



# SONOMA COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Affiliated with California Farm Bureau Federation and American Farm Bureau Federation

## MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 12, 2018**

### **Pat Burns, Tristan Benson Join Sonoma County Farm Bureau Board of Directors**

**Santa Rosa, CA** - Pat Burns and Tristan Benson have joined the Board of Directors for Sonoma County Farm Bureau, the county's largest agricultural organization.

Burns, a Healdsburg native, started his term with Sonoma County Farm Bureau in August 2017, having previously attended board meetings as a Farm Bureau member. Burns chairs Sonoma County Farm Bureau's Labor & Safety committee and serves on the membership committee.

Burns grew up surrounded by agriculture, but wasn't actively involved in the industry until 1993 when he started working for Bevill Vineyard Management where he worked as a vineyard manager for the next 20 years.

Since 2013, Burns has worked as the General Manager of Vineyard Operations for M. Draxton Wines where he oversees the vineyard operations of 250 acres of Cabernet in Alexander Valley. Additionally, Burns is in charge of grower relations and purchasing grapes for Draxton Wines.

Burns joined Sonoma County Farm Bureau's board to stay current on issues affecting agriculture. He is looking forward to the opportunity to educate the general public about agriculture and how it affects them. For Burns, water and labor are two of the most critical issues affecting local agriculture.

Benson, 34, joins the board as the chair of the Sonoma-Marin Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R), a committee of Sonoma County Farm Bureau for active agriculturists between the ages of 18 and 35 who are involved in production, banking, business, and many other areas of the agriculture industry.

Benson succeeds Andrew Ryan who served on the Sonoma County Farm Bureau Board for the 2016-2017 term. Benson's term on the Sonoma County Farm Bureau Board will coincide with his one year term as chair of the Young Farmers & Ranchers committee. The YF&R committee chair began serving on the Sonoma County Farm Bureau board last year when Sonoma County Farm Bureau saw an increased need to involve future leaders in the current issues and regulations facing Sonoma County agriculture.



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Benson is the foreman of Benson Ranch, a family business that produces plums, Asian pears and grain. Benson produces seed grain with a business partner that gets sold to millers. Benson also considers himself a mechanic, repairing equipment for his custom farming operation and other farmers.

Benson is passionate about agriculture and wants to see the industry thrive. While he sees challenges, he also sees many opportunities in Sonoma County. It is particularly important to Benson to encourage the next generation of farmers to continue in agriculture and ensure they are successful.

“Sonoma County Farm Bureau is excited to welcome Pat Burns and Tristan Benson to our Board of Directors,” said Steve Dutton, president of Sonoma County Farm Bureau. “Pat brings years of experience in the industry, a strong passion for agriculture and commitment to watching and contesting regulations that could harm agriculture. Tristan represents the next generation of agricultural leaders and his enthusiasm to support Sonoma County ag is welcome on our board.”

Sonoma County Farm Bureau currently has 17 board members, with one spot reserved for the chair of the Sonoma-Marin Young Farmers and Ranchers committee. A full list of board members is available at [sonomafb.org/directors](http://sonomafb.org/directors).

## **About Sonoma County Farm Bureau**

Sonoma County Farm Bureau, a non-profit grassroots organization, was founded in 1917 and has been representing the interests of farmers and land owners in Sonoma County for more than 100 years.

Sonoma County Farm Bureau is a membership driven organization dedicated to protecting and promoting agriculture in Sonoma County. For more information visit [sonomafb.org](http://sonomafb.org)

## **About Sonoma-Marin Young Farmers & Ranchers**

Sonoma-Marin Young Farmers & Ranchers are active agriculturists, between the ages of 18 and 35, who are involved in production, banking, business, and many other areas of the agriculture industry. YF&R members develop their leadership skills while volunteering their time as vital members of their county Farm Bureaus. For more information visit [sonomafb.org/yfr](http://sonomafb.org/yfr)

[Photo of Pat Burns](#)

[Photo of Tristan Benson](#)

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