

# COMPASS

Issue 1

March 2017



## President's Message



**CWA PRESIDENT JEANETTE LOMBARDO WITH ATTENDEES AT THE JANUARY ANNUAL MEETING AND CONVENTION.**

### CHANGE

A New Year! A time for reflection, renewal, and revival. This annual process started in November when your executive board took time to contemplate the future direction of CWA for the coming year. We asked ourselves: are we all that we ought to be? This reflection led to a list of activities for this year that will begin to transform CWA into that vision. Some of those ideas, include: developing a membership plan that will coordinate with our Public Relations Plan, developing a fundraising committee that will focus on continuous outreach to sponsors and planned giving, a second statewide fundraiser, a new media slogan for next year #IamCWA, and a membership focus.

Last year I challenged you to “Innovate, Motivate, and Activate” your CWA chapters, and you rose to that challenge. Scan the hashtag #ActivateCWA2016 and you will be impressed! All of us stepped outside of our comfort zones and together accomplished much, a few examples:

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March 4-5 - SWM in Santa Maria

May

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- some members, for the first time in their advocacy journey, wrote letters to their local newspaper editors and legislators,
- members stepped forward to serve in a leadership role as an appointed director,
- some spoke for the first time at the podium at your board of supervisors meetings on agricultural issues,
- members advocated through social media with many of us learning new skill sets on Twitter and Instagram as we created a media plan and implemented it,
- chapter members showed up in Sacramento in force,
- we had more CWA members at American Agri-Women Fly-in in June than we have had in several years,
- you educated yourselves and our members on important issues and legation and in doing so empowered our organization to implement its mission,
- State CWA took positions on more legislation than we have in a long time, and
- we developed a new website that now allows us to electronically provide comments on legislation and to regulatory agencies.

We all achieved personal growth and I am very proud of our members on an individual basis and on our organization as a whole.

What is my challenge for you this year? Celebrate you and Celebrate CWA! California Women for Agriculture is an incredible organization and we must celebrate it. Look around at a meeting and see the different types of women who all have different passions, different views on issues, and different ages. All of us are at different places in our advocacy journey. We have learned to embrace this diversity as an organization and on issues (water, GMO, pesticides, etc.) that can sometimes divide us. Only when we work together on these issues inside of our meeting rooms can we have the conversations that need to be had across the aisle in Sacramento to make positive changes and create forward traction on the issues that affect our industry so severely. After forty plus years and all the agricultural legislation we have weighed in on, CWA is still here fighting because there is a place within this organization for everyone.

How do you celebrate you? I am CWA, and so is every member in our organization no matter how different our backgrounds. We must all share our personal stories as we recruit new members this year into the organization. In sharing our stories we will draw people who value and respect agriculture like we all do. In seeking to get new members involved at the local or state level, CWA will retain active members. New members will grow in their skill sets as they continue their advocacy work. Eventually new members will become seasoned members and begin to mentor new members. Our organization does have a life cycle and going through every stage is very rewarding. Celebrate this journey and its impact in your personal and professional lives.

This year there is a focus on membership. It is my vision that one day soon we will have a CWA chapter in every county in California. We need active membership to create a political force that will be a catalyst for change. Given the vast geographical area of our state these chapters will not be cookie cutters of each other and that is just fine. (continued on page 3)

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Change is needed to fight the battles ahead for our industry. At our core, all CWA chapters will honor our policy positions, and it is those shared values that will propel us forward.

Best Regards,

Jeanette Lombardo, CWA President

## “I Am CWA”

### By Monique Bienvenue

When people think of agriculture, they often think of tractors, hats, fields and furry animals roaming around a barn somewhere in the Midwest. More often than not, the picturesque image of an enormous barn surrounded by livestock and mountains is not only what people think of when they try to imagine what the agriculture industry is all about, it has become the focal point of what the media has shared through various news outlets. While all of those components; the farmer, the rancher and everything associated with their lifestyle, are extremely pertinent to California’s booming agriculture industry, they are also just one component to what being an “agriculturalist” is all about.

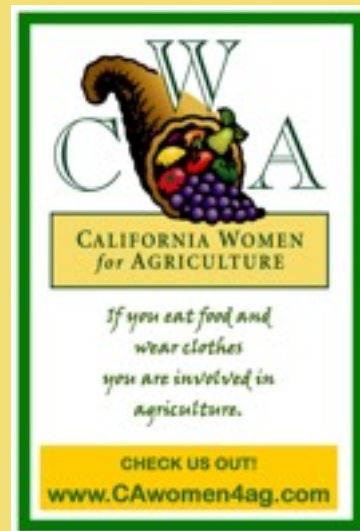
On the outside, I don’t look like your typical “aggie.” As the Director of Communications for a produce business, I don’t have to wear jeans and a hat to work every day, and unlike my colleagues who grew up in a small town, I grew up looking at skyscrapers in the heart of Los Angeles. While the agriculture industry needs and relies upon the backbreaking work of farmers and ranchers each and every day, being a member of CWA aims to tell a bigger story; a story where every single agriculturalist is in the center of the plot, and one that strives to educate others on the role that agriculture plays in everyone’s life.

