small Farm Center at (530) 752-8136. Cost: \$20 plus tax and shipping.

## News Notes



■ An organization called Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) offers a list of organic farms around the world that provide room and board to volunteers who work three to six hours a day at unskilled tasks. Volunteers pay only their travel costs to and from farms, and must make their own arrangements with farmers. To receive the farm list, participants must join either the international WWOOF organization or the WWOOF organization in the country where they want to work. Costs for joining vary between \$10 and \$20 in participating countries.

To find out more about becoming a WWOOFer, access the WWOOF International web site at <http://www.phdcc.com/sites/wwoof/index.html>. The site lists all countries with WWOOF organizations, and includes an application for those interested in adding their organic farms to the WWOOF list at <http://www.phdcc.com/sites/wwoof/hostapp.html>. Mailing addresses: WWOOF International, P.O. Box 2675, Lewes BN7 1RB, England, UK. To receive a list of U.S. farms involved in WWOOFing, contact NEWOOF USA, New England Small Farm Institute, P.O. Box 608, Belchertown, MA, 01007; (413) 323-4531.

■ The California Division of Tourism offers a variety of options to farmers who want to advertise their agri-tourism activities. To find out about advertising your agri-tourism venture in the California Division of Tourism Regional Visitor's Guides, contact California Tourism Publications, 19600 Fairchild Road, Suite 260, Irvine, CA 92715; (949) 833-9002. To place advertising information in California Welcome Centers throughout the state, contact your area welcome center or local chamber of commerce for more information.

The California Division of Tourism's California Countryside Grants enable the eight rural regions of California to promote their regions. These regions include the North Coast, Shasta Cascade, Gold Country, High Sierra, Deserts, Inland Empire, Central Valley, and Central Coast. Although individuals cannot receive these funds, you can find out if your rural region is developing a tourism project in which your farm can participate. For information, call Eileen Hook, rural tourism liaison, at the California Division of Tourism, (916) 322-1266.

■ What do California visitors like to do? According to the California Division of Tourism, overseas travelers spend 37.3 percent of their time visiting small towns, 33.2 percent touring the countryside, and 2.1 percent on ranch vacations. National travel trends are moving towards shorter-duration vacations closer to home, with an emphasis on new experiences for families and singles.

Agri-tourism attracts the public in California as well as other states, including Iowa, where the tourism budget is significantly higher than California's. Pennsylvania has a farm vacation guide that includes a number of farms accredited by the state to offer farm stays. Farm stays range from simple accommodations in the extra bedroom to overnighting in a separate house adjacent to the family's. Guests eat with the family, feed the animals, and help with farm chores. ■

# conference news

**1999 California Farm Conference**  
**"Cultivating the Farm/City Connection"**  
**November 7-9, 1999**  
**Berkeley Marina Radisson Hotel, Berkeley, CA**



This year's farm conference will plant the seeds for a stronger relationship among farmers, consumers, educators, food professionals, environmentalists, and policy makers. An extensive series of more than 40 workshops, seminars, and tours will stimulate discussion on a wide range of food and agricultural topics, including sustainable agricultural practices, specialty crops and products, policy issues, successful farm-to-city models, agriculture and food education, direct marketing, and alternative marketing.

**Information and registration:** (510) 222-5091. **Web site:** <http://www.mother.com/~caff/farmcon99>  
**Cost:** Pre-registration (before Oct. 16) is \$90. After Oct. 16 is \$110. (Other costs may apply.)

## Farm Conference short courses and workshops include:

### Short course

**Starting and Sustaining a Small Farm**  
**Sunday, November 7**  
**10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

Learn the keys to success in starting and sustaining a small-scale farming operation. Presented by the **UC Small Farm Workgroup**, this course covers topics including soil and climate, farm equipment, cropping decisions, infrastructure, and the financial resources necessary to be successful. The course includes a hands-on workshop in developing a business plan, and a presentation on cropping decisions.

The Small Farm Handbook will be used as a class text, and costs \$20 plus tax. Short course fee: \$30. (You may register for this course without registering for the conference.)

