STANISLAUS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Stanislaus County FARM NEWS PAPER

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Registration Live!

Spray Safe Registration is open, join us for FREE CE hours on November 20th at MJC

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AgEdventure Day Recap

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Family Night Out Event Recap

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Feature Story

FARM BUREAU PLANTS SEEDS OF AG EDUCATION IN LOCAL STUDENTS

AgEdventure Day recap

By: Joe Cortez
Turlock Journal



Agricultural isn't just about plows and sows anymore. Not with the ever-changing technological landscape that has created ag-adjacent jobs that didn't even exist a few decades ago.

But agriculture is still very much about planting seeds.



Ag leaders from throughout the region were on hand Thursday at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds for the Farm Bureau's annual Ag Edventure program, where they planted seeds with nearly 1,300 third-graders – from Turlock, Hughson and Chatom school districts – in hopes they'll take root and sprout into an interest in ag.

The Farm Bureau's annual Ag Edventure event held Thursday at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds featured over 50 stations focusing on ag-related programs for local third graders to explore.

Take trees for instance. Tom Burchell, owner of Burchell Nursery in Oakdale, said there's a lot more to growing a tree than just digging a hole in the ground.

"It's not only the agronomics of growing a tree," said Burchell. "There's the soil science, the plant-health science, horticulture science. You've also got the insect science – entomology – and the disease science. To make a healthy tree, there's the fertilizer side of things. Plus, we have a breeding program, so there's the genetics behind what makes a good tree, and how we crossbreed to make new varieties to be better in terms of disease resistance and drought resistance. There's a lot to it."

Burchell's was one of about 50 stations that were set up, along with 12 additional animal stations, that featured presenters such as the University of California Cooperative Extension, Turlock Irrigation District, the East Stanislaus Resource Conservation District, Garton Tractor, California Ag in the Classroom, Blue Diamond, Dave Wilson Nursery, the Almond Board of California, the county ag commissioner, the sheriff's department, and many others.

"We work with farmers, ranchers, and just

a bunch of people in the ag community," said Abi Fair, the Farm Bureau's media coordinator. "They come and talk to third-graders about all the things they do.

"This year we were able to partner with Turlock and Pitman high schools. They're doing 20 stations – each school is handling 10 – and they're mainly focusing on our county's top commodities."



One stop featured tractors provided by Garton Tractor in Turlock. (Can you imagine being 8 years old and allowed to play on a real tractor – and not getting into trouble for it?)

The Farm Bureau's annual Ag Edventure event held Thursday at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds featured over 50 stations focusing on ag-related programs for local third graders to explore.

"I think it's great that Turlock puts on events like this," said Tom Garton, the company's owner. "So many of these kids don't even know what a tractor is … or a horse or a cow. This might be their first exposure to all this. I hope they take away that there's a lot more to our food process than just buying it at Costco."

Mark Avilla, a member of the bureau's board of directors, is a fourth-generation farmer in the region.

"My hope is that the kids just get their first taste of what ag is," Avilla said. "A lot of these students have never seen livestock before. I went to school for ag communications, so ag literacy has always been big for me. And the best way to address that is to get kids involved early."

Undoubtedly, the most popular stations were those featuring animals. Christi Fair introduced kids to a pair of donkeys: 10-year-old Mama and 4-year-old Queenie.

Those well-known beasts of burden, donkeys still play a significant role on farms today.

"I think donkeys get a bad rap," said Christi Fair. "They're just considered hard-working animals, but they're loving, sympathetic animals. And they love children."

Fair said she understands that younger generations are not as likely as they once were to carry on a family's farming tradition.

"Being a farmer just doesn't pay the bills like it once did," she said. "And you can't blame them. It's a lot of work for a little pay."

That's why events such as Ag Edventure are so important for kids who might not understand that they're growing up surrounded by the greatest farmland in the known galaxy. And that the jobs they'll someday seek, are plentiful in the ag industry.

"The people here love what they do, and they are so excited to share the things they're working on," said Abi Fair. "I hope the kids walk away knowing it's important to grow food and to take care of the environment, and are inspired by that."

Eight-year-old Yolanda, a student at Medeiros Elementary School, sure seemed to be inspired. She said her favorite part of the day was petting a horse. And when asked about the TID educational trailer, she replied, "It was cool! I learned a lot of stuff about (long pause) stuff."

Asked if she might like to work on a farm someday, she nodded to confirm. "Maybe working with animals?" she was asked. Another nod.

"Maybe as a veterinarian?" came the follow-up question. Yet another nod.

Consider the seeds planted.










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Dear Abi,

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Submit your question here!