To be a member of CWA is to be a leader, advocate and passionate enthusiast involved in California’s agriculture industry. A group of devoted women, this organization is made up of many unique individuals with one common goal: to promote, protect and advocate on behalf of California’s diverse food industry. While my story is very different from others, I am still an avid agriculturalist and a strong supporter of California agriculture. **I am a member of CWA** and dedicated to being one of many voices who want to share the farmer’s story.

This year, CWA’s yearly campaign is titled, “I am CWA.” We believe that by sharing our stories, telling others what our chapters are doing and by being vocal on social media, we’ll help to bridge the gap between agriculturalists and our urbanized neighbors. Each and every one of us has a voice and a story to tell; it’s time that we begin to share that information to unite with our sisters in agriculture and shift the conversation of what people think agriculture is all about, to what it really stands for.

Be sure to use the hashtag #IamCWA on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the chance to have your story shared on CWA’s social media platforms.

**#IamCWA**



The Compass is the external communication for California Women for Agriculture. Recipients include CWA members, agriculture organizations, associations, elected and appointed officials and other selected recipients. Chapters are encouraged to submit news, photos, announcements, articles, and suggestions. Directors should submit issue updates and information in advance if action is required.

The Compass is published four times a year by California Women for Agriculture as a service to members. Deadline is the 20th of the month in which a statewide meeting is held.

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## Member Highlight

### By Wilja Happe

Carpinteria/ Santa Barbara chapter of CWA has been active for 40+ years and currently has 40+ members.

Carpinteria, population 15,000, is located in the Coastal zone, and the main crops include cut-flowers and bouquets; cherimoya; avocados; tropical fruits, plants and trees; hydroponic vegetables (that's' vegetables grown on or in water); and orchid plants. Products are sold on the local farmers' markets, as well as, shipped to far away destinations like Boston and Chicago. Carpinteria has small-town-charm and due to its location, the population in summer months grows tremendously due to the many visitors staying at the local State Park campground at the ocean. There is a weekly farmer's market. At the High School there is an active FFA as well as 4-H program, both supported by CWA. We also support the local school gardens, show-animals, flower and plant show, tractor-restoration projects, and the annual California Avocado Festival.

**Elizabeth van Eyck and Sandy Weil** have been co-presidents for the past four years (Sandy was solo president for six years prior). The ladies make for a great leadership team, where Sandy hauls her strength from her education background and Elizabeth and her family have long time ties to the Carpinteria Valley, her great-grandfather farmed lima beans locally in the 1880's.

Elizabeth worked her entire career in real estate, with a focus on agriculture properties. She is a mother of three



PICTURED FROM LEFT  
ARE ELIZABETH VAN  
EYCK AND SANDY  
WEIL.

grown children and grandmother of two. Her focus for the local chapter of CWA is on the importance of Ag education, not only at the local schools but also to support young college students in their pursuit of Ag education. For State CWA, she supports the importance of educating consumers in California on issues that are important to California farmers and the issues that have an impact on their operations and farm practices. Elizabeth followed in the footsteps of her mother and both have been long time CWA members and supporters!

Sandy Weil hails from California and Texas. Her parents grew up on farms in Texas and Oklahoma. Sandy had an active career in education. She held many positions: from high school teacher to assistant principal and home economics and vocational education in food services. Sandy and her husband moved to Carpinteria in 2004 and are the owners of a ranchette with cherimoya trees (yes! Google that one!) and avocado trees. She joined CWA in 2004 and became president soon after.

She is honored to work with Elizabeth as co-president. The chapter has always focused strongly on their support for the local FFA students and has given out many, many local scholarships over the years, raised money for the school barn, school greenhouse and helped purchase supplies for FFA projects.

"I have learned how important agriculture is to the State of California and globally," Sandy says. "I have always believed that the quality of food is a great contributor to continued good health and I hope to educate by example."

## Sacramento Legislation Introduction

The California Legislature started the session with a series of resolutions that they hope to use to counter any Trump administration action. There was hope that perhaps leadership was so focused on their anti-Trump momentum that they would forget about introducing bills. But on the February 17th deadline, more than half of the 2,549 bills were introduced. Now legislators, constituents, media, and lobbyists are wading through the mass amounts of bills that flooded in that last day.