### Instructors

*Tom Broz*, farmer, Live Earth Farm, Santa Cruz County

*Manuel Jimenez*, farm advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Tulare County

*Desmond Jolly*, director, UC Small Farm Center, and agricultural economist, UC Davis

*Jim Leap*, farm manager, UC Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems

*Richard Molinar*, farm advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Fresno County

*Steve Schwartz*, director, California FarmLink, Sacramento

### Workshop

**Farm Stays and Agri-tourism**  
**Tuesday, November 9**  
**9:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**Organized by the Small Farm Center and UC Cooperative Extension, Marin County**, this workshop provides an overview of the opportunities and challenges associated with incorporating agricultural tourism and farm stays into a farming operation. Presentations include:

- marketing, insurance, and regulatory tips by agricultural tourism entrepreneurs
- research findings
- tourism industry highlights

The workshop also provides an opportunity to brainstorm with other participants about farm stays and other forms of agricultural tourism.

### Speakers

*Ellie Rilla*, UC Cooperative Extension, Marin County, Novato, CA

*Nita Gizdich*, Gizdich Ranch, Watsonville, CA

*Sharon Doughty*, Vineyard Inn, Point Reyes, CA

*Voris Brumfield*, Redwood Empire Association, San Francisco, CA

**1999 National Small Farm Conference**  
**October 12-15, 1999**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**

This national conference provides a forum for state and county extension faculty, small-scale farmers, community leaders, and non-governmental organizations to share new approaches to small farm programs.

Conference topics include marketing strategies, value added enterprises, grant writing, business and entrepreneurial skills, and farmer to farmer and beginning farmer networks.

Participants may choose from a variety of theme-oriented tours that include a marketing/agri-tourism experience; a research, plant, and alternative agriculture tour; and a visit to the St. Louis Botanical Gardens.

## Conference fees

The registration fee is \$125 and includes a reception, three breakfasts, two lunches, one dinner buffet, and conference tours. Hotel rooms must be reserved by Friday, September 10, 1999, to receive the group rate.

## For more information

Contact Troy Darden, ATTN: SNSFC, Lincoln University, 301 Allen Hall, P.O. Box 29, Jefferson City, Missouri, 65102-0029; (573) 681-5587.

## Web site

<http://luce.lincolnu.edu/nsfc>

## For a copy of the conference announcement

Call the Small Farm Center at (530) 752-8136.

# calendar

## SEPTEMBER

3

### Successful Farming for Small Farmers

Indio, CA

Gain information for successful farming presented by speakers including Jose Aguiar, farm advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Indio Office.

Contact: Jose Aguiar, UC Cooperative Extension Indio Office, 49-209 Oasis St., Room 103, Indio, CA; (760) 863-7949.

3

### Field Day - Reduced Tillage in Tomatoes

Tracy, CA

Results of preliminary field trials of conservation tillage with processing tomatoes will be discussed, in addition to summaries of other conservation tillage studies. Tilling equipment also will be on display.

Contact: Benny Fouche, UC Cooperative Extension San Joaquin County, 420 S. Wilson Way, Stockton, CA; (209) 468-9491.

11

### Apples for the Home Garden and Small Orchard

Santa Cruz, CA

Apple tree expert Orin Martin explains the varieties and rootstocks that are best suited to the home garden or small orchard.

Contact: John Fisher, UC Santa Cruz, 1156 High St., Santa Cruz, CA 95064; (831) 459-3248.

14-16

### Fresh-cut Products: Maintaining Quality and Safety

UC Davis

Taught by Extension Specialist Marita Cantwell, this workshop covers food safety issues including production, processing, packaging, and quality control of fresh-cut products.

Contact: Kimberly Hall, University Extension, University of California, 1333 Research Park Drive, Davis, CA 95616; (530) 757-8519.

## OCTOBER

2

### Austin HerbFest '99

Austin, TX

Sponsored by the Austin Herb Society, this event includes vender booths, lectures, and demonstrations on gardening and herbs.

Contact: Cathy Slaughter, Gabriel Valley Farms, 130 Jonah Mill Rd., Georgetown, TX 78626; (512) 930-0923.

2-3

### The 13th Annual Hoes Down Harvest Festival and Organic Farm Bus Tour

Capay Valley, CA

This family event includes farm crafts, workshops, tours, entertainment, an organic farmers' market, hay rides, and pumpkins.

