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# *Calaveras County Farm Bureau*

*Winter 2018*

## **Calaveras County Farm Bureau has many to thank at Annual Barbecue Fundraiser**

*By Rebecca Fischer*

The Calaveras Farm Bureau hosted their annual barbecue fundraiser and live auction on August 25, 2018. The barbecue had a great turn out and had some very special guests: California Farm Bureau Federation President, Jamie Johansson, and Second Vice President, Shaun Crook.

It was a warm evening, but thankfully there was plenty of shade for the guests on the patio of the Ranch House at the Calaveras County Fairgrounds, which once again served as the venue for the event. More guests than originally planned arrived, and we had to bring out more tables and chairs! There was still plenty of room, though, and the night went on without a hitch. The Gold Country Young Farmers and Ranchers once again served as the decorating committee, and decorated the tables with festive autumn centerpieces, that included glass jars filled with flowers in fall shades of red, orange, and gold. Kaylee Dilashaw's daughter and her friend were a big help by filling the jars



Photo by Amanda Berry

*CCBF President Jamie Johansson, center, proudly holds up his bottle of Brice Station wine with CCFB 1st Vice President Amanda Berry, left, and CCFB President Mindy Rasmussen, right.*

with small rocks to keep the flyers placed on the tables from blowing away. Laurie Giannini also donated fall decorations like wooden pumpkins and miniature scarecrows to add to the centerpieces. As guests waited on dinner, CCFB second

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vice president (and auctioneer for the night) Mark Fischer played some classic country tunes on the speakers.

Dinner was once again prepared by Mike Quiñones, who served some fabulous steaks along with salads and bread rolls. Nobody left hungry! The bar was also open for a social hour before dinner, and included wine donated by Ironstone Vineyards and Brice Station Winery.

After the guests got their food and sat down, board members and guest speakers began to say a few words. Jaime Johansson gave a speech on the importance of lobbying for farmers and ranchers in Washington D.C., and thanked local farmers, both young and old, for their support. Following that, Farm Bureau member Michael David Fischer presented Joe Valente, who is retiring from his position of District 12 representative, with a plaque to thank him for all his work for the Farm Bureau.

Next, CCFB Secretary Toni Ann Fischer gave a brief overview of the history of Ag Day, which has been held every March since it began 20 years ago.

She thanked presenters and sponsors for their support over the years, and the Calaveras County Fairgrounds for serving as a place for students to gather to learn about agriculture. To show their appreciation, plaques were given to presenters who have volunteered for many years at Ag Day: Randy and Sue Metzger of Metzger Farms, Libby Kassik, Tammy Blakely, Kathy Mewhinney, Stuart and Dolores Mast of Brice Station Winery, and Chris Thom. Chris Thom has only missed one Ag Day since its inception.

The live auction followed dinner, and Rebecca Fischer once again served as “Vanna White” to help her father Mark Fischer auction items off. By the end of the night, Calaveras County Farm Bureau raised over \$7,000 worth of proceeds for agriculture education, like Ag Day and scholarships for local high school seniors going to study agriculture in college.

The Calaveras County Farm Bureau would like to thank all who attended and sponsored the event. It was a wonderful night that raised money for an important cause. Thank you to those who came! We at CCFB appreciate your support!

*Clockwise from top right:*

*Farm Bureau member Michael David Fischer and CCFB 1st Vice President Amanda Berry serve drinks to guests during social hour.*

*CCFB Board of Director member and Gold Country YF&R Chair Rosemary Giannini, left, chats with Steve Kafka and CFBF 2nd Vice President Shaun Crook and his family.*

*CFBF President Jamie Johansson gave a speech on the importance of lobbying in DC for farmers.*



Photos by Rebecca Fischer



## Gold Country YF&R Winter Updates

Wow. It's already been a year since the Gold Country Young Farmers and Ranchers got their start. For our first year, we've accomplished a lot: we've had members attend the California Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting last December, and the American YF&R Annual Meeting in Reno in February. We competed in a frog jumping competition against the Calaveras Wine Grape Alliance at the Calaveras County Fair and partook in a variety of industry tours throughout the county.



One of our biggest accomplishments, though, was planning and hosting our very first fundraiser event ever! The Gold Country Young Farmers and Ranchers hosted our first annual Brew and Ball Crawl on September 22, and it was a hit! Members made a variety of meatballs from scratch, and also fried up some rocky mountain oysters. These were served with spaghetti and salad, and dinner was followed up with some scrumptious cup-

cakes, home baked by Gold Country YF&R cochair Amanda Berry. A lot of hard work went into the planning, set up, cooking, and clean up, but it was worth it.

While dinner was being prepared and meatballs were brought out for sampling with various beers and hard ciders, including Amador Brewing Company, Indigeny, and [insert other that I can't seem to remember], attendees played corn hole, which led to a corn hole tournament that lasted until after dinner. Other attendees brought their own cattle iron brands to brand a board made my Brady Dubois and a bench made by Greg Rasmussen. The brand board is going to hang in the Ranch House at the Calaveras County fairgrounds. After dinner, the brand bench was auctioned off to the highest bidder by Ryan Sullivan, who kindly stepped in to serve as the auctioneer. All in all, attendees said they enjoyed the event very much, that it was family friendly and mellow, and a great way to spend the evening.

