



# Successes in Agritourism at Avila Valley Barn & Gopher Glen Organic Apple Farm

Agritourism Intensive – November 12, 2021    Presenter - Raven Lukehart, Owner





## Second Generation

- General Management: Raven Lukehart-Smith
- Farming Operations: Jake Lukehart-Smith
- Prepared Food Operations: Chef Jesse Smith





Family owned and operated since our start

- Bruce and Debbie Smith designed and developed the Avila Valley Barn we all know and love today





## Avila Valley Barn Then & Now

- Established in 1985 by dentist John and his wife Bobbi DeVincenzo
- Operated by Debbie and Bruce Smith 1886 – 2009
- Ownership transferred to Debbie and Bruce Smith 2009 – Current

# Avila Valley Barn Then

- Homemade pies
- Homemade Jams and jugged honey
- Local Fruit
- Draft horse cart rides
- Planted first you-pick orchard
- Employment of 1 – 5 people

# Avila Valley Barn Now

- Full handcraft bakery
- 100 acres of fruit and veg
- Hayrides
- Smokehouse and chicken shack
- SLO made ice creamery
- Gift shop
- Local fruits and vegetables
- Pasture raised meats and eggs
- You-pick apples, peaches berries, and flowers
- Corn Stand
- Farm animal zoo
- Pony Rides
- Catering
- Donut Shop
- Co-packed jams, honey, and picked goods
- Soon: Events and alcohol
- Employment: 30-80 persons and 2 seasonal interns

# Challenges

- Maintenance of equipment and buildings
- Maintaining a “clean farm”
- Overhead associated with the public visiting
- Winter slow down
- General farming knowledge
- Zoning and permitting
- Controlling waste and leaks
- Taxes
- Generational transition
- Balancing personal time
- Crop loss

























## Gopher Glen Then & Now

- Established in 1971 by dentist John and his wife Bobbi DeVincenzo
- Operated by John and Bobbi 1971 – 2009
- Ownership transferred to Debbie and Bruce Smith 2009 – Current



# Gopher Glen Apple Farm

## **Then**

- Covered garage
- Fresh pressed cider
- 65 retailed apple varieties
- Apple sampling

## **Now**

- Full barn
- Walk in coolers and freezers
- Fresh pressed cider
- Hard apple ciders
- Local & craft goods gift shop
- Apple sampling
- Organic production
- Private cider events and music
- Farm stay
- Festival booths



# Challenges

- Transitioning to organic and the 7 year hurt
- Funds for regenerative farming practices and equipment
- Labor force
- General farming knowledge
- Health and safety requirements
- Zoning and permitting
- Creating Profit
- Land price
- Crop loss and lack of crop diversity
- Working with family





Fresh Pressed

APPLE  
CIDER

Spitzenberg

Red Hovang

Balduin

Oneifra

Braeburn

Red Gold

Oneifra

SALT WATER  
TARTS  
\$0.10/10

PURE  
HONEY  
Straws

Honey  
1/2 pint \$10  
Pint \$17  
Jar w/ handle \$25  
Honey straw  
\$.25/100









Healthy  
Soils  
WEBINAR

MANAGING SOIL NITROGEN AND SOIL  
WATER IN YOUR SYSTEM.

JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup> / 11-12:00ZOOM

Introduction from Partners, Sampling and  
Application Demo, Question and Answer

2020 University of California  
Cooperative Extension  
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
DISTRICT





# How to determine where to spend your efforts

- Do any logjams or adverse factors exist?
- Where within production will you get your biggest return for each dollar spent?
  - Resources → Production → Marketing
- Consider the following when developing a new enterprise.
  - Does it utilize knowledge and resources you already maintain?
  - Is it addictive to your resources?
  - Does it pencil out on paper with conservative income and inflated cost guesstimates?
  - Does it align with your context for doing business?