



# NEWSLETTER

## President's Message

Leadership...dream it, plan it, do it!

Leadership brings people together to achieve or focus on a common goal(s), to develop plans to achieve the goal(s) and to stay the course until the goal(s) are achieved. With our goals to educate, promote and advocate for agriculture, each member can be a leader to get the message out, telling the Ag story and clarifying fact from fiction. We need to help direct the 'published narrative' from the misinformation to factual information. "There is only published opinion. There is no such thing as public opinion." Winston Churchill

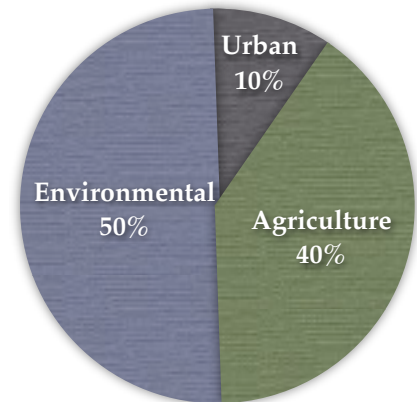
Our CWA chapter is replete with leadership talent. Each is a leader in her own way and sphere of influence. Let's consider some of the attributes of a leader:

- Steadfast in pursuit of the goal(s)
- Flexible when developing strategies
- Courageous when faced with 'push back' to the message
- Confidence to 'stick-to-it'
- Ability to listen to others
- Strength to acknowledge it's time to 'retrench'
- Ability to compromise but know the line that can't be crossed
- Ability to collaborate and build collaborative teams

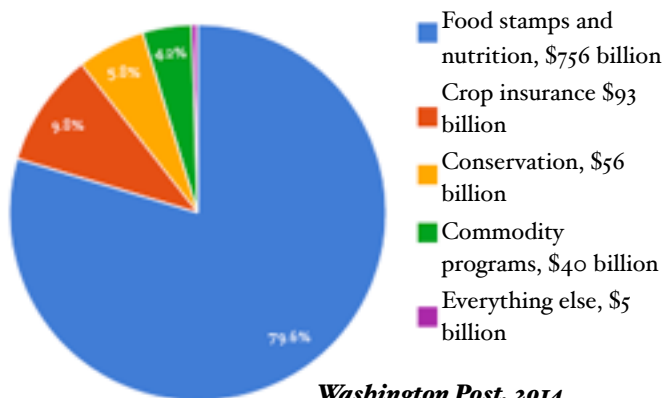
It's important for us to articulate the vision, develop realistic strategies, maximize the skills of a talented committed team to get it done and proceed with enthusiasm. All the while, we should not forget that we all should be having fun too.

Besides possessing and employing leadership skills to be successful, we must be armed with good information. Here is some federal, state and local Ag information for our coffee or cocktail conversation:

### State of California Water Usage

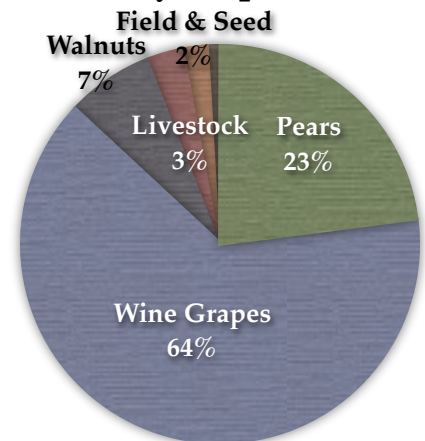


What's in the farm bill? (Costs from FY2014-2023)



Washington Post, 2014

### Lake County Crops Gross Value



"The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time." Abe Lincoln If each day, each of us takes a leadership role in getting the Ag story out, we have the best chance of changing minds and attitudes.

- Sharron Zoller, CWA President.



SENDING LOTS OF SUNSHINE TO:  
SAUSHA RACINE on the loss of her mother.

TONI (RENFRO) BROWN, PAMELA KIRKPATRICK, CHUCK MARCH, CARMEN CARPENTER, and ELIZABETH SPRINGER as they continue to bravely endure health challenges!

ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS!