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## Gold Country YF&R Photo Gallery

You can check out more photos online! Follow us on Facebook at Gold Country Young Farmers and Ranchers or Instagram @goldcountry.yfr



*Photos clockwise from above right:*

*Sisters Rebecca and Victoria Fischer get ready to brand the bench and board with their family's cattle irons.*

*A Brew and Ball Crawl attendee presses a flaming brand to the bench.*

*Sonja Harris happily serves an attendee a sample of Amador Brewing Company beer with the chicken parmesan meatballs.*

*Gold Country YF&R Chair Rosemary Giannini proudly displays the specialty of the night, fried rocky mountain oysters.*

*Opposite page:*

*Dinner guests enjoy their evening meal on the lawn of the Utican Mansion.*



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We had a good team of young people who helped set up and clean up the event. We are already very excited for next year.

The Gold Country YF&R would like to thank the following people for stepping up and giving us a hand:

Tad Folendorf and his family, for lending us their beautiful home to serve as a venue

Sherri Smith, who helped us prepare and cook the fried rocky mountain oysters

Greg Rasmussen, for crafting and donating a beautiful bench for us to auction

Julia, who was a tremendous help with flower centerpieces and decorations

Ryan Sullivan, who stepping in to be the auctioneer when we needed one

The Calaveras County Fairgrounds, for lending us their chairs and tables

On Nov. 11, we went on an industry tour of the Anderson Christmas Tree Farm in Murphys. We met at Kaylee Dillashaw's house for coffee, hot chocolate, and pastries, then caravanned together over to the farm. Owner and farmer Charlie Anderson kindly hosted us, and gave us a very interesting overview on how Christmas tree farms operate.

A retired fire fighter, Charlie opened the farm up for business 25 years ago. In that time, he has experimented planting a variety of trees, such as Scotch Pine, Douglas Fir, and Colorado Blue Spruce, to name a few.

For established trees, he prefers to stump cultivate-cutting a tree down, but leaving at least 3 branches on the stump, and an identical tree will grow from the stump. For trees that need to be replaced, he buys "plugs" to plant. A tree planted as a seed or plug will take at least 8 to 10 years to grow; with stump cultivation, the tree grow back in at least 4 years. He has his trees on a drip irrigation system, and before opening day, prunes each tree to be more presentable to customers.

Charlie also described some of the challenges he's faced as a Christmas tree farmer, including losing trees to drought, scorching summer heat, and pests like gophers and star thistle.

It's a worthwhile endeavor to him, though, because he loves to see families come to his farm and enjoy their experiences picking and cutting down their own trees. He also offers a tractor hay ride and built a custom tree house to add to the experience his customers will have. He said, seeing their smiling faces is his "payment" for all his hard work.

When he isn't running the Christmas tree farm, he operates a small mill on his property, taking trees that have overgrown where they were previously planted, and dead trees affected by drought and bark beetle.

We really enjoyed our time touring his farm, and appreciate Charlie for hosting us, even when he's busy preparing for opening day. If you would like to see Anderson Christmas Tree Farm for yourself, head on over to Murphys the day after Thanksgiving and check it out.



*Charlie Anderson, left, explains the different varieties of trees he has planted on his farm.*

# Announcements

The California Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting will be Dec. 4-7, 2018 in San Diego.

The Calaveras County Farm Bureau will be sending the following delegates:

Steve Kafka  
Amanda Berry

December 7, 2018

Gold Country YF&R

Christmas Potluck

R.S.V.P for directions!

[goldcountry.yfr@gmail.com](mailto:goldcountry.yfr@gmail.com)

The Gold Country YF&R would like to thank the following businesses and individuals for their table sponsorships of our Brew and Ball Crawl 2018:

Amanda Folendorf \* Calaveras County Fair and Jumping Frog Jubilee \* Country Feed and More \* Coleman Kassik \* Conifer Communications \* Diestel Turkey \* Duck Creek of Calif. \* Justice Rasmussen \* Rasmussen Ranch \* Sierra Eye Care Associates \* Spence Ranch and Feed \* Sunset Automotive \* T&T Trucking \* Tad Folendorf \* Terri Arrington \* Tim and Sara Oskey \* Town and Country Pet Resort

THANK YOU!



Would you like to support the Gold Country YF&R?  
Buy a hat! \$20, 768-8702 or  
[goldcountry.yfr@gmail.com](mailto:goldcountry.yfr@gmail.com)

October 9, 2018 the Gold Country YF&R elected their Executive Board for the 2018/19 year. Our elected officials are:

Chair - Rosemary Giannini  
Co-chair - Amanda Berry  
Treasurer - Nicolette Ratto  
Secretary - Rebecca Fischer  
Social Media Coordinator - Kaylee Dillashaw

## Agritourism Intensive course offered in Calaveras County

The UC Cooperative Extension and UC SAREP partnered with the Calaveras County Tourism Bureau, Calaveras Grown, Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce, the Calaveras Winegrape Alliance, and other local partners to offer the course “Agritourism Intensive 2019 – Calaveras County.”