With the days getting shorter and the weather getting colder, I'm already dreading the inevitable "I'm bored" chorus from my kids. They're used to spending their days outside, getting dirty and finding ways to entertain themselves around the farm. But when we're stuck inside, it seems like they've forgotten how to have fun. Any ideas for keeping little farm kids busy (and keeping their parents sane) during the winter months?

-Counting Down to Spring

Dear Counting Down to Spring,
Ah, winter. That magical time of year when the kids have been inside for approximately 17 minutes and have already eaten three snacks, destroyed the living room and announced that there's absolutely nothing to do.

If your kids are anything like mine, they're happiest when they're outside getting dirty, chasing animals or finding something they probably shouldn't be climbing on. Unfortunately, Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate, and sometimes we have to bring a little bit of the farm indoors.

The good news? You don't need an elaborate Pinterest project or $100 worth of craft supplies to keep them entertained. Here are a few ideas to help survive those chilly days.

Bring the barn inside. Grab some toy tractors, livestock and a bag of dry beans or uncooked rice to create a miniature farm sensory bin. Throw in a few scoops and cups, and you've got yourself a farming operation that might actually run on schedule. Just be prepared to find a few stray beans under the couch until Easter.

Put those little hands to work. Make homemade butter by shaking heavy cream in a tightly sealed jar, bake bread or whip up a batch of cookies. It's a great opportunity to talk about where our food comes from, and if you're lucky, they might even help clean up afterward.

Build your own farm. Break out the cardboard boxes, construction paper and whatever else is hiding in the craft drawer. Let the kids build barns, fences, pastures and fields for their toy animals. You might be surprised by their creativity.

Use the Kid's Corner of the Paper. Every issue I include an activity geared towards our youngest Farm Bureau supporters. These are a quick an easy activity for your kids to enjoy while still being educational.

At the end of the day, keeping kids entertained doesn't have to mean planning every minute of their day. Sometimes a little boredom is exactly what they need to get creative and use their imaginations.

And when all else fails? Bundle them up, throw on some boots and send them outside for a little fresh air. After all, there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing. Or at least that's what we tell ourselves until someone tracks mud across the freshly mopped floor.

-Abi

FREE ADS FOR FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

As another membership service, Farm Bureau members are offered FREE classified advertising in the Stanislaus Farm News. Ads must be 18 words or less and only one ad per month per membership (membership number required.) Ads may be MAILED to the Stanislaus Farm News, or BROUGHT to the SCFB office, 1201 L Street, Downtown Modesto. NO PHONE-IN OR FAX free ads will be accepted. Free ads are restricted to farm machinery or equipment or unprocessed farm products. Farm jobs wanted or offered will also be accepted. No real estate ads and no commercial items or services will be accepted. 209-522-7278

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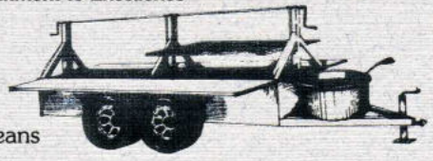
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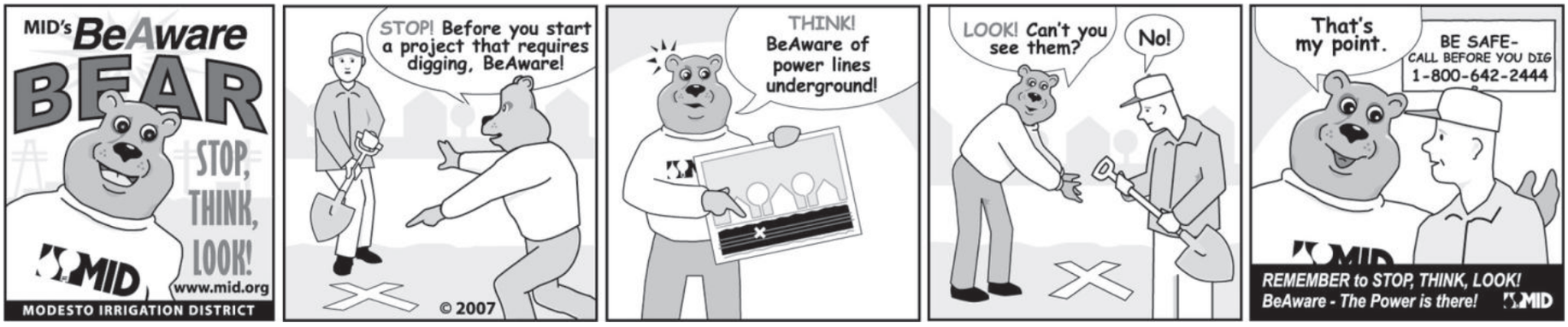
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Recipe Card