*Fall Social December 4th,  
RSVP by November 25th*

**Invitation Available on Website**

A HEARTY SHOUT OUT THIS MONTH TO:

- ❖ MICHELLE SCULLY on her recent selection as a Woman of the Year!
- ❖ MARILYN HOLDENRIED and crew for yet another outstanding - and record breaking - Pear Festival!
- ❖ SUSIE KAUFMANN and DENA WOOD, along with all the wonderful VOLUNTEERS who once again worked so hard organizing, making and selling the delicious pear pies and turnovers at the Pear Festival -- and Scully Packing and Adobe Packing for contributing pears! We exceeded last year's profits!
- ❖ DIANE HENDERSON for her recent Star of Lake County Agriculture Award!
- ❖ MARGARET EUTENIER, JAN ECKERT, and SCULLY PACKING for their contributions to the Country Store at the Ag Boosters BBQ and Fresno SWM!
- ❖ TONI AND PHIL SCULLY - Grand Marshalls of the 2014 Lake County Fair!
- ❖ KAREN AND JERRY HOOK for the wonderful LCCWA Display at Umpqua Bank!
- ❖ KAREN JONES - Middletown HS Ag Teacher - our new LCCWA South County Area representative!
- ❖ GAYE ALLEN - author of the terrific "Lake County Wine Guide" - and MYRON HOLDENRIED for gifting copies to the AgVenture participants!
- ❖ SIX SIGMA RANCH and proprietors KAJ and ELSE AHLMANN on having their 2011 Diamond Mine Cuvee featured by Williams Sonoma in its fall wine catalog!
- ❖ LAKE COUNTY QUILT TRAIL founder MARILYN HOLDENRIED and volunteers CAROL MAXWELL, GERRI GROODY, ANNETTE HIGDAY and LYN HILTON (who hand paint each quilt) for being featured in the September/October Farm Bureau magazine "California Bountiful"!
- ❖ BONNIE SEARS for mentoring LCCWA board members concerning working on improving social media presentations! (ongoing...)

**Calendar**

**December 4  
Fall Social and Officer  
Installation**

**December 9  
Board Meeting  
(Members Welcome)  
11:30 Umpqua Bank**

**January  
Membership Renewal**

*January 16-18  
Staterwide Meeting  
San Luis Obispo*

*March 14-15  
Staterwide Meeting  
Harris Ranch*

## MICHELLE SCULLY, WOMAN OF THE YEAR



***Michelle receiving her award from John Garamendi***

Michelle Scully, LCCWA member, agriculture and economic development advocate, and Marymount University Lakeside Campus inaugural Executive Director, has a twenty-year history of service to Lake County - particularly in the areas of agriculture, education, and economic development.

When she and husband Pat relocated to Lake County he went to work in the family's pear packing business, and she quickly immersed herself in community activities. Michelle was appointed to an advisory board tasked with researching the divisive issue of genetically modified crops. She also served on the steering committee that developed AgVenture, a program to educate community leaders on the importance of agriculture in Lake County.

To address the issue of hunger, she organized a very successful Bountiful Gift Box fundraiser for the county's Hunger Task Force. She brings creativity and solid business ideas to the table of the Regional Economic

Development Committee with a style that keeps community members excited and engaged in realizing opportunities. She was a member of the Advisory Council appointed to be a driving force behind the opening of Marymount's Lakeside Campus. Michelle has weathered storms - professional and personal - with infinite grace and a smile on her face. When she fell and broke her back riding her horse on their ranch, she dragged herself, using only her arms, a quarter mile home, where she lay on the floor until her husband arrived and insisted on taking her to the ER. Once home from surgery, she missed just three lectures of teaching her biology class at Mendocino College, where she is still an instructor.

Michelle personifies grit - able to work hard, overcome adversity, and bring long-term passions and community goals to fruition. Nominated by Matt Perry, Denise Rushing and Rebecca Southwick, she was chosen as a Woman of the Year from her district for 2014 by Congressman John Garamendi.

*- Adapted from a press release to the Lake County Record-Bee*

## LAKE COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

Executive Director Allison Tucker has been developing a new website for Lake County Farm Bureau. She is working to make it both informative and user friendly; we hope to have it up and running soon.

