

CAPAY VALLEY

HARVEST

Vol 1
Issue 1

A newsletter from farms & ranches around the Capay Valley

June
2005

REGIONAL AG CALENDAR

June 2: CVV Ag Task Force, 7-9 p.m., Esparto Library.

June 4: Capay Valley Regional Farmers' Market, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Esparto Park.

June 5: Evening Under the Apricot Trees, Good Humus Farm, Capay. slowfoodyolo.com or (530) 795-3043.

June 8: Yolo County Resource Conservation District Annual Dinner, Nelson's Grove, Woodland. (530) 662-2037 x119.

June 12: Lavender Festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Cache Creek Lavender, Rumsey. (800) 323-0063 or www.cachecreeklavender.com.

July 2: Capay Valley Regional Farmers' Market, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Esparto Park.s

July 7: CVV Ag Task Force, 7-9 p.m., Esparto Library.

August 4: CVV Ag Task Force, 7-9 p.m., Esparto Library.

August 6: Capay Valley Regional Farmers' Market, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Esparto Park.

August 17-21: Yolo County Fair, Woodland.

August 27: A Village Feast, Central Park, Davis. (530) 754-1937 or slowfoodyolo.com.

September 11: A Day in the Country, Yolo Land Trust. (530) 795-3110.

October 1: Hoes Down Harvest Festival, Full Belly Farm, Guinda. (800) 791-2110.



Capay Valley Grown is a project of Capay Valley Vision, a local, nonprofit organization. For more information, visit www.CapayValleyVision.org or call (530) 787-3353.

Life on the Land by Paul Muller

Farming can be just darn hard to figure out. Each year, and each season offers its own twists and challenges—Spring 2005 has even seasoned observers shaking heads. The one and a half inches of rain in early May had many farmers scrambling to get hay baled and stacked, while others watched the rain come down and the mold and must go up, making their hay unmarketable. Walnut growers had sprayers blasting to prevent blight. Tomato growers found planting delayed, slow growing plants, and a higher prevalence of disease.

Yet, farmers adapt, change, and survive. In turn they change the landscape that surrounds all of us. The billion or so pounds of almonds harvested in California last year have been largely sold at a good price, so Esparto is seeing new almond orchards being planted this winter. The planting of new walnut orchards that will begin to bear nuts about four years from now is done with a gambler's optimism and careful planning.

We live surrounded by working landscapes that offer an evolving panorama of wild edges and carefully tended fields. The stewardship of farmers and farmworkers that tend our land and rural resources grows the bread, vegetables, meat, wine, milk, and thousands of other products that reach our tables.

Driving by the fields and orchards that make up the Capay Valley-Esparto region, it is easy to catch the aroma of new mown grass in the Jensen almond orchard, or the sweet smell of Hatanaka hay being put into bales, or even the mustiness of stewing tomatoes in a harvested Sagara tomato field.

These flashes in our senses, often experienced at 55 mph, engage us in a common experience with those who work the land. We are also kept in touch with the sensibilities of a life of hard work and careful planning that can be affected by the uncontrollable reality of a late spring storm or frost.

To know a region and appreciate the realities of its farmers is to aid in the preservation of the character and flavor that makes living in this area unique and special. The fields that surround us are an important part of our regional economy—creating jobs, business, and products that both define our place and also renew themselves each year.

Our region produces a wide variety of high quality products—whether almonds, tomatoes, walnuts, wines, sweet corn, peaches, or watermelons, each has the exceptional flavor derived from deep rich soils, great climate, and clean water. Each crop is backed by the story and skill of farmers and farmworkers who care for their farms while making their farm resources productive.

The Capay Valley Grown brand is an attempt to bring the products, aromas, fields, and personalities to your table with each product sold. It is an attempt to make the landscape more personal so that we will all become invested in its stewardship.

Knowing and buying fresh and local products is our adapting together—keeping a local farm economy vital, smoothing out the bumps in the challenges with market uncertainties, and finally, getting the best from local producers you know and trust.

PROFILES



David Hatanaka, a long-time grower in the Capay Valley region, has had farming in his family for over 65 years, and has been personally farming for 30 years. His farm currently produces a wide variety of delicious goods, including corn, melons and bell peppers.

David Hatanaka Farming

13605 County Road 88E
Esparto, CA 95627
(530) 787-4970
dhatanaka@earthlink.net

Owners

David and Candice Hatanaka

Number of Years Farming

30

Our Farm

David Hatanaka Farming produces a wide range of products including: alfalfa, hay, wheat, corn, melons, sunflower seeds, bell peppers, and a variety of vegetables on 9,000 acres of land. They use conventional and sustainable production practices including IPM and No Till or Minimum Till.

Distribution of Product

The farm sells a majority of its products through the wholesale market. However, customers can find David Hatanaka Farming goods at farmers' markets and roadside stands. The Corn Patch roadside stand east of Capay is open through the summer months with produce picked fresh daily.

