



SPRING 2018

LEGACY

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POWER OF**

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PROTECTING THE FARMS THAT FEED YOUR FAMILY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Charlotte Mitchell

A past. A present. A personality. But most importantly, a promise.

When the Central Valley Farmland Trust was created, it promised to help farmers protect farmland in California's Central Valley. The name was a clear and concise reflection of the mission – you can trust us to protect farmland in the Central Valley.

With that promise came great responsibility, a commitment to protect farmland, forever. Forever is a long, long time, but we keep that commitment every day, every hour, every minute. And we constantly look to the future – how will we ensure the next generation, and the one after that, and the one after that, keep the commitment we made today?

As we look to the future, one thing is clear. There is power in partnerships. There is strength in unity, in numbers, in growth. Together, we can keep our promise to protect farmland. Together, we are stronger and can achieve more.

Today, I am excited to announce a new partnership that will help us keep our promise. Central Valley Farmland Trust has officially merged with the Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust. This merger honors our past (CVFT was created when the Stanislaus Farmland Trust merged with the Sacramento Valley Agricultural Land Conservancy and Merced County Farmland and Open Space Trust), strengthens our present, and grows our personality for the future.

With this merger, our commitment has grown beyond our Central Valley roots – from Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, and Madera counties into Contra Costa County. As our company and commitment have grown, we've realized that so too must our name. Our promise is now to protect farmland in more of California, so our name has become California Farmland Trust.



You'll be seeing the name California Farmland Trust on our communications from now on, and we've even launched a new website (be sure to visit us at cafarmtrust.org). Although our service area will remain our six counties for now, we look forward to forming more partnerships and helping protect more of our precious farmland in the future.

“OUR PROMISE IS NOW TO PROTECT FARMLAND IN MORE OF CALIFORNIA...”

We promise to work our mission, to help farmers protect the best farmland in the world. Thank you for all that you do help us keep our promise, to protect farmland, forever.



OUR MISSION

Help Farmers Protect the Best Farmland in the World



Member in Good Standing

CURRENTLY SERVING

Sacramento, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Stanislaus, Merced, and Madera counties

Directors:

- Tim Byrd, Modesto
- Mike Darnell, Sacramento
- Ron Dolinsek, Rocklin
- Jim Gwerder, Tracy
- Jon Harvey, Pleasanton
- Denny Jackman, Modesto
- Jim Jorgensen, Rocklin
- Patrick Johnston, Brentwood
- Larry Ruhstaller, Stockton

Board Officers:

- Barbara Smith, Courtland | President
- Ron Freitas, Modesto | Vice President
- Maxwell Norton, Merced | Secretary
- Ken Oneto, Elk Grove | Treasurer

Staff:

- Charlotte Mitchell | Executive Director
- Melanee Cottrill | Associate Director
- Troy Young | Program Assistant

Trustee Council:

- George Gomes
- Ed Nishio
- Emily Rooney
- Paul Wenger

Content:

- Melanee Cottrill
- Erin Davis
- Jon Harvey
- Charlotte Mitchell
- Troy Young

Editor/Design:

- Erin Davis,
- Davis Communications Group

NEW DIRECTORS x5

Diverse Perspectives With the Same Goal

Jim Jorgensen

Jim Jorgensen, along with his sisters, Joanne and Janice, placed a conservation easement on their 300-acre ranch in Gustine nearly a decade ago. Now, he is expanding his conservation work by joining the CFT board. “My goal is to be productive and help bring my perspective as a landowner with an easement to the board,” said Jim. “I am impressed with the board and staff of CFT. They are a high caliber group of agriculturally-minded folks who have a common purpose to protect California farms.” Jim’s grandfather came to California in the 1880s and acquired the then 600-acre Jorgensen property. “He began the legacy of my family’s appreciation for the land, crops, and the synergy of how one property interacts with the larger landscape around it,” shares Jim. This long history on the land gives him a distinct viewpoint as a board member.