Applications have been coming in from our local schools for the Blue Jacket Bonanza, which awards free FFA jackets to deserving students. The application deadline was October 31.

Thanks to membership recruitment efforts by Allison and several board members, LCFB has once again met the 4th quarter membership goal, which will earn us income from the California Farm Bureau Federation.

Administering the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program has required a great deal of time and effort from Allison the past few weeks, and she continues to enroll new members. This program will only become more complicated as new regulations are developed to deal with the drought.

We now have a winner to announce for our raffle of 1/2 hog from the Junior Livestock Auction: Carolyn Henderson! LCFB plans to donate the other 1/2 hog to a local charity.

*- Diane Henderson*

**DID YOU KNOW?**

“It can be said that farming is not a job. It is a calling - a fearful, lovely, life-consuming passion to till and bring forth life from the earth.” Ask Mary (Suchan) O’Meara, third generation Suchan Farm and Nursery farmer and Lake County CWA member. Poetic in her description, Mary has expressed what so many of us who have “taken up the plow” feel in our souls.

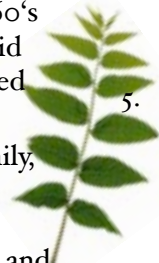
Suchan Farm and Nursery, owned by Mary’s parents Alex and Lois Suchan (also a long-standing LCCWA member), had its literal roots in the walnut trees that lined the driveway of the original property Alex’s father, of the first Suchan generation who hailed from Poland, had purchased in the heart of Upper Lake. Alex, of the second generation, concluded that the walnut business would probably best small dairy farming as a living. So he planted, reaped, dried (utilizing the spare bedroom) and hawked his walnuts, eventually developing and selling nursery stock. By the 1960’s Alex was planting exclusively the Paradox Hybrid walnut seedling “a superior rootstock” introduced to him by local farmer Sam Henry.

Fast forward to today, where the Suchan family, now into the fourth generation with Mary’s son Ryan, employs six full-time workers: clerical, orchard and nursery managers, field employees, and mechanics/equipment operators. Several temporary workers are also employed for the walnut harvest (which usually runs October 20 - mid-November), tree digging (December 20 - March 20), and seed sorting and planting (April 4 - May 15). “Most employees do all jobs at one time or another.”

The operation is twofold: Paradox Hybrid Walnut Seedling Nursery; and Walnut Orchard. Here are some interesting facts about each:

**PARADOX HYBRID WALNUT SEEDLING NURSERY**

1. Frequent Lake County spring frosts and late spring rains can severely limit seed crops; therefore, the farm, in addition to the Northern California black walnuts from their own seed trees, purchases leased seeds and pays a fee based on how many hybrid trees are



produced after they stratify, sprout and plant the seeds.

2. Seeds are placed in volcanic sand in December to stratify and are taken out in late March and April, with seeds that would produce black walnut seedlings discarded. A certain percentage of the black nuts have been successfully pollinated by English pollen and the paradox that results they plant in their nursery.
3. Between 3 - 8 acres of nursery are planted each year, depending on their estimate of seed, orders for trees and available ground. Around half of the nursery is sold over a year in advance, with the rest sold during the fall and winter before digging.
4. 5.27 acres of land are used for nursery and have, in the past, grown alfalfa, oats, Sudan grass, sweet clover and safflower in rotation prior to planting nursery. They are currently experimenting with triticale in rotation to eliminate the high irrigation and haying expense of the alfalfa and other hay crops.
5. When nursery soil is too heavy from rains, roots can break during digging, and wet soil is also extremely damaging to the consistency - “relegating a high percentage of trees to the fire pile.” Waiting until it is dry enough to dig after a rain is a huge challenge.
6. In order to maintain a good relationship with their seed suppliers, they often purchase more seed than they can grow.
7. Customers (most from the Sacramento Valley) like to receive trees in January to plant, so the nursery struggles to dig, wash, grade and caliper, bundle, count, load and get them out within just a few weeks after digging.
8. The nursery has been averaging 70,000 trees per year the last several years, but have grown as few as 17,000 after a frosty spring and as many as 102,000 in a good seed year.
9. Even though the nursery has established a reputation of having the best paradox seedlings in the entire industry, becoming known to new growers remains a challenge. Word of mouth is their best lifeline, as they cannot afford “glossy brochures or full page ads.”