PIE CRUST COOKIES

From the Kitchen of Sandi Dirkse



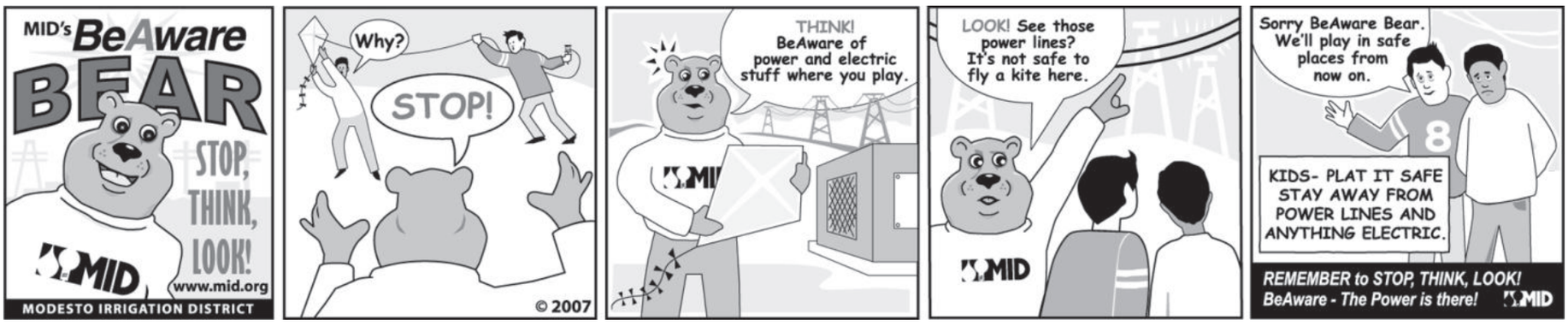
Save me for later!

Ingredients

- 2 and ½ cups flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 Tbs butter
- ⅔ cup vegetable shortening
- ½ cup ice cold water

Directions

- Whisk flour and salt together in large bowl
- Add the butter and shortening. Using a pastry cutter or two forks, cut the butter and shortening into the mixture until it is in pea sized bits. Do not overwork.
- Drizzle the water in 1 Tbs at a time and stir with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until every Tbs has been added. Stop adding water when the dough forms large clumps.
- Transfer the pie dough to a floured work surface. Bring the dough together and form into two balls. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and chill for at least 2 hours or up to 5 days.
- After the dough has chilled, roll it out, use a little bit of flour to prevent sticking.
- Roll the dough thin and then cut using cookie cutters.
- Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar
- Bake at 350 for 12 minutes and enjoy!





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STANISLAUS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Photo Contest WINNERS!

Thank you to **everyone** who submitted photos for the 2026 SCFB photo contest. We appreciate your pictures and loved seeing **your view of Stanislaus County agriculture**. Congratulations to our winners.

1st Place



Winner: Bogdan Condor

2nd Place



Winner: Bogdan Condor

3rd Place



Winner: Tim Ragsdale

4th Place



Winner: Tim Ragsdale

5th Place



Winner: Larry Speed

AB 2646 (Krell, 2026)

H-2A Worker Minimum Wage

In 2026, the California Legislature passed and Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law AB 2646 (Krell, D-Sacramento) setting a higher California minimum wage for certain non-California resident agricultural employees and certain California-resident employees working in conjunction with them.

What AB 2646 does:

- AB 2646 sets a minimum wage of $19.75/hour for non-California resident agricultural employees whose employment is approved by either the Department of Industrial Relations or the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("approved agricultural employees"). Foreign workers employed in the U.S. (and California) on H-2A temporary agricultural worker visas are the only class of agricultural workers who fit this description.
- AB 2646 also requires the payment of this super-minimum wage to "corresponding employees" engaged in agriculture performing the same, or substantially similar, work during the same time period as an approved agricultural employee employed by the same employer in the same county.
- The AB 2646 super-minimum wage will be adjusted upward on January 1, 2027 and on each subsequent January 1 by the social security cost-of-living adjustment for that year.
- AB 2646 is effective on Jan. 1, 2027.



What AB 2646 does not do:

- Certain media and social media outlets have reported that AB 2646 imposes the $19.75/hour minimum wage on agriculture sector-wide.
- AB 2646 **is not** an agriculture sector-wide minimum wage; it applies only to approved and corresponding agricultural employees described above.
- The applicable minimum wage for agricultural employees who are **neither** approved nor corresponding agricultural employees (the bulk of California's agricultural workforce) will continue to be covered by California's state-wide minimum wage of $16.90/hour ($17.40/hour on Jan. 1, 2027).