Jim Gwerder

Jim Gwerder pursued farmland conservation work in the East Bay after 30 years of serving farmers by protecting their property rights. “I live on the property I was raised on, just outside of Tracy, so representing landowners and their rights was a natural fit for me,” said Jim, new CFT Board Member and former BALT board member. As a licensed real estate broker Jim says, “My perspective comes from understanding the business of farming and ranching, the lifestyle and commitment it takes, and knowing the business of real estate – I can be helpful to landowners. I want farmers to have the tools they need, that are also respectful of property rights. Bringing my experience to the California Farmland Trust is a way I can help continue a mission I believe in, farmland protection.” Jim served in the U.S. Air Force, while earning his degree in business from Stanislaus State. He and his wife, Anna, live outside of Tracy in his childhood home and have three grown boys.

Jon Harvey

“I come from a blended perspective. I am a mechanical engineer by trade, a tree hugger by background, and have learned a deep respect for landowners and the stewards of working landscapes,” said Jon Harvey, new CFT board member and former BALT board member. Jon’s perspective started with a “...wildlife habitat conservation set of values,” he says. But he quickly learned that most of the quality landscape not controlled by the government is owned by farmers and ranchers. “I come at this effort from a unique perspective, because of my non-ag background – mine is more scientific and natural environment focused, but I think what I can bring is someone to initiate conversations in a way that might other-wise be uncomfortable. I have an appreciation and respect for the farmers and ranchers and what they face.”



THE JOINT BOARD APPROVING MERGER DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE WELCOME EVENT.
FRONT ROW: TOM BLOOMFIELD (BALT), BARBARA SMITH (CVFT), MAXWELL NORTON (CVFT), KEN ONETO (CVFT)
BACK ROW: LARRY RUHSTALLER (CVFT), JIM JORGENSEN (CVFT), PATRICK JOHNSTON (BALT), JANET CAPRILE (BALT), JON HARVEY (BALT), RON FREITAS (CVFT), TIM BYRD (CVFT), JIM GWERDER (BALT).

Patrick Johnston

Patrick Johnston, new CFT board member and former BALT board member, comes from a family that has been farming in Brentwood since the early 1920s. “The work of CFT is personally important to my family,” he said, because “we see first-hand the interconnectedness of many issues that tie back to protecting farm ground and thus protecting local food. Protecting farmland protects my ability, and others’, to continue supplying this need and working with our community to serve our residents.”

“THE WORK OF CFT IS PERSONALLY IMPORTANT TO MY FAMILY BECAUSE WE SEE FIRSHTHAND THE MANY ISSUES...”

Patrick shares, “My goal on the board is to be a voice for the farmer, ensure he has the flexibility overtime that he needs to do his business of growing food, but I will also focus on the greater good of what we do.” Patrick lives with his wife Amy and two high school aged daughters on their farm in Oakley.

Denny Jackman

We are excited to welcome back to the board a familiar face, Denny Jackman. Denny, a past CVFT Chairman, rejoins our board after a three-year hiatus. Welcome back Denny!

MEET THE CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST

By Farmers, For Farmers



(L) PEACHES AT HUMBOLDT RANCH IN 2017. (R) CVFT VICE PRESIDENT RON FREITAS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHARLOTTE MITCHELL AT HUMBOLDT RANCH IN 2017

The Central Valley Farmland Trust (CVFT) started with two Merced county farm-women conversing at a kitchen table, dismayed by the rapid development they saw around them, coming closer and closer to overwhelming their family farms. Knowing something needed to be done to protect the farmland, Linda and Eleanor started the Merced County Farmland and Open Space Land Trust right there at the kitchen table. We can't think of a more fitting beginning, protecting farmland from the kitchen table on which those very farms put food for families.