There are already several bills that will prove to be a hotbed for debate.

- SB 49 (De Leon) would maintain that California could maintain its current interpretations of environmental, labor, and business regulations even if the federal regulations are eased
- AB 12 (Cooley) and AB 77 (Fong) each strive to reduce overlapping regulatory oversight

- AB 1163 (Irwin) would create a matching grant program for the "Buy California" Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to leverage federal and private investment and appropriate \$3,000,000 to create that grant
- SB 530 (Vidak) would cut red tape allowing for more streamlined farmworker housing projects
- AB 5 (Gonzalez) would require employers to make current part-time employees full-time before the hiring of more part-time employees
- AB 168 (Eggman) would prohibit an employer from requiring a salary history when hiring a new employee
- And last but certainly not least... AB 313 (Gray) would overhaul the oversight the State Water Resources Control Board has on water rights

These are very brief summaries of only a handful of bills CWA is watching. If you have any questions, please reach out to our State Legislative Task Force Director Laura Brown

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## Be Part of AAW's National Advocacy and Education Campaign

American Agri-Women (AAW) is launching a year-long education and advocacy campaign to show that everyone is part of agriculture every day, and to raise awareness about who produces our nation's abundant food, fiber and energy supply. The "AgDay 365: Ag Day is Every Day" campaign will help raise awareness for and give a theme — a brand — to many projects that affiliates and AAW are already doing, along with being the basis for developing new events and efforts associated with the theme. AAW and our affiliates are already involved in National Ag Day every year and this project provides a vehicle to expand our reach. Our plan is that this will develop into an ongoing effort that affiliates, our members and other agricultural organizations and individuals may join in.



### What's Happening Now

The campaign had a "soft launch" at the convention through a social media announcement — using the hashtag #agday365 — and attendees joined in and shared the theme on their own social media accounts. We appreciate Farm Credit signing on as an inaugural sponsor and the AgDay 365 committee is securing other sponsors as well. In 2017, there will be AgDay 365 events and activities, in addition to the social media campaign.

### Be an AgDay365 Ambassador

There are many ways you can be part of the campaign. Here are some ideas:

#### 1. Affiliates

- Send in your regularly scheduled events so that we can build a national calendar for AAW. We'll cross-promote your events throughout the year through social media and other ways. (Email [community@americanagriwomen.org](mailto:community@americanagriwomen.org).)
- Send in fact sheets or resources you have about your affiliate or commodities and we'll use those to educate consumers. (Email [community@americanagriwomen.org](mailto:community@americanagriwomen.org).)
- Consider developing a new consumer education event, maybe partnering with other ag groups.
- Share posts from the AAW social media accounts on your affiliate accounts. And, when you post about agriculture, please use the #agday365 hashtag.

- On social media, look for "American Agri-Women" (@AgriWomen) on Facebook and Instagram. On Twitter, look for @Women4Ag. And be sure to follow AAW's consumer page on Facebook, Women4Ag. We've also launched a new Facebook page, AgDay365.
- Share the logo and information on your website and in your newsletters.
  - Consider finding local sponsors for the campaign.

#### 2. Members

- Keep doing what you're already doing by educating and advocating in person and on social media and now join those efforts with the campaign using the Ag Day is Every Day theme and #agday365 hashtag.
- Share photos with the committee and we'll promote them nationally.
- Tell your friends and colleagues about the campaign and have them join in on social media.
- Share posts from the AAW social media accounts on your personal accounts. And, when you post about agriculture, please use the #agday365 hashtag.

Finally, we're seeking ideas to help develop #AgDay365 events at Mid-Year, Fly-In and the 2017 convention in Minnesota. All ideas are welcome! Contact Doris Mold, AAW President, [president@americanagriwomen.org](mailto:president@americanagriwomen.org) or Lynn Woolf, Community Relations Committee chair, [community@americanagriwomen.org](mailto:community@americanagriwomen.org).

### Syngenta Leadership At Its Best (LAIB)

Syngenta is working on updating their entire leadership program. This year they are not offering LAIB to several of the organizations that they have in the past as they are revamping their program. AAW is one of the groups that will not be receiving LAIB in 2017. Last year Syngenta generously allowed us several additional spaces in our LAIB program class in anticipation of this change. We value our partnership with Syngenta and look forward to the new and improved leadership training program from them in 2018. In the meantime your AAW Leadership Committee is developing some internal leadership programs to increase the capacity of AAW members.

