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California AgTour Connections

UC ANR Agritourism News & Notes

October 2014

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Greetings!

Thank you for being part of California's agritourism community. We hope October is being good to you and yours this year.

Some of you are celebrating successful events and more visitors than ever on your land. Others are struggling to understand what it takes to make agritourism a viable addition to a working farm or ranch. We are excited to be involved in a multi-state research project that may help us all learn what it takes to build a stronger industry.

We're also still planning a Statewide Agritourism Summit for April, 2015, and look forward to talking with many of you there about the future of our statewide network. More news soon about both these developing projects.

The UC Agritourism Directory and Calendar, www.CalAgTour.org keeps attracting more readers. Are your farm and events included? Please join. Listing is free.

This issue also contains news about the 2015 California Small Farm Conference, county policy and regulatory changes from around the state, and lots of links to useful resources and funding opportunities.

Thanks for reading.
Sincerely,

Penny Leff, Agritourism Coordinator
[UC Small Farm Program](#)

Place -Based Innovation: An Integrated Look at Agritourism in the Western US

What helps agritourism flourish in some places, and have a harder time gaining traction in other places? The Small Farm Program is working with researchers from Colorado State University, the University of Northern Colorado and the USDA Economic Research Service to try to answer this question, as part of a new multi-state study. This project is supported by Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grant # 2014-68006-21842 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture**

Over the next three years, the team will conduct surveys of agritourism operators, map agritourism clusters, interview agritourism visitors and involve some of you in focused case studies to learn about the factors that lead to successful agritourism development. This research will directly lead to the development of outcome-based



educational programs for farmers, ranchers and extension educators. The project will also create curriculum for undergraduate and graduate students learning about agritourism.

You may receive a short questionnaire by mail sometime in the next few months. It will arrive with a self-addressed stamped return envelope for your convenience. Thank you very much in

advance for participating in this important research project by completing and returning the questionnaire. For more information, please contact UC Small Farm project team members [Shermain Hardesty](#), 530-752-0467 or [Penny Leff](#), 530-752-7779.

California Small Farm Conference

San Diego - March 7 - 10, 2015



Attracting approximately 500 participants yearly, the [California Small Farm Conference](#) (CSFC) is the state's premier gathering of small-scale farmers, farmers' market managers, university researchers, federal and state agriculture agencies, agriculture students, food policy advocates, consumers and others. Please plan on joining us in San Diego in March, 2015. Registration will open by November 15.

The detailed 2015 Conference Schedule is coming soon! Keep updated on all activities by liking us on [Facebook](#) and signing up for our [E-Newsletter](#). We hope some of you will

join us on the Agritourism Field Course or the Alternatives in Marketing Field Course.

**Scholarship Applications now online
Apply by Dec. 5, 2014**

The CSFC awards scholarships to small-scale farmers and ranchers, student farmer/ranchers, farmer/rancher employees and farmers market managers to attend the Conference. Scholarships are awarded based on a number of criteria including farm and household income. Scholarship awards include significantly reduced registration fees of \$95 to the three-day

conference, all workshops and networking sessions, conference meals, and a Sunday Field Course at a discounted rate of \$25. Scholarship applications for the 2015 Conference must be completed [online here](#). Those who have received a Conference scholarship for a previous conference are not eligible.



Local Planning Committee meeting January 2015

Attention San Diego farmers: We need your input on local contacts for speakers, workshop topics, field tours and the tasting event! The final meeting of the Local Planning Committee will be held on Monday, January 12, 2015, at the San Diego Marriott Mission Valley from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. If you would like more information about joining the CSFC Local Planning Committee, please contact the [conference coordinator](#), Jennifer Roth, or [register here](#).



Silent Auction Donations needed to support scholarships

Would you like to introduce new people to your products, your business, your farm, or your agritourism operation? How about donating a night at your farm stay, a wine tasting, a cooking class spot, a gift basket of your products, a work of art, a consultation, a farm tour or free admission to your next event, or any other enjoyable or useful item or service, for the CSFC silent auction? Do you know other businesses that may be interested?