Eventually, the kitchen table was outgrown and in 2003, representatives from Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced Counties began meeting to create a regional land trust. These early meetings included farmers from San Joaquin County, and representatives from the Sacramento Valley Ag Land Conservancy, the Stanislaus Farmland Trust, and, of course, the Merced County Farmland and Open Space Trust. All agreed – protecting farmland was paramount, and combining efforts to create economies of scale would further the mission in the best way possible.

As a result of those meetings, with assistance from Carol Whiteside of the Great Valley Center and the Packard Family, the CVFT became a reality in May 2004. At the time, the collective protected land totaled almost 8,500 acres with nine easements.

The first agricultural conversation easement closed by the newly formed Trust was 263 acres at the Humboldt Ranch in April 2005, bringing the total to ten. By the end of 2006 CVFT held 14 easements totaling over 10,000 acres. Today CVFT has over 13,500 acres of farmland protected on 38 farms that grow almonds, peaches, grapes, walnuts, cherries, tomatoes, asparagus, onions, sweet potatoes, corn, alfalfa, hay and grain.

“...PROTECTING FARMLAND FROM THE KITCHEN TABLE ON WHICH THOSE VERY FARMS PUT FOOD FOR THEIR FAMILIES.”

In the tradition of Linda and Eleanor, CVFT has continually sought ways to expand and improve its efforts. In 2008, CVFT was one of 38 land trusts throughout the United States awarded accreditation status by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. The Trust is excited to move into the future with friends in Brentwood to protect farmland in Contra Costa County.

MEET THE BRENTWOOD AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

Community Conservation

The Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust (BALT) was formed in 2002, to work with farmers and the community so that future generations in the Bay Area will have a local source of food. BALT preserved productive agricultural land with a successful farmland conservation program and worked to promote the economic viability of agriculture in Contra Costa County.

The first conservation easement was established in January 2005 with 20 acres protected at 2450 Concord Avenue. BALT hit the ground running, acquiring three more easements in the next two years. BALT's initial success was due to its dedicated board, readily available funding from the City, and its dedicated Executive Director, Kathryn Lyddan. Kathryn and the Board took BALT beyond conservation, building a deep connection to the community through the Buy Fresh, Buy Local and Brentwood Grown campaigns. BALT was a regular presence at farmer's markets, and known throughout the community for its dedication to protecting the City's agricultural heritage.

To Kathryn, the efforts to go beyond direct conservation were paramount, "We not only need to preserve the valuable farmland but create new markets for local farmers in neighboring urban areas. Particularly in the Bay Area, urban folks are eager to purchase fresh, local food and they want to establish a connection with neighboring farms," she said.

That spirit of community guided BALT's efforts through the recession, in times both bountiful and lean. At the time of the merger with CVFT, BALT held 14 easements on 11 different properties, protecting a total of 1,340 acres. Even as the merger progressed, BALT maintained its dedication to farmland, closing an easement on the Cecchini Farm just months before the merger was finalized.

When Kathryn accepted a position at the California Department of Conservation, the board decided it was time to consider joining forces with another agricultural land trust. The neighboring Central Valley Farmland Trust was a natural fit. The BALT board members' dedication to conservation didn't end with the merger; each director remains on the board or a committee of the CFT.

Together, CVFT and BALT, as the California Farmland Trust, look forward to a future full of productive farmland.



BARBARA CECCHINI AND KATHRYN LYDDAN SHOWING OFF BALT'S BUY FRESH, BUY LOCAL CAMPAIGN AT A FARMER'S MARKET



CFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, TRUSTEE COUNCIL, AND STAFF

WELCOME EVENT

Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust

On November 14, 2017, members of the BALT board of directors, Brentwood landowners, BALT supporters, and the CVFT board of directors came together to commemorate their merger into one outstanding organization aimed at serving more California farmers. Their time together at Hannah Nicole winery, which sits on a protected farm on the outskirts of Brentwood, was spent

sharing a meal, exchanging stories, and looking ahead to big goals of conserving more farmland together.