DIRECTAPPLIANC
209-238-3000

STANISLAUS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Staff Christmas Gift Guide!



Everyone in the office picked their two best gift ideas to share with our members. If you're looking for an inexpensive gift or a splurge, there's something here for everyone on your list!



Caitie

Executive Director

Under $25



Darn Tough Wool Socks

Splurge



Steele Canvas Laundry Cart



Abi

Membership Coordinator

Under $25



Primally Pure Lip Oil

Splurge



Staub Dutch Oven



Melissa

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Geometry Kitchen Towel

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Minky Couture Blanket



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Candle Warmer Lamp

Splurge



Yeti Ice Chest



Tom

Director of Governmental Affairs

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Kubota M5-111 tractor

Kids Corner!

An indoor activity for rainy winter months!

Homemade Play Dough Recipe

A quick and easy homemade play dough perfect for playing!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- ¼ cup salt
- 2 Tbs Cream of Tartar
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 Tbs vegetable oil
- Optional food coloring

Directions:

1. Mix all dry ingredients together
2. Add oil and boiling water to dry ingredients and mix until incorporated
3. Knead once cooled down
4. Store in an airtight container

Tip! You can add food coloring to make different color play dough for your farm and other activities!

Now Let's Build a Farm!

Head outside to collect a bucket of sticks and twigs. Make sure they are completely dry before starting your farm. Once they're ready, get creative and build your dream farm!

Build Your Own *FARM!*



Building Challenge!

- Build a Barn
  - Every farm needs a place to store feed, tractors and other equipment
- Create a Fence
  - Farmers and ranchers need fences to keep their livestock safe
- Plant Some Pasture
  - Cows, horses and sheep need pasture to graze on
- Build a Chicken Coop
  - Make something for your chickens to stay and lay their eggs
- What else do you think farmers need?

Did you know?

Farmers are builders, engineers and problem solvers too! Between irrigation, fence building and maintaining facilities, farmers have to use these skills every day.

STANISLAUS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

SPRAY SAFE 2026

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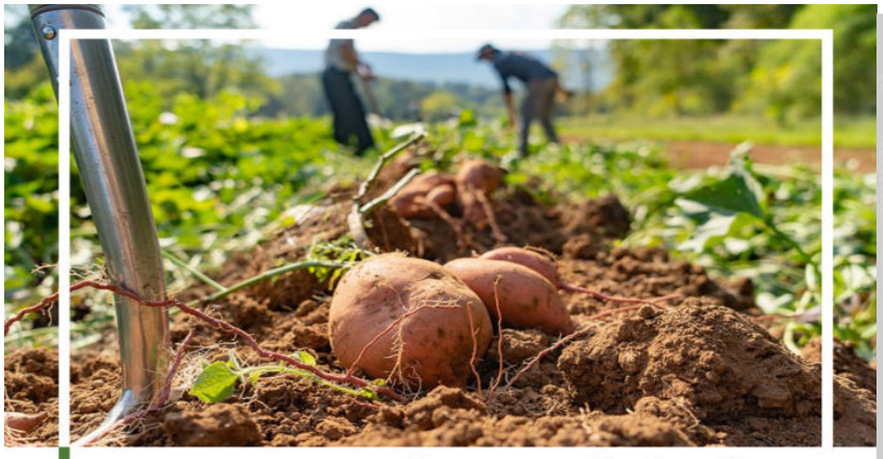
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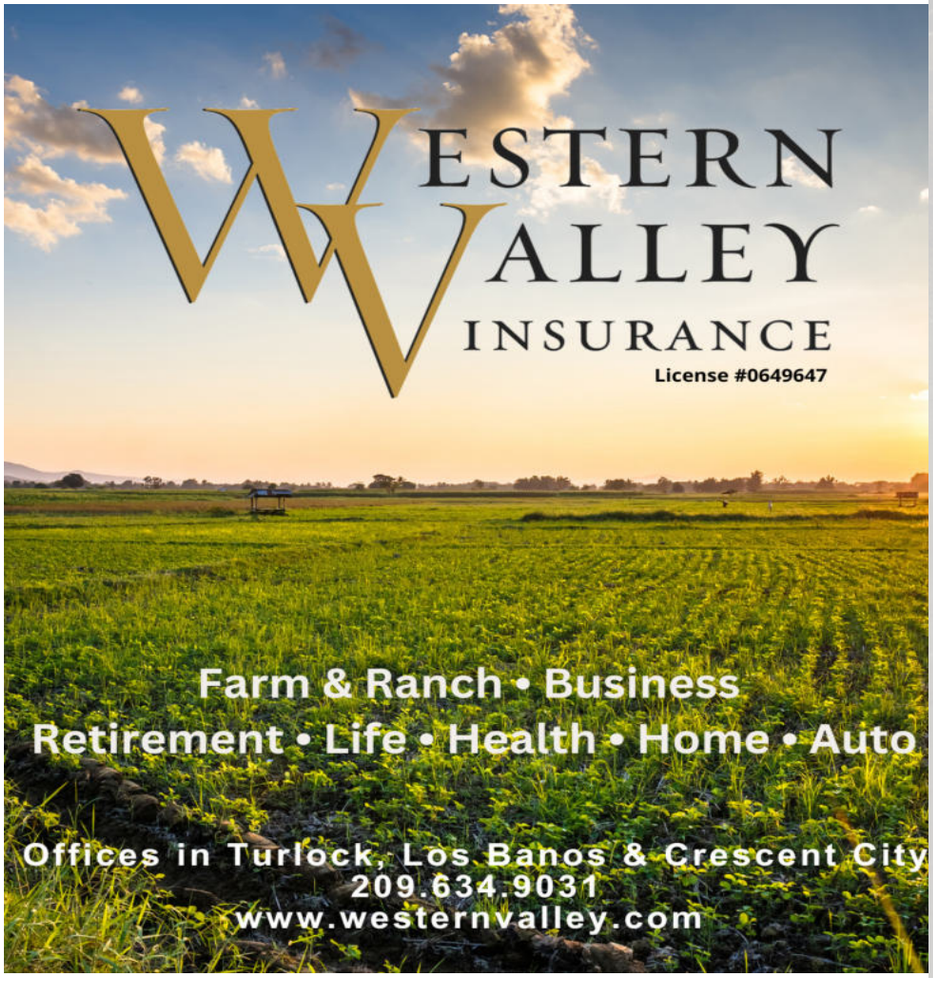
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STANISLAUS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