The Silent Auction is always a popular part of the conference, as well as an important funding source for the conference scholarship program.

For more information, or to make a donation, contact [Penny Leff](#), 530-752-7779

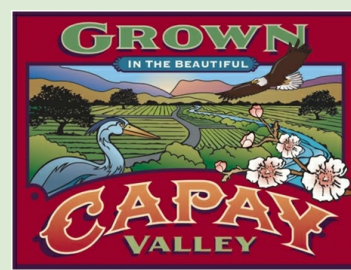
California Counties Changing the Rules Agritourism ordinance and policy updates

Farmers and ranchers all over California have created plans for hosting, entertaining, feeding and educating the public on their land. Often, the major challenge they face in turning these plans into viable job-creating enterprises is the permitting and regulatory process set by county zoning ordinances.

County supervisors, economic development leaders and tourism professionals are joining forces with farmers, ranchers, planners and environmental health departments to encourage agritourism development on working farms and ranches in many counties. However, change is slow. The last time this newsletter shared a look at some county changes was [July 2013](#). Here are some updates since that time:



- **Yolo County** adopted [new ordinances](#) for agricultural zoning in July 2014, allowing farm stays, farm dinners, small event centers on larger properties, and other agritourism activities "by right". The Capay Valley Vision's Agricultural Task Force, a group of Yolo County farmers, [wrote this letter](#) to provide input into the new ordinances. Some of the suggestions led to changes from earlier drafts of the ordinances, with a wider range of agricultural production and visitor-serving activities allowed "by right" in the final version than in the earlier versions.



- **Santa Clara County** adopted a [Winery Ordinance](#) in January 2013 that reduced the permitting cost for new small and mid-size wineries. [This matrix](#) compares earlier Santa Clara County winery regulations to the board of supervisors' recommendations for new rules in 2013. In November 2013, The county board of supervisors passed changes in ordinances so that signs leading to wineries can be placed on rural roads. As a result of hard work by the South County Wine Trail Formation Committee, the [Gilroy Wine Trail](#) is now a reality.



- **El Dorado County** released a [new draft in March 2014](#) of their proposed ordinances covering a wide range of agricultural and agritourism activities, including animal raising, agricultural lodging, ranch marketing, guest ranches, bake shops and wineries. Among other groups, the [Apple Hill Growers Association](#) and the [El Dorado Farm Trails](#) have been involved in the rule-making process with county staff for many years. Chris Flores, of El Dorado County Department of Agriculture, says that the requirement for a new Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is slowing down the process of finalizing the new ordinances. To learn more and to subscribe to updates, contact [Chris Flores](#), 530-621-7506

- **San Diego County** Board of Supervisors in 2013 directed staff to develop an "Agricultural Promotion Program" intended to "...streamline regulations; provide more opportunities for agricultural ventures, such as microbreweries and cheese-making, to further support small-scale agricultural operations; and promote agricultural tourism throughout the unincorporated portions of the County." The planning process has been funded and is moving forward. The latest information is on the [project webpage](#). San Diego farmers and others interested in staying involved in this process can contact [Carl Stiehl](#), 858-694-2216, to be placed on the "stakeholders list."



- **Santa Cruz County** Planning Department released a draft "[Santa Cruz County Economic Vitality Strategy](#)" document in May 2014, based on a series of public meetings and other research. In the "Agriculture Sector" part of the report, strategies recommended include: "Strategy 3.1: Consider Amendments to County Code to Support Agricultural-Related Enterprises. These include provisions that support agri-tourism such as farmstands, farmstays, on-site winery tasting rooms, U-Pick; and housing for farmworkers..." For more information or to stay involved, contact Santa Cruz County Planning Director [Kathy Molloy Previsich](#), 831-454-2580.

- **Santa Barbara County** is in the process of updating its Winery Ordinance. For more information, see the [county's website](#)

- Discussion about the **San Joaquin County** Winery Ordinance continues. To

learn more or join the conversation, see [this website](#), administered independently by Jon Bjork.

Please let us know about changes in your region for future updates and news alerts.

