



May 2011

California AgTour Connections

Agritourism News & Notes

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Greetings!

Blossom festivals, baby animal viewing, U-Pick openings, do-it-yourself classes, springtime tours and tastings and of course planting are keeping many of you busy this month. New collaborations are springing up around the state and reporters help spread the word about what you're offering.

California Agriculture journal just released the [peer-reviewed article](#) by UC researchers about the economic impact of California agritourism, which has generated extra interest in agritourism.

The [UC Small Farm Program](#) agritourism program was thrilled to help connect farmers and ranchers with tourism professionals, county planners and other community leaders at our recent "Growing Agritourism" workshops. The final workshop in this series will be in Salinas on May 18. Follow-up gatherings are now scheduled in four other regions; you are invited to join us for talk and tours. With newly announced funding from the Western Center for Risk Management Education, we are planning a series of risk management workshops for producers next winter, and have begun talks to connect the [CalAgTour.org](#) directory to a larger statewide agricultural mapping project.

Thanks for opening this newsletter. Please stay in touch. We'd love to write about your farm or ranch activities in the next newsletter.

Sincerely,
Penny Leff, UC Small Farm Program agritourism coordinator

Final "Growing Agritourism" Workshop in Salinas Central Coast agritourism community meets May 18

The Central Coast region workshop, originally scheduled for March 3 in Salinas, has been rescheduled for May 18. **You are invited to [register!](#)** The workshop is for agritourism operators, farmers and ranchers



considering agritourism, agricultural and tourism professionals, county planners and regulators, elected officials and community leaders. It will be a chance to learn from one another and to discuss common challenges and opportunities for building a stronger infrastructure for successful agritourism in the region.

Please help spread the word about this workshop to your colleagues, associations and anyone else involved in Central Coast agritourism.

[Salinas Workshop agenda](#)
[Salinas Workshop flier](#)

More than 300 participants gathered for the first four agritourism professional development workshops held in Merced, Rio Vista, Ukiah and Red Bluff this January and February to make useful contacts and discuss new approaches to shared challenges. Many of the [presentations](#) from the first four workshops are posted. For more information, see the [Small Farm Program website](#) or contact [Penny](#) at 530-752-7779.



The workshops, organized by the UC Small Farm Program in cooperation with UC Cooperative Extension and several local sponsors, are funded by Western SARE.

Regional follow-up gatherings - You're invited!

Four upcoming "Growing Agritourism" meetings include tours



Please join other farmers, ranchers, agritourism operators, tourism and agricultural professionals and community leaders at one of four half-day agritourism gatherings planned for the coming month. Each of these events will take place on a farm or ranch and will feature small group discussions, an expert speaker on an agritourism issue of general concern, and a

tour of an agritourism operation. The 300 participants of the regional "Growing Agritourism" workshops in January and February are particularly encouraged to attend, but everyone involved in California agritourism is welcome. The events are part of the agritourism professional development project organized by the UC Small Farm Program and funded by Western SARE.

There is no charge for participation at the gatherings, but registration is required and space is limited at some venues. Please click on the registration links below or contact Penny at 530-752-7779 to learn more details about each event:

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Region: Gather at Brookside Farm in Brentwood, Wednesday May 25, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
[Brentwood information and registration](#)

San Joaquin Valley and Foothills Region: Gather at the Heartland Festival, Saturday May 28, (Memorial Day Weekend) 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Location: Double T Acres, Stevenson CA 95374
[Double T Information and registration](#)

Northern Valley and Mountains Region: Gather at Chaffin Family Orchards in Oroville, Thursday June 2, 1:30 - 5:00 p.m.
[Northern Valley information and registration](#)

North Coast Region: Gather at six Sigma Ranch in Lower Lake, Wednesday June 8, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
[North coast information and registration](#)

CalAgTour.org directory & free event listings

Is your farm or ranch listed? Is your next event on the calendar?

Twice as many people as last year are searching for California farms and ranches to visit using [CalAgTour.org](#). Listings and event postings are free.

If you are a working farmer or rancher operating an agritourism business or organizing agritourism events, we invite you to complete the [directory application](#) or the [event listing application](#) online so we can include your business and events in the directory. If you're already listed, please [check your listing](#) and update it if needed. You can use the [directory application](#) form for updates. We'll contact you if we have any questions.



Let's fill up that [events calendar](#)!

Join our Facebook page & listserv to connect Let's stay in touch



We're on [Facebook](#) as "AgTour Connections." This is your page; please feel free to use it to share your activities, events, pictures and thoughts! Don't forget to "like" the page.

Also, please join the conversation on the Agtour-connect listserv, hosted by UC Davis. This is an email discussion group for everyone involved in the business of California agritourism. [Sign up here](#) to share your thoughts, questions, news, or updates with other list members.

Bay Area Green Tours partners with MALT & BALT Berkeley group brings visitors to farms & ranches

Non-profit educational tour organizer, [Bay Area Green Tours](#), has teamed up with local agritourism associations, Marin Agricultural Land Trust ([MALT](#)) and Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust ([BALT](#)), to bring busloads of Bay Area visitors to local farms.



This Saturday, May 7, the [Marin County Farm-to-Fork Tour](#) will visit organic farms Red Hill Ranch and County Line Harvest, Stemple Creek Ranch and Quetzal Farm. The tour organizers do all the promotions, arrange the transportation and tour staffing, sell tickets and show up at the farms with about 50 interested urban people. Although the farmers are not paid directly for hosting the tours, they sell products to the visitors and gain from increased brand recognition for their agricultural products at stores and farmers markets by investing only about two hours of their time.

Tour organizers are offering a 25% discount to readers of this newsletter for the May 7 tour. You can get more information and register [here](#). When you sign up, you can use the following code to get your 25% discount:

- A) Tour without lunch: Code: discountbeth
- B) Tour with lunch: Code: discountbethlunch

The upcoming Brentwood tour series will feature U-Pick cherries and nectarines in June, and other regional farms in August, with ticket sales opening up soon. Farmers who are not more than 1.5 hours from

Berkeley and are interested in being part of future tours can contact [Erica Woll](#), 510-520-7477

Agritourism insurance survey

Please help us all understand liability insurance options



Risk management and liability insurance are major issues for most agritourism operators. Numerous farms and ranches have recently been challenged to find insurance to cover their agritourism operations; some of them have suddenly been dropped after operating for 25 years without incident.

In order to help operators understand what options they might have, [Farm Stay U.S.](#) organizer Scottie Jones is conducting a confidential survey of agritourism operators about liability insurance coverage for different activities and sizes of operations. There may be opportunities for agritourism operators to join forces in the future to become a group that can negotiate specific coverage at reasonable rates.

[This survey](#) can be taken anonymously, although you can include your contact information and your insurance agent's contact information if you choose. Scottie promises to share the compiled results of this survey with us when it is completed, and we will report the findings in the next AgTour Connections newsletter.

Thanks for reading and doing what you do. Please forward this newsletter to anyone who might find it useful (Click on "forward email" below).

Sincerely,

Penny Leff
UC Small Farm Program
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