They are currently retailing Capay Valley Grown Hay locally and to Petaluma, Clear Lake, the Sierra region, and Half Moon Bay. They also export internationally.

Manas Ranch Double Bar O Angus Ranch

25838 County Rd 21A
Esparto, CA 95627
(530) 787-3228
www.manasranch.com

Owners

Fred and Alice Manas

Family

Sacketts and Rubio (Spaniards)
settled in Winters in 1800

Number of Years Farming

Lifetime

Our Farm

Using conventional and IPM production practices, Manas Ranch employs two permanent workers and twelve seasonal workers to cultivate apricots, cherries, and peaches on 30 acres.

Double Bar O Angus Ranch is a cow-calf cattle operation in Yolo County with about one hundred registered Angus and commercial cows on about 1500 acres. This is a closed herd. All female offspring are kept to improve the herd. Registered Angus bulls are available for other cattle producers and grain-fed steers are available to the consumer for locker meat.

Distribution of Product

Manas Ranch's production is sold directly to customers in their farm store and on the internet. Customers can also purchase these delicious products at Manas Ranch. All of the ranch's products are sold in Yolo County.

Double Bar O Angus sells steers for locker meat direct to consumers. This meat grades high choice to prime. Double Bar O Angus also offers calve ease registered Angus bulls to other cattle producers for seed stock. Customers can contact Fred Manas directly to arrange purchases.



Fred and Alice Manas, longtime growers in the Capay Valley region, have operated Manas Ranch/Double Bar O Angus Ranch in Esparto for twenty-five years, where they produce not only sweet peaches, apricots, and cherries, but raise beef and seed stock bulls.

Fiddler's Green Farm

18265 County Road 70
Brooks, CA 95606
(530) 796-2184
eldon@afes.com

Owners

Jim Eldon and Julie Rose

Family

Wife and 2 children (Miles-11
and Ella-8)

Number of Years Farming

17

Our Farm

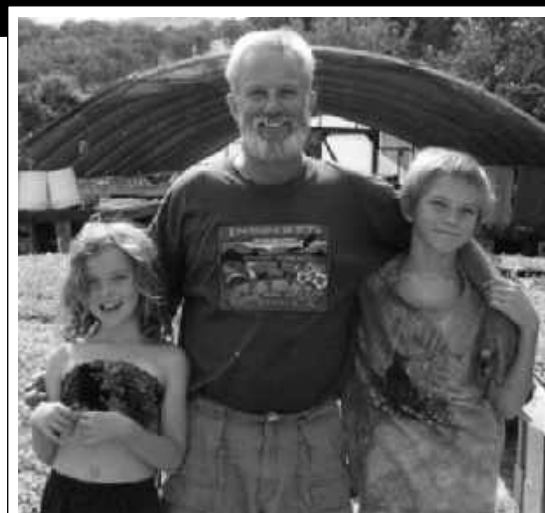
Using certified organic production practices, Fiddler's Green Farm employs two permanent and numerous seasonal employees to cultivate the farm's goods.

Fiddler's Green Farm currently produces a variety of delicious certified organic vegetables that would make anyone's mouth water!

Distribution of Product

The farm sells a majority of its products through farmers' markets. However, ten percent of goods are sold on the wholesale market and ten percent are sold to restaurants. Customers can find Fiddler's Green Farm products locally at the Davis Food Coop and the Sacramento Coop.

To enjoy Fiddler's Green fresh vegetables at fine restaurants, visit Waterboy and Lark Creek Inn and taste a sample of what the farm grows.



Jim Eldon (pictured with his two children), owns Fiddler's Green Farm with his wife Julie Rose. They have been farming on over 30 acres of land for the past 17 years. Their farm, in the heart of the Capay Valley region, is home to a plentitude of savory vegetables.

in agriculture



The Team at Full Belly!

Full Belly Farm

PO Box 251, Guinda, CA 95637
Physical Address: County Road 43
(530) 796-2214
www.fullbellyfarm.com