UPCOMING EVENTS

Calendar

Nov 19th

Northwest Regional Meeting

Hart Ransom

Join us for a Thanskgiving dinner and gift raffle

Nov 20th

Spray Safe

MJC West Campus

FREE continuing education hours for growers and employees

Nov 23rd

Workforce Development Meeting

SCFB Office

Help shape the future of Stanislaus County Workforce

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Event Recap

FARM BUREAU BRINGS AGRICULTURE TO MCHENRY MANSION SPOOKTACULAR

Staff members dress as local commodities to share the importance of agriculture with trick-or-treaters

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau staff traded their usual office attire for some agriculture-inspired costumes on October 27th as they participated in the 2026 McHenry Mansion Spooktacular in downtown Modesto.

The annual Halloween event brought families together for an evening of trick-or-treating, and Farm Bureau joined in on the fun with a booth designed to celebrate the county's agricultural industry.

Rather than dressing as traditional Halloween characters, Farm Bureau staff decided to represent some of Stanislaus County's top agricultural commodities. Caitie dressed as corn, Melissa represented pollination as a bee, Taylor dressed as a dairy cow and Abi represented the nursery industry as a flower.

For three hours, staff handed out candy to hundreds of trick-or-treaters while sharing fun facts about agriculture and the important role it plays in our community.

Of course, no Farm Bureau booth would be complete without a little hands-on agricultural education! Staff brought along Bessie, the wooden dairy cow recently featured in the Modesto Children's Museum Harvest Takeover, giving children the opportunity to try their hand at "milking" a cow.



Bessie quickly became one of the evening's biggest attractions, with excited children lining up to give milking a try. For many, it was their first experience learning how milk makes its way from the cow to their refrigerator. The interactive activity was a hit with kids and parents alike, making the Farm Bureau booth a popular stop throughout the evening.

In addition to candy, staff distributed a variety of kid-friendly agricultural education materials for families to take home. These included coloring books, chocolate milk straws from the California Milk Advisory Board and agricultural stories from the Almond Board of California.

These materials provided another opportunity to introduce children to the crops and livestock produced in Stanislaus County while encouraging them to continue learning about agriculture at home.

Events like the McHenry Mansion Spooktacular offer Farm Bureau a unique opportunity to connect with families who may not have firsthand experience with agriculture. By combining familiar Halloween traditions with fun, interactive activities, staff were able to introduce agricultural concepts in a way that was both approachable and memorable.

From the creative costumes to the excitement surrounding Bessie, the evening was filled with smiles, laughter and plenty of candy. Farm Bureau staff had a wonderful time participating in the festivities and sharing their passion for agriculture with the community.

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau looks forward to continuing to participate in community events that help connect local families with the farmers, ranchers and agricultural industries that make our county so special.