**DID YOU KNOW? CONTINUED...****WALNUT ORCHARD OPERATION**

1. Suchan Farm and Nursery maintains their own orchards and have managed several others in the past. Harvest usually runs from October 20 to mid-November, depending upon the rain- “a constant worry.”
2. They own their own hulling and dehydrating facility, having upgraded and enlarged it several times since the late 50’s. Two harvesters, two sweepers, two shakers, a field elevator, and nut buggies “all well aged”; a backhoe, trencher, wood-splitter, hay equipment, seeder, spray equipment, Woodmizer saw mill, several tractors and implements, three forklifts, two digging machines, many small tools, two delivery trailers, a large and small dump bed truck for hauling compost, sand, firewood, fertilizers and gravel- make up the farm equipment pool. Mechanical harvesting is preferred, as hand picking is not cost effective, easy to find, or timely. However, again the weather determines the method. Delivery has evolved from a 10- wheel dump bed truck over St. Helena Mountain to a Diamond Walnut receiving plant in Calistoga, to a Ranch Pick-up plan operation with Diamond and another company.
3. They can harvest from 25 - 150 tons per year depending on weather and resultant nutset.
4. Orchards have been removed and replanted due to disease or old age, or a need to replace an undesirable variety with a newer, better. It



*Mary Among the Nursery Trees*

takes many years for a walnut orchard to produce a harvestable crop, something all walnut farmers struggle with.

5. What to do with pulled trees or pruned brush is always a challenge due to burn permit laws, and the fact that labor -intensive chopped firewood sales do not realize worthwhile profits. However, occasional burl sales do help. Hiring a large wood chipper to chip and remove the chippings after selling the stumps has been a worthwhile yet costly investment.
6. Alex participates in U.C. research projects, and is always excited about a new variety that looks very good for Lake County weather “and has a never-say-die attitude about the next one that might show up, constantly grafting experimental scions on trees around the farm.”

“If there is an answer to why we farm when the struggle is so intense year after year it is this: we love it. The smell of the soil after a rain, the cooling breeze after a long hot day; the amazing clean air in Lake County; the crisp fall days after a frost when the yellow leaves twirl in ever-changing patterns to the ground; the beautiful feathered patterns of ice on the leaves of the nursery when we cover them with ice to try and save their tender shoots. It cannot be described as well as it can be lived...” Just ask Mary!

*-Lori McGuire*



AGVENTURE 2014 UPDATE



*Members of the class and AgVenture Committee*

AgVenture was a roaring success again this year! Our class enjoyed tours of Henderson Orchards, Scully Packing, Beckstoffer Vineyards, Gregory Graham Winery, Suchan Walnut Farm & Nursery and Chacewater Winery & Olive Mill. Transportation to all tour venues was provided through our partnership with the Military Funeral Honors Team and their van.



*The Chefs at Vigilance*

Twenty-six speakers, which included a three person farmworker panel, gave presentations over four days of the program which took place one day a month August through November. Presentations included information on water, land use, labor, pest management, regulatory requirements, GMOs, cultivation of conventional and organic crops, history, agricultural research and crop financing.



*Savoring and Socializing*

At their graduation on the last day of the program, class members shared a few experiences they were most likely to remember from their participation in AgVenture and left with new information and perspectives on agriculture in general and in Lake County in particular.

Support for AgVenture is provided through participant tuition, sponsorships, in-kind donations and partnerships with our venues. Special thanks goes to the Lake County

Winegrape Commission this year for the use of their new office in Kelseyville for class meeting space as well as their sponsorship of lunch at Vigilance Winery.

Grateful thanks to AgVenture Steering Committee members Annette Hopkins, Toni Scully, Diane Henderson, Terry Dereniuk, Sharron Zoller and Paula Bryant for the success of this year's program.

*- Annette Hopkins*

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