Owners
Andrew Brait, Paul Muller, Judith Redmond and Dru Rivers

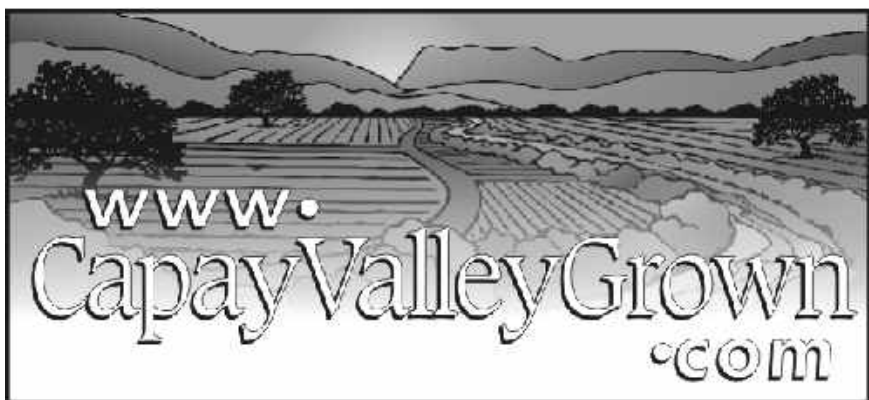
Number of Years Farming
20

Our Farm
Using certified organic production practices. Full Belly Farm employs about 35 workers year round to cultivate eighty different crops including vegetables, fruit, flowers, walnuts, herbs, and lambs on 200 acres of land.

In addition to being focused on production, Full Belly Farm is home to many activities including educational tours, school groups, and the annual Hoes Down Harvest Festival, that celebrates rural life and reacquaints the public with the process of growing food in a sustainable manner.

Distribution of Product
Full Belly Farm's products are sold to wholesale distributors, retail stores, and restaurants. Customers can also purchase products at local farmers' markets and through the CSA. They also have an on-farm fresh produce stand open every Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. at the end of County Road 43 north of Guinda.

Local neighborhood drop sites for CSA boxes are available in Woodland and Davis (see website for details). Full Belly Farm attends the local farmers' market in Esparto. Other farmers' markets that Full Belly Farm sells at are in Berkeley (Tuesday afternoon, year-round), San Rafael (Thursday morning, year-round), and Palo Alto (Saturday morning).



Good Humus Produce

12244 County Rd 84A
Capay, CA 95607
(530) 787-3187
www.goodhumus.com

Owners
Jeff and Annie Main

Family
Children Zach, Alison, Claire

Number of Years Farming
29

Our Farm
Using certified organic production practices, Good Humus Produce uses both permanent and seasonal workers to produce fresh and dried fruits, vegetables, jams and jellies, and herbs, on 20 acres.

Not only does Good Humus Produce cultivate delicious fruits and vegetables, but also the farm offers flowers and lavender products, as well as beautiful wreaths.

The farm grows a variety of fruits and vegetables including eggplant, kale, spinach, persimmons, pumpkins, apricots, peaches, and nectarines.

Distribution of Product
One-third of Good Humus Produce's production is sold to CSA members and one third is sold at local farmers' markets. The remaining production is sold to a wholesaler, Veritable Vegetable, or is retailed directly to consumers at the Davis Food Coop, Sacramento Coop, and Monterey Market. Consumers can also purchase products via the internet.

For immediate gratification, consumers can dine at two local restaurants where Good Humus Produce's products are prepared and enjoyed. For an enjoyable meal with excellent fruits and vegetables, consumers can go to Natural Food Works and California Café in Davis.



Jeff and Annie Main, long time producers in the Capay Valley region, have operated Good Humus Produce for twenty-nine years, where they produce fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs, and lavender products. They also create beautiful wreaths as well as mouth-watering jams.

BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL!

By Jim Durst

We are fortunate to live in Western Yolo County. The Capay Valley-Esparto region has historically supplied nearby urban areas with the finest produce, nuts, grains, and meats.

Not only are we blessed with a Mediterranean climate but also good water and soils. This allows us to grow a wide variety of crops and to make them readily available to nearby customers. In fact, if you were to walk into any grocery store, most of the items you would see in the produce department are grown here locally in-season. Our area is especially well known for its tomatoes, melons, stone fruit, winter vegetables, nuts, flowers, eggplant, and grapes. The list goes on and on.

They're all available to you, the local resident, with just a little searching. The farmers' market in Esparto is a good place to start. Farm stands also offer summer flavor at its peak. You may want to sign-up with one of the subscription farm programs (CSA) run by local farms. Alternatively, you may choose to garden yourself and pick your own fruits and vegetables. Take the time to eat close to home. You will discover the bounty of nature just outside your door.

Capay Valley Grown: A Partnership of Local Farms and Ranches

The Capay Valley-Esparto region of Yolo County is a treasure to all who know it. An agriculturally abundant place, the products of the area's local farms and ranches are widely enjoyed. As California continues to grow and change, local farmers are working together to strengthen the valley's agriculture so that it continues to play a central role in shaping the region's future.

One such strategy is the Capay Valley Grown partnership launched in 2004 with twenty-three charter partners—farms and ranches that wanted to increase the marketability of their high quality products. Capay Valley Grown partners strive to sell a sense of place with their products: information that conveys value to end users while creating transparency about where the food comes from. Capay Valley Grown partners are exploring ways to get as close as possible to customers in Yolo County and Northern California in order to maximize freshness, flavor, and consumer confidence.