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## Women in Ag (WIA) Initiative

By Alexis Taylor

Former Deputy Under Secretary, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services & Women in Ag Initiative Lead



I have had the privilege of leading the Women in Ag (WIA) Initiative and it has truly been one of the highlights of my career. As farmers, business owners, scientists, reporters, policy makers, teachers, students, and volunteers, we represent every facet of agriculture and I am both reminded and blown away by our capacity on a daily basis.

As many of you know, my political colleagues and I will be leaving soon. While there will undoubtedly be changes, I want to ask you all for help in ensuring we keep building on the work and momentum developed these past eight years under the Obama Administration to support each other both on and off the farm and address the challenges we face in agriculture. There are so many ways we can all support Women in Ag in our daily lives and I'd like to share five of my favorites with you:

1. **Host a women in ag roundtable, panel or mentoring circle in your own community:** These dialogues are ways to engage community groups of women involved at all levels of agriculture and share experiences with other women in the ag industry. USDA has developed a toolkit to support these discussions and promote small group or one-on-one mentorships. Start the conversation in your community by downloading the toolkit: <https://newfarmers.usda.gov/women-ag-get-connected>
2. **Share your story with us and learn from other women in ag:** Every month, USDA shares the story of a woman in agriculture who is leading the industry and helping other women succeed along the way. If there's a woman in agriculture you'd like to see on the blog, please tweet suggestions using #WomenInAg or email [AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov](mailto:AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov). Read stories on our blog: <http://blogs.usda.gov/category/women-in-ag/>
3. **Join the Women in Ag Mentorship Network:** The network connects more than 1,500 stakeholders across the country through regular engagement calls and newsletters as well as allows women to share stories and relay advice. To join the WIA Mentorship Network, email [AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov](mailto:AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov).
4. **Celebrate and honor contributions of women in agriculture:** USDA has released a series of factsheets detailing the impact women have on agriculture in each state and across the country. As women in ag, it is our responsibility to make sure the next generation of women is educated, encouraged and empowered. Read about women farmers in your state: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=women-in-ag.html>
5. **Amplify the voices of young females:** No individual can claim their successes as uniquely their own. Instead, they are the result of numerous mentors, teachers, friends and leaders – both male and female - who have supported them along the way. No matter your profession or seniority, seek out another females who you can mentor.

As a farm girl, a part of USDA's senior leadership team, and a woman in agriculture, it is has been my honor to lead the Women in Ag Initiative over this past year. As I begin my next journey, I am confident and hopeful that our paths will cross again.

### About the USDA Women In Agriculture Initiative

The Women in Agriculture (WIA) initiative was launched in 2014 and has since developed into a driving force in USDA's missions to support the growing and diverse next generation of farmers and ranchers. There are three pillars that support the initiative:

(1) WIA Employee group, (2) WIA Mentorship Network and (3) Global Women in Agriculture.

Contact [AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov](mailto:AgWomenLead@osec.usda.gov) for more details, join the network and get updates on future engagement calls and event invitations. Get connected online and find resources at <https://newfarmers.usda.gov/women-in-ag>.

Women in Ag for Mentoring and Empowerment (WAME) honored CWA member Marlene Miyasaki at the Fertile Ground Award Luncheon for her dedication to the students at California State University, Fresno's Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (JCAST) at the World Ag Expo on February 14, 2017.



**PICTURED FROM LEFT: BRANDI LOFORTI, PAMELA SWEETEN, MARLENE MIYASAKI, AND ASSEMBLY MEMBER MATHIS**

"WAME's Fertile Ground Award is given to outstanding women in agriculture who work diligently to help advocate on behalf of the ag industry," said WAME Executive Board Member Pamela Sweeten. "When we were thinking of who to give this award to, Marlene was the first person to come to mind."

WAME's board of directors chose to recognize Miyasaki for her selfless attitude of service towards young students and her desire to see them succeed. Her outstanding service and leadership on Fresno State's campus has shown through in the success of its

agriculture students, and their continued support of the industry as alumni.

"Marlene is the sole reason why I'm involved in CWA today," said CWA Central Valley Chapter President Monique Bienvenue. "She helped guide me all throughout college, and continues to encourage me to stay as active as possible in our industry today." Miyasaki is an active member of CWA, 4-H, Alpha Zeta and acts as a mentor and advisor to numerous clubs and organizations affiliated with JCAST. Her role as the Fresno State Plant Science Department

Secretary has helped to enhance JCAST's overall reputation, and her passion for agriculture seeps through to the students with whom she interacts with on a daily basis.

"I can't imagine not working with students," said Miyasaki. "Being able to have an impact on tomorrow's ag leaders is why I do what I do."

## CWA STATE GENERAL DONORS

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## CWA SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

We would like to give a special thanks to the following organizations that have sponsored the reception:

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California Fresh Fruit Association  
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