This course will introduce the student to a range of opportunities for diversifying a working farm or ranch by providing enjoyment and education to visitors for profit. Local experts will guide participants as they assess their own farm or ranches for agritourism potential and start creating business, risk management, and marketing plans for their own agritourism operations. Local experienced agritourism operators will share their own experiences and will be part of a supportive network of advisors as class participants plan and start new enterprises.

Students will participate in individual research and writing exercises, in-class and online discussions, and will have homework assignments to complete between class sessions. Class instructors will provide each participant with individual feedback if requested. No educational credit will be given for this course.

The first workshop held on January 30, 2019 will introduce participants to the range of agritourism enterprises possible as diversification strategies for managing production and financial risk. Producers will learn from experienced agritourism operators, county staff and expert advisors about managing legal risks, liability, regulatory challenges, and permitting for various types of operations. The project team will then engage participants in a hands-on process of assessing their own farm or ranch assets and evaluating costs, benefits and risks of several potential or existing agritourism enterprises, including evaluation of family, staff, and other human resources of the enterprises.

Homework exercises involved consultation with family and support professionals.

The second and third workshops held on February 27, 2019 and March 27, 2019 will involve local small business development and tourism professionals and agritourism operators in teaching participants to understand and manage the financial, human, and price risks of operating agritourism enterprises. Participants will learn about the importance of risk assessments, record keeping and budgeting, emergency preparedness, business planning and marketing strategies, and will be introduced to modern marketing tools including social media, effective websites, and other low-cost promotions. They will begin creating business plans, marketing strategies, and risk assessments. Participants will be supported in their business planning, marketing strategy design, risk assessments, and plan implementation by individual consultation with the project team and with successful agritourism operators in their regions. At least one site visit to a successful agritourism operation will be included in the curriculum. Small group discussions and in-class exercises will encourage network development. The project team will follow up by telephone or email with all participants who complete the planning assignments, checking in on progress and offering consultation.

The three workshops will be offered at Greenhorn Creek in Angels Camp on the following dates: January 30, February 27, and March 27, 2019. Each session will be 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. with lunch included. The 3-session course costs \$60. For more information contact Penny Leff of UC SAREP at [paleff@ucdavis.edu](mailto:paleff@ucdavis.edu) or (530) 752-5208. If you would like a PDF with more information about the course, go to our “Upcoming Events” page at [www.calaverasfarmbureau.org](http://www.calaverasfarmbureau.org).

# 2017 Calaveras County Crop Report finished

*Opening statement of the 2017 Crop Report from Calaveras County Ag Commissioner Kevin Wright:*

"It is my privilege to present the 2017 Calaveras County Crop Report as prepared pursuant to Section 2279 of the California Food and Agriculture Code.

Timber and Cattle were the leading commodities. Timer notched a marked increase in value, up to 50 percent to a little over 7 million dollars. More quality green logs were harvested as opposed to fire and beetle damaged timber. Cattle and calves, the bedrock of Calaveras agriculture, also came in at 7 million dollars as prices rose from the multi-year lows in 2016 and rangeland forage was excellent due to timely rains.

Overall wine grape yields were slightly better than last year despite cool weather and hail damage in the spring that negatively impacted smaller vineyards in the higher elevations. Improved management practices on some of the larger vineyards and timely harvest and utilization of grapes by wineries were positive factors. Price per ton rose moderately.

Poultry prices remained low on the national-level but specialty growers enjoyed good demand for their

free range or organic chicken in Bay Area markets.

Walnut growers continued to contend with the lower prices that hit the export markets over the past year and a half, but yields remained steady.

Olive yield in active orchards rose but a lack of interest in harvesting olives from older orchards because of labor costs remains. Small olive operations with a retail outlet flourished.

Overall, agriculture production in the county rose 15 percent to 29 million dollars, with cattle and timber, our two largest commodities, leading the way.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the producers who provide data to help us compile a meaningful report. Numbers do no adequately represent the effort that it takes to grow and market an agricultural commodity in Calaveras County. Finally, I would like to thank the staff at the Department of Agriculture for their help in compiling this report and who do the wide variety of tasks necessary to fulfill our mandates, serve the county's varied agricultural interests, and represent the Commissioner's office in a thoughtful and professional manner."

## Leading Farm Commodities

Timber	\$7,334,000	Apiary	\$316,000
Cattle and Calves	\$7,220,500	Nursery Products	\$250,000
Poultry	\$3,890,000	Misc. Livestock	\$195,000
Wine Grapes	\$2,972,600	Vegetable crops	\$193,000
Walnuts	\$2,063,400		

*This graphic from the Calaveras County Crop Report gives an overview of the county's leading farm commodities.*