Farms and ranches are using the Capay Valley Grown label as a place-identifier on everything

from boxes to brochures, road signs to websites. The label is a symbol of high quality, fresh, flavorful products from the region's farms and ranches and reflects a sense of pride in our rich agricultural history and community.

Through the Capay Valley Vision Agriculture Task Force, area farmers and ranchers, including Capay Valley Grown partners, meet on a regular basis sharing ideas and working on projects to strength local agriculture. Already this year, the partners have worked together to:

Participate in the monthly Farmers' Market and annual Almond Festival in Esparto.

Place Capay Valley Grown products in new markets including Town & Country in Winters.

Develop new marketing tools including a brochure, website, and this newsletter.

Co-host a tour and seminar on solar energy to discuss the financial benefits and mechanics of on-farm photovoltaic systems.



Currently twenty-eight farms and ranches comprise the Capay Valley Grown partnership and together offer the incredible variety of local agriculture: fruits, vegetables, nuts, meats, honey, olive oil, wine, wool, herbal cosmetics, nursery plants, crafts, and more. This quarterly agricultural insert of the *Valley Voice* seeks to increase knowledge of local agriculture and to let you know where to buy local, fresh, high quality products direct from the source. Look for Capay Valley Grown, and taste the flavor of this place!

CAPAY VALLEY GROWN FARM & RANCH PARTNERS

B-Z Bee Pollination, Inc.

Honey (530) 787-3044; www.BZ-Bee.com

Bloom Ranch

Almonds, Walnuts, Pistachios, Mandarins, & Peaches (530) 796-3357; www.bloomranch.com

Blue Heron Farm/Dream Gourds

Organic Oranges, Walnuts, Tomatoes, Figs, & Decorative Gourds (530) 796-3799

Cache Creek Nursery

Organic Vegetable Starts, California Natives, Perennial Shrubs, & Herbs (530) 796-3521
www.cachecreeknursery.com

Capay Canyon Ranch

Organic Red Flame Grapes (530) 662-2372

Capay Valley Vineyards

Wine (530) 796-4110
www.capayvalleyvineyards.com

Circle K Ranch: Walnuts (530) 796-2216

Fiddler's Green Farm

Farm Mixed Organic Produce (530) 796-2184

Free Heart Farm

Almonds, Candied Almonds, & Eggs (530) 787-4444 www.freeheartfarm.com

Full Belly Farm

Mixed Organic Produce & Natural Wool (530) 796-2214; www.fullbellyfarm.com

Gold Oak Ranch: Mandarins & Walnuts

Good Humus Produce

Mixed Organic Produce, Dried Fruit, Jams, Jellies (530) 787-3187; www.goodhumus.com

Haag Farm

Walnuts (530) 787-3603; www.walnuts.us

Hatanaka Farming

Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Melons, Peppers, Squash, Onions, Pumpkins (530) 787-4970

III Docs Almond Ranch

Almonds (530) 796-4141

Lamb Valley Farm: Citrus

Live Oak Farm

Olive Oil, Mixed Organic Produce (530) 796-4084

Manas Ranch/Double Bar O Angus Ranch

Peaches & Grain-fed Beef (530) 787-3228
www.manasranch.com

McDonald Orchards

Almonds, Walnuts, & Honey (530) 796-3821

Murphy Ranch

Natural Beef Cattle & Cowsters

The Old Green Go

Apricots, Plums, Asian Pears, Melons, Oranges (530) 796-3855; webaker@ucdavis.edu

Oldani Family Farm

Oranges, Pistachios, Apricots, Plums, Figs, & Persimmons (530) 796-4143; coldani@yolo.com

Riverdog Farm

Mixed Organic Produce (530) 796-4100
www.riverdogfarm.com

Rumsey Farms/Dos Brujas

Herbal Products Nuts, Oranges, Herbs, & Herbal Cosmetic Products (530) 796-3060

Taber Ranch

Almonds & Olive Oil (530) 796-3755

TS Ranch: Beef Cattle (530) 796-3755

West Valley Alpacas

Alpacas & Alpacas Fibers (530) 662-8630
www.westvalleyalpacas.com

Winter Creek Ranch

Organic Walnuts (530) 796-3723
www.wintercreekranch.com

Where to find Capay Valley Grown Products in Yolo County

Stores

- Cache Creek Mini Mart, Brooks
- The Corner Store, Guinda
- Davis Food Co-op
- Java Station, Esparto
- Nugget Market, Woodland and Davis
- Town & County Market, Winters

Farmers' Markets

- Capay Valley Regional, Esparto
- Davis Farmers' Market
- Woodland Farmers' Market

Farm Stands

- The Corn Patch, Capay
- Full Belly Farm Stand, Guinda
- Manas Ranch Farm Stand, Esparto
- West Valley Alpacas Store (by appt.)

**Some farms and ranches are open for direct sales, feel free to contact them to find out more about getting their products.*