Contact: Dru Rivers P.O. Box 222, Guinda, CA 95637; (530) 796-3464.

9

### Harvest Festival

Santa Cruz, CA

The public is invited to enjoy music, food, talks, hay rides, children's events, and tours. Contact: John Fisher, UC Santa Cruz, 1156 High St., Santa Cruz, CA 95064; (831) 459-3248.

12-15

### 1999 National Small Farm Conference

St. Louis, MO

This conference provides a forum for state and county extension faculty, small farmers, community leaders, and non-governmental organizations to share new approaches to small farm programs.

Contact: Troy Darden, ATTN: SNSFC, Lincoln University, 301 Allen Hall, P.O. Box 29, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0029; (573) 681-5587.

21-22

### Sensory Evaluation of Olive Oil

UC Davis

Participants learn to evaluate olive oil through a blend of lectures and tastings that teach theory and provide applied experience. Paul Vossen, farm advisor, Sonoma County, teaches the course.

Contact: Kimberly Hall, University Extension, University of California, 1333 Research Park Drive, Davis, CA 95616; (530) 757-8519.

## NOVEMBER

5-6

### National Small Farm Trade Show and Conference

Columbia, MO

Featuring successful farmers sharing their methods, this conference addresses topics including cut flowers, miniature cattle, and financing.

Contact: Ron Macher, National Small Farm Show, 3903 W. Ridge Trail Rd., Clark, MO; (800) 633-2535.

6-7

### Getting Started in the Specialty Food Business

UC Davis

Learn the realities of getting your home-created product to the market in this course that covers topics including assessing consumer demand, processing, packaging and product testing, pricing, and promoting.

Contact: Kimberly Hall, University Extension, University of California, 1333 Research Park Drive, Davis, CA 95616; (530) 757-8519.

7-9

### 1999 California Farm Conference

Berkeley, CA

For small-scale farmers, farm advisors, farmers' market managers, and other interested parties, this conference includes seminars and tours on topics including sustainable agriculture, specialty crops, policy issues, agriculture and education, and direct and alternative marketing.

Contact: Kinene Barzin, c/o Richmond Farmers' Market, P.O. Box 434, Richmond, CA 94808-0434; (510) 222-5091.

Add your event to our web site at <http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/cgi-win/sfcweb.exe/listevents>



## Planning Your Agri-tourism Enterprise: Risk Management

**W**hen inviting the public to your farm, you must first make your property as safe as possible to avoid accidents. However, should one occur, the agreements you make prior to the farm activity may dictate who is legally responsible for the injury. Following are explanations of a few practices you should be aware of before proceeding with farm visits. A discussion with your legal counsel also is advised.

**Hold Harmless Agreement.** A hold harmless agreement between two parties states that one party will assume the risk of legal liability associated with an event for the other party. Usually landlords will include hold harmless language in leases to protect them from being sued if an accident occurs on their property. Farmers may ask on-site vendors to sign hold harmless agreements that release farmers from liability should a vendor-related accident occur on the farm.

**Participant Waivers.** Typically, participant waivers are used when minors are involved in school or camp activities, and would be appropriate for on-farm school tours. The minor's parents or guardians are required to sign the document agreeing to release the farmer from any responsibility for injury to their child. However, the waiver does not absolve farmers from liability for injuries directly caused by their negligence.

**Incident Reporting.** If an incident occurs, the safety point person on your farm should fill out and file an accident report, including contact information of witnesses and accident-site photos, for future reference. Should a claim be presented later, the file should provide sufficient information to begin the investigation. The safety point person also should follow up with the injured party. Many small claims can be averted by demonstrating concern for the individual.

**Vendors and other Independent Contractors.** If the activity provided by vendors or other independent contractors requires a license, check the license to see if it is current. Make sure independent contractors carry insurance before you allow them on your farm.

**Source:** *Sound Advice for Functions and Events* by the Nonprofits' Insurance Alliance of California, P.O. Box 8507, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-8507; (800) 359-6422. *Editor's note: While most farms are for-profit enterprises, these general tips still apply.*

**Additional resource:** *How to Run a Farm Tour*, by the Ontario Farm Animal Council, 7195 Millcreek Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, L5N 4H1. ■

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