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Feature Story

AG IN THE CLASSROOM CONFERENCE

Recap of the Regional AITC Conference hosted at the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau Office

By: Vicky Boyd

About 30 teachers and educators spent a day recently learning about agriculture and how they could incorporate the new-found information into their lesson plans. The session, held at the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau's office in Modesto, was one of three inaugural one-day regional events put on by the Sacramento-based California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom program.

Ashley Maderr, who teaches seventh through 12 th grade at Fusion Charter School in Turlock, said she was looking for fresh ideas to take back to her classes. The school has a greenhouse and garden that aren't used as much as she'd like. They also have an aquaponics setup.

"We have a lot of things going on including a garden club," said Maderr, a first-timer at an AITC event. "But I want to find more resources on how to bring more education to it."

One of the exercises that caught her attention involved putting 4 ounces of extra-heavy whipping cream into a jar and shaking it to create butter. Another one of interest examined the different California-grown commodities that went into making trail mix.

Four-color hand-outs and teaching plans accompanied the exercise along with descriptions of how each ingredient — walnuts, pistachios, almonds, yogurt bits, dried apricots and freeze-dried strawberries — was produced.

"I loved the commodity activities," Maderr said. Amy Menghetti, who teaches fourth grade at Chrysler Elementary School in Modesto, also was looking for new ideas to take back to her classroom.

"We try to integrate more science and social studies with English language arts," she said. Her students are currently in the middle of learning about the human digestive system.

"Obviously, here we're talking about food and where it goes," she said. Her class also will be talking about the plant life cycle.
A favorite of many attendees was the "play with your food" lesson, which involved creating a hedgehog using a pear, table grape and toothpicks.

"When kids are allowed to (play with their food), they experience food in a much less scary way," said AITC's Stephanie Goeb, who led the exercise.

The playful lesson was part of AITC's partnership with the California Department of Education's Office of Farm to School, which provides information on childhood nutrition and healthy eating, said AITC Executive Director Amanda Fletcher. The educational effort supports the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Farm to School Program that helps schools procure locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

LEARNING FROM EXPERTS



Deanna van Klaveren, who led a session on the importance of pH, brought the unique perspective as both a farmer and teacher. She co-owns Generation Growers wholesale plant nursery west of Modesto with husband Roger and formerly taught high school ag in Tracy. She still teaches a native plant identification class at Modesto Junior College.

Van Klaveren said it was important to educate teachers about agriculture and food production because they're shaping the minds of the next generation.
"They're teaching and sharing with students about what we do, so the more knowledge we can give them about how we grow plants and all of the different areas of ag, the more they can share with their students that information from experts," she said. "They're impacting 30 to 40 students each year."

Kurt Hoekstra, an Oakdale dairy producer who also farms almonds and field crops, was one of two members on an informal question-and-answer panel. With the discussion led by AITC's Fletcher, Hoekstra and Jake Wenger, who farms nuts and works for an almond handler, described a "normal day" on their farms.

They also discussed how they'd adopted technology to improve their operations and their animals' health. In addition, the casual format allowed attendees to ask questions of the farmers to gain a better understanding of what they do.

Hoekstra, a Stanislaus County Farm Bureau board member, said it was important to take time to educate teachers.'

“They’re the ones who are educating our kids, and they need to hear from farmers, hear from dairymen, what really happens on dairies and on farms,” he said. “They can bring that into the classrooms. I think it’s just as important as learning something like world history because it affects you.”



After a day filled with classroom learning, the session culminated with a field trip to the family-owned Fiscalini Farms in Escalon, which makes artisan farmstead cheeses from the milk produced from their cows. There, the teachers learned about the dairy’s century-plus history as well as the technology used today, such as “Fitbits for cows” health monitoring necklaces and robotic milking systems. The Fiscalini family added farmstead cheese production to their operation in 2000.



LISTENING TO TEACHERS

The decision to create the regional one-day events was based on teacher input, Fletcher said.

One of the biggest hurdles they cited for not attending the larger annual three-day AITC event was cost.

This year, the foundation launched three one-day programs, which brought the conference closer to home and eliminated the need for overnight hotel stays. At the Modesto meeting, attendees came from as far south as Tulare County and from as far north as Sacramento County.

In addition to Stanislaus County, AITC held regional sessions in Sonoma and San Diego counties.

The plan now is to alternate the regional workshops one year with the three-day program the following year, Fletcher said. With that in mind, the big conference is planned for Sept. 24-26, 2027, in Fresno.

The Modesto session was filled with a mix of make-and-take projects, all supported by hand- outs and lesson plans, as well as other teaching materials such as four-color posters. Most of the lessons also were adaptable to different grade levels.

The resource materials and lesson plans are all available for free download from the AITC website, https://learnaboutag.org/resources/ . Many also are available in Spanish.