Many of the documents referenced here, along with other county and state policy and zoning ordinance drafts and final versions, are available on the Small Farm Program website section, "[Changing the Rules; Planning for and Regulating Agritourism in California](#)"



An idea: Crop signs for the driving public

Here's an idea you might follow up on; it was sent to me by Californian Linda Smetzer. If it interests you, please let me know, and I'll put you in touch with Ms. Smetzer:



"My husband and I were raised in Bakersfield and now live in the SF Bay Area. His mom worked for a potato/cotton farmer. Driving 99 and 5 we always love seeing all the wonderful farms, orchards and croplands.

Agriculture is so important to our state. BUT so is TOURISM. Here's what we've talked about every time we travel the Valley. It's a simple and somewhat inexpensive idea. Why don't farmers and ranchers create signs to show what vegetables and fruits and livestock they are providing to residents and visitors and the nation? We remember the Burma Shave signs of old. One farmer uses that idea to tell about his crops, and we love it. It helps to break up the endless miles of driving. We are proud of our farmers and ranchers and their production. I hope they might think about advertising their products with signs or with something creative. It's educational for kids and adults from California, the nation, and other countries.

I don't know if your organization has the interest or the means to spread the word about helping out us "civilians" to better enjoy and understand our state's bounty, but I thought I'd try an email to you that might be forwarded to other organizations or publications who might spread the word. Or if someone there can suggest the right channels, I'll follow it up. Thanks very much for your time and interest."

When's the last time you looked at www.CalAgTour.org ?
It's yours to use!



Thousands of people searched the UC Agritourism Directory & calendar last month for California farms and ranches to visit.

Did they find you? It's all free!

If you are a working California farmer or rancher operating an agritourism business or organizing agritourism events, we invite you to complete the [directory application](#) or the [event listing](#) form online to be included in the directory.

Please check [your listing](#) and update as needed. Send us your event news. (add paleff@ucdavis.edu to your email blast list) Let's fill up that [events calendar](#)!

Some useful resources...

- [Farm Based Education Network](#)
A free member network established to strengthen and support the work of educators, farmers and community leaders providing access and experiences of all kinds on productive working farms
- [Integrating Safety into Agritourism](#)
This website contains a variety of walkthroughs, based on the type of operation, to help owners identify health and safety hazards and provides resources that can be used to help fix these hazards. It's a great tool that can be used to help keep children safe when they visit farms and ranches.
- [North America Farm Direct Marketing Association](#) (NAFDMA) - a membership based trade association dedicated to providing endless peer-to-peer learning opportunities, connections and resources, for farmers who are passionate about the business of agritourism and farm direct marketing.
- [UC Small Farm Program Agritourism](#) - research reports, factsheets, handouts and presentations from workshops, articles and current projects
- [World Wide Workers on Organic Farms](#) (WWOOF US) - linking visitors with organic farmers for educational exchange
- [AgLink Connect](#) - new privately-developed website and app with the goal of connecting the public with agritourism, fairs, festivals, restaurants, events and other farm and ranch related activities. Free listings and video-making tool.
- [Farm Stay U.S.](#) - A website operated by the U.S. Farm Stay Association (and Scottie Jones of Leaping Lamb Farm in Alsea, Oregon), for promoting farm and ranch stays in the United States. The site includes resource sections for farm stay operators and for farm stay visitors.



A Few Funding Opportunities

- [Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education](#) (WSARE)
 - Farmer/Rancher Grants - up to \$25,000 - proposals due December 2014
 - Professional & Producer Grants - up to \$50,000 - Proposals due Dec 2014
- [Farmers' Market Promotion Program](#) (USDA AMS)
This competitive grant program can provide support for farmers markets,

roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities - awards from \$15,000 to \$100,000

- [Local Food Promotion Program](#) (USDA AMS) - to support local and regional food business enterprises
- [CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program](#) - funds for projects that will solely enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture)



Thanks for reading to the bottom of the page. Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think may find it useful (Use the "forward this email" link just below), or share using the links at the top.

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