

Sonoma County Farm Bureau: Working For You 2016

Sonoma County Farm Bureau values our members and works hard to support local agriculture, keeping it viable in the county by protecting the industry from over regulation and continuing to educate the general public and farmers alike. We want to take this opportunity to share a small snippet of what Sonoma County Farm Bureau has done to protect and promote agriculture over the last year:

Endorsing Political Candidates Who Support Agriculture

- Endorsed and held a fundraiser for political newcomer Lynda Hopkins who was successfully elected to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in November
- Endorsed Shirlee Zane for re-election to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Endorsed and supported additional candidates including Bill Dodd, elected to the California State Senate; Mark Levine, elected to the California State Assembly; Mike Thompson, elected to the United States Congress; and Jim Wood, elected to the California State Assembly
- 100% of endorsed candidates were elected to office

Participating in Cannabis Regulation Discussions

- Represented agriculture interests by participating in meetings throughout the county regarding cannabis regulation and legislation
- Supported the position that state level cannabis legalization and resulting rules focus on community safety and not lead to overly burdensome regulations for Sonoma County agriculture

Educating the Public About Agriculture

- Provided more than \$135,000 in scholarships through the Farm Bureau Foundation of Sonoma County
- Taught 5,700 people, including 4,200 elementary age children, about agriculture at SCFB's annual Ag Days
- Started an Ag Education teacher contest and awarded the grand prize to the Two Rock Elementary School, the teachers received a \$1,000 grant to continue expanding their school garden
- Participated in Petaluma Youth Ag Day
- Sponsored the Life on the Farm Arena at the Gravenstein Apple Fair where approximately 15,000 members of the general public could learn about agriculture
- Attended the Sonoma County Fair livestock shows and auctions promoting good animal husbandry
- Co-sponsored the Sonoma County Fair Awards Dinner and presented 102 awards to 4-H and FFA students
- Hosted and coordinated five days of agricultural tours for nearly 150 high school juniors around the county through the Tomorrow's Leaders Today program

Promoting Agriculture Through People and Events

- Put on a sold-out 1,400 person crab feed to raise money for agricultural education
- Honored the Mauritsen Family as Farm Family of the Year at Love of the Land
- Awarded the Luther Burbank Conservation Award to Richard Hughes for his work with the RCDs and NRCS to build a rainwater catchment pond and collect rain from the roof of his barn
- Inducted past executive director Tim Tesconi into the Farm Bureau Hall of Fame
- Hosted more than 200 Farm Bureau members at the 99th annual dinner honoring outgoing president John Azevedo and introducing incoming president Steve Dutton

Taking a Stand on Local Ballot Measures

- Supported the community separator measure to maintain rural space and protect agriculture in Sonoma County
- Supported the transient occupancy tax to equalize revenue collection
- Opposed the transgenic contamination (GMO) ordinance as SCFB continues to represent all forms of agriculture
- Opposed the parks tax which would impose higher taxes on rural residents to fund local parks

Protecting Winery Events

- Attended meetings explaining how the sale of wine directly supports agriculture and therefore related activities help agriculture
- Took the position that this is important because wine is only the first target – if wineries are restricted these regulations can be passed onto other forms of agriculture

Fighting for Your Water Rights

- Hosted six water committee meetings with stakeholders
- Worked with local elected officials and organizations to form GSAs for the sustainable groundwater management act
- Objected to many aspects of Senate Bill 88 which requires anyone diverting more than 10 acre-feet of water annually to measure and report
- Urged Farm Bureau members to comply with SB 88 after it became law and assisted those who needed advice
- Submitted comment letters jointly with the Napa County Farm Bureau, Wine Institute and four other grower groups critiquing Vineyard Waste Discharge Requirements for Sonoma Creek and Napa River Watershed

Modernizing the Home of SCFB

- Purchased a new home for Sonoma County Farm Bureau offices at 3589 Westwind Blvd in the Airport Business Park
- The purchased building will provide modern facilities to accommodate growth of the organization and its services to members and county agriculture
- Sold the 970 Piner Road Office

Training Our Agricultural Community

- Partnered with the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce to provide an English Learning Program for the agriculture industry
- Educated more than 475 people in English and Spanish through courses; Pesticide Regs., CPR, Heat Stress, Forklift Cert., Supervisor Mgt., CE for Pesticide Applicators, Diesel Regs., BIT Program, Drones, Estate Planning, Tax Credits for Ag, and more

Supporting Local Businesses

- Cooperated with 43 local businesses to promote and direct members patronage through a local discount program
- Partnered with 42 Sonoma County wineries to promote and direct members patronage through providing discounted purchases

California Farm Bureau Federation: Working For You 2016

Your membership in Sonoma County Farm Bureau grants you an automatic membership with both California Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation. At the state level, CFBF has 64 employees working on state regulations and policy at the capital in Sacramento and educating the state about the importance of agriculture. At the national level, AFBF has 104 employees working for you in Washington, D.C. and around the country to keep your operation in business. Here's what CFBF is continually working on to protect your interests:

Your Goalie: Blocking Efforts to Undermine Agriculture

- Preventing a moratorium on drilling new water wells
- Blocking efforts to transfer groundwater adjudications from the courts to the state
- Defeating legislation to increase taxes
- Enforcing Williamson Act contracts
- Preventing permit requirements for removing oak trees from private property topping unreasonable restrictions

Your Advocate: Sponsoring Legislation, Representing Your Interests

- Protecting water rights
- Seeking repeal of WOTUS
- Representing agricultural employers
- Improving the organic registration system
- Working with allies to change the state BIT Program
- Tightening penalties for rural crime
- Fighting expansion of ESA and seeking its reform

Your Source of Savings: Reducing the Costs to Farm and Ranch

- Saving landowners hundreds to thousands of dollars a year through parcel-tax reform
- Protecting the Williamson Act
- Creating an estimated annual savings of \$100 million through availability of generic pesticides
- Working to assure equitable energy rates for farmers and ranchers
- Assuring continuation of the net-metering energy program
- Providing discounts on insurance, supplies, services
- Working to clarify tax rules for farm equipment, fertilizer
- The leading agricultural organization in supporting farm-friendly candidates

Your Voice: Amplifying Your Opinions in a Variety of Forums

- Generating 8,100 messages to elected officials, agencies
- Advocating before state, regional water boards on irrigated-lands programs
- Generating participation in DPR hearings on pesticide use near schools
- Responding to more than 300 media inquiries
- Reaching non-farm audiences via social media, TV, magazine
- Commenting on greenhouse-gas and methane-reduction strategies
- Preserving, expanding access to markets
- Joining coalitions for Career Technical Education, aboveground petroleum storage, port operations
- Working to clarify tax rules for farm equipment, fertilizer
- The leading agricultural organization in supporting farm-friendly candidates

Your Resource: Providing Services You Need To Meet the Challenges Ahead

- Providing guidance in complying with labor laws
- Holding workshops on SGMA implementation and water measurement
- Publishing comprehensive news coverage online and in print
- Developing the next generation of agricultural leaders
- Training successful candidates for elected office
- Providing the knowledge and insights you need to deal with new laws and regulations