Fletcher said the materials aren’t limited to teachers, either, but are available to anyone involved with charter schools, home schooling or even producers who give school tours and want materials to give out.

In addition, the materials can be ordered as hard copies free of charge from the Sacramento-based AITC.

MJC Press Release

MJC AGRICULTURE OPENED ITS DOORS TO THE FUTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT WITH OPEN HOUSE AND SENIOR DAY

By: Jeanne Oosterman Agriculture Student

MODESTO, Calif. — Modesto Junior College's School of Agriculture welcomed high school seniors, families, retirees and alumni to its Agriculture Open House and Senior Day on Oct. 1 and 2 at the MJC ACE Pavilion.

The event began Thursday evening with an Open House, bringing 130 people together that included members of the MJC agriculture community, alumni and families from across the state. Friday morning focused on Senior Day, where 273 high school seniors explored the agriculture programs and opportunities available at MJC.

Students toured the West Campus agriculture units by bus, met with professors, learned what MJC life looked like from currents students, and explored the majors offered through the School of Agriculture. They also received information about MJC agriculture clubs, financial aid and the registration process.

Senior Day gave prospective students an opportunity to experience the MJC Agriculture community firsthand, ask questions and learn more about the educational and career opportunities available through the program.
Richard Nimphius, a former dean of the MJC School of Agriculture, gave this encouragement to current and future MJC students: "The opportunity is here, you just have to take advantage of it."

The MJC Agriculture and Environmental Sciences division is home to over two thousand MJC students, served by a dozen full time staff. Here, they equip students not only for careers in agriculture but also connect them with those currently in the industry. Learn more at mjc.edu/ag.

#MJCAG

For more information contact Lori Marchy at marchyl@yosemite.edu or (209)575-6206.





Upcoming Event

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE TRAINING

By: Caitie Diemel

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau and the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau Foundation invite local growers and agricultural employers to join us for an Agricultural Workforce Development Meeting on Monday, November 23, from 9:00–11:00 AM at the Farm Bureau office in Modesto.

As part of our ongoing workforce development efforts supported by a grant through Stanislaus County Workforce Development, this meeting will bring together agricultural employers and representatives from Modesto Junior College (MJC) to explore educational opportunities and discuss the evolving needs of our local agricultural workforce.

MJC Dean of Agriculture Troy Gravatt, along with agriculture program leaders and students, will share information about current agricultural programs, Associate of Science degrees, certificates, and career pathways available through the college.

Following the presentation, growers and agricultural employers will have an opportunity to share their perspectives on workforce challenges, needed skills, and potential training opportunities. From forklift certification to specialized employee training, we want to hear what programs would make a difference for your agricultural business.

With one of the region's premier agricultural community colleges right in our backyard, this is an opportunity to strengthen the connection between education and industry while helping prepare the next generation of agricultural professionals.

Join us for coffee, morning refreshments, and an important conversation about the future of our agricultural workforce!

When: Monday, November 23, 2026 | 9:00–11:00 AM
Where: Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, 1201 L Street, Modesto

Event Recap

FARM BUREAU FAMILIES COME TOGETHER FOR A NIGHT OF FUN

First Family Night Out at Modesto Children's Museum celebrates family, community and agricultural education through the Harvest Takeover.

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau welcomed members and their families to the Modesto Children's Museum on October 8th for its first Family Night Out at the museum. The evening brought together Farm Bureau families for a night of fun, food and fellowship while giving attendees an opportunity to experience the museum's agricultural-themed Harvest Takeover.

The event replaced Farm Bureau's traditional Family Night Out at the Modesto Nuts, offering a new way for members to connect in an environment designed with the entire family in mind.

One of the main goals behind the change was to create an event where families with young children could feel comfortable attending without worrying about finding childcare or keeping little ones entertained. The museum provided the perfect setting, allowing children to explore and play while parents visited with fellow Farm Bureau members.



Throughout the evening, kids made their way through the museum's interactive exhibits, exploring everything from the agricultural activities to the museum's everyday attractions. Meanwhile, parents enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with familiar faces, meet other Farm Bureau families and spend an evening together outside of their busy schedules.

Guests also enjoyed dinner catered by Food Fix and cookies from Olde Tyme Bakery.

Bringing Agriculture to Life

In addition to providing a fun evening for members, Family Night Out offered an opportunity to highlight Stanislaus County Farm Bureau's partnership with the Modesto Children's Museum.
For two months this fall, the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau Foundation sponsored a Harvest Takeover of the museum, transforming portions of the space into hands-on agricultural learning experiences designed to introduce children to the industry that plays such an important role in Stanislaus County.

The takeover features a variety of interactive activities that allow children to explore agriculture through play.

One popular attraction is Bessie, a wooden cow made here in the office that gives children the opportunity to try their hand at "milking" a cow. Nearby, a livestock branding station introduces children to the purpose of branding and allows them to create their own unique brand using stamps.



Feed sensory bins, featuring feed generously donated by Associated Feed, give children the chance to explore different types of livestock feed and learn more about what farm animals eat.

The museum's dress-up stage also received an agricultural makeover, featuring costumes that introduce children to different careers in the industry. From farmers and tractors to beekeepers, veterinarians and pest control advisers, children can imagine themselves working in a variety of agricultural professions.

Another highlight is the Top 10 Commodities arch, which showcases the leading agricultural commodities produced in Stanislaus County. The display helps families better understand the diversity of agriculture in their own backyard and the products local farmers and ranchers provide.

In the museum's Makers Lab, children can participate in the Garden in a Glove activity, planting seeds to take home and watch grow. The simple activity introduces young

learners to plant growth while encouraging them to continue exploring agriculture long after leaving the museum.

Adding to the fall atmosphere, pumpkins and cornstalks donated by RAM Farms were displayed throughout the museum, bringing a touch of the harvest season into the space.

Growing Connections and Agricultural Awareness

The Harvest Takeover is about more than providing fun activities. It is an opportunity to introduce agriculture to children and families who may not have firsthand experience with farming or ranching.

Through hands-on experiences, children can begin to understand where their food comes from, how livestock are cared for and the many different careers that help make agriculture possible.

By partnering with the Modesto Children's Museum, Farm Bureau has been able to share these lessons with families throughout the community in a setting that encourages curiosity, creativity and learning through play.

The first Family Night Out at the museum was a success, with a great turnout, happy kids and plenty of opportunities for members to connect. The evening was a reminder that Farm Bureau is not only about advocating for agriculture but also about building relationships and bringing agricultural families together.

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau would like to thank the Modesto Children's Museum for hosting the event and Associated Feed and RAM Farms for their generous contributions to the Harvest Takeover.

Most importantly, thank you to all of the Farm Bureau families who joined us for the evening. We enjoyed seeing everyone come together and look forward to creating more opportunities for our members and their families to connect in the future.





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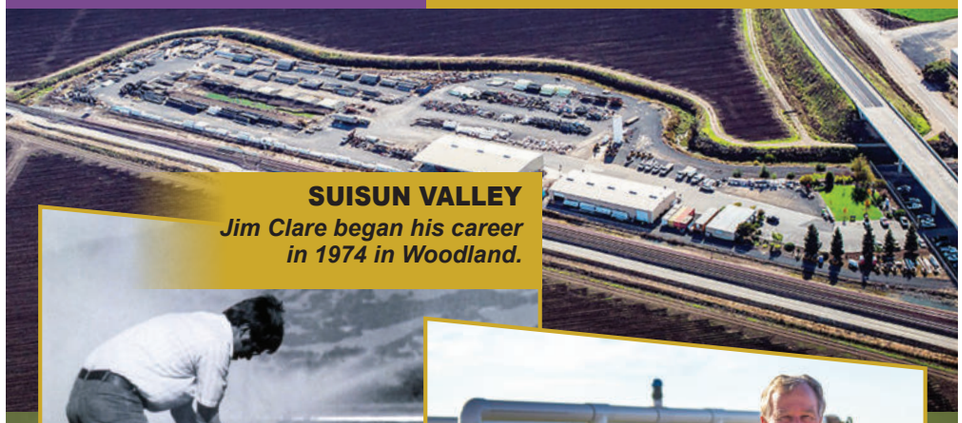
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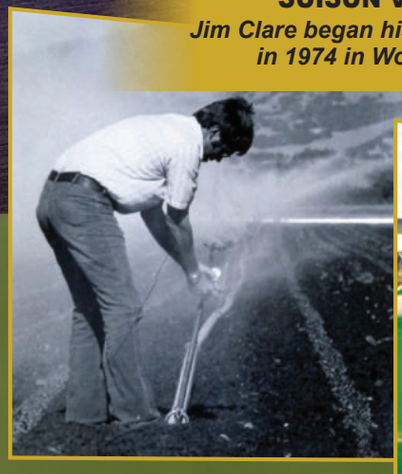
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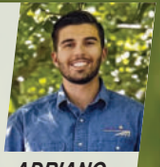
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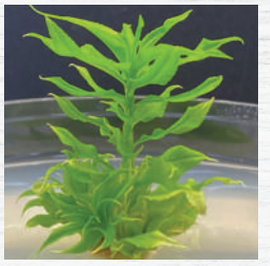


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