Charlotte Mitchell, CVFT Executive Director, addressed the group along with Ron Brown, Interim BALT Executive Director. The group celebrated the closing of BALT's final, biggest easement, and the dawn of the California Farmland Trust.



(L) BALT BOARD, L-R: PATRICK JOHNSTON, JANET CAPRILE, TOM BLOOMFIELD, JON HARVEY, JIM GWERDER, RON BROWN, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR BALT, HONORS THE BALT BOARD AT THE WELCOME EVENT. (R) BALT PRESIDENT TOM BLOOMFIELD, AND CVFT PRESIDENT BARBARA SMITH, SIGNING MERGER DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE WELCOME EVENT.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: INTRODUCTION

Jon Harvey

My early efforts in wildlife habitat conservation quickly led me to appreciate the value farms and ranches add in the greater Working Landscapes and interfaces with other urban and natural land uses. There is much work to be done to connect and educate consumers in the urban environment with healthy food and other rewards from farms and ranches. I feel very fortunate and honored to be among the merged land trust board members and staff. We have so much opportunity and challenge ahead of us, and I am both humbled and excited to work with my new colleagues to help build a more sustainable future for California agriculture.

The benefits farmers and ranchers bring to our great state are often underappreciated. When someone's livelihood depends on the health of the plants or animals raised on their land with the climate and local resources at hand, the result is usually one with far reaching returns beyond the intended crop. Ranches, orchards and farms provide healthy food, clean air, storm water capture, aesthetic beauty, jobs, and a home for farm families and many other living things. Additionally, orchards, grasslands and healthy soils store carbon which builds resilience for climate stability.

Land trusts promote and facilitate terms to compensate property owners fairly, in a quasi-free-market deal between a willing seller and willing buyer. Unless pre-funded by a large donor, legislative action, or lawsuit, land trusts created to merely meet the needs of the region are up against a very difficult task of private fundraising.

**"I AM BOTH HUMBLLED & EXCITED...
TO HELP BUILD A MORE SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE FOR CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE."**

We need your support to help scale our work to meet the needs of the property owners who desire to maintain a legacy of farming or ranching on their land as an alternative to converting it to urban development. This is why I serve this organization, devoting my time and resources into supporting an agricultural economy and landscapes.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

E. & J. Gallo Winery



E&J Gallo Winery

In 1933, brothers Ernest and Julio Gallo set out on what would become a great adventure, when they founded the E. & J. Gallo Winery. From humble beginnings producing just 177,000 gallons of wine in Modesto, to over a dozen wineries selling over 100 brands in 90 countries, E. & J. Gallo Winery has always remained a family company with an unwavering commitment to quality.

From its inception, E. & J. Gallo Winery has sought to turn challenges into opportunities and change into growth. And it has succeeded remarkably well in that endeavor. In 1966, it became the largest US winery by sales volume. And in 1972, Ernest and Julio were featured on the cover of Time Magazine. The company continued to press forward, being named the Best American Wine Producer by the International Wine & Spirits Competition in 2000.

Through all the opportunities and growth, Gallo has remained at its heart a family company, committed to making a difference in the communities where its team lives, works, and plays. The company proudly proclaims: “As a family-owned company, we

believe in the importance of preserving and enhancing the land for future generations to enjoy. Co-founders Ernest and Julio Gallo laid the foundation for our commitment to the environment in the 1930’s, and it is still evident today in how we manage all aspects of our business. Adhering to sustainable practices that are environmentally sound, economically feasible and socially equitable, we educate and inspire others to conserve and preserve.”

As part of its commitment to preserving the land, Gallo is proud to support many nonprofits – including the California Farmland Trust. Gallo has been a supporter of CFT since its inception. Gallo attorney Tim Byrd is a founding board member and is still on the board today. Tim says, “looking back in 50 years, our grandchildren will undoubtedly point to preservation of our Central Valley farmland, the most productive farmland in the world, as one of our most significant achievements.”

We couldn’t agree more.

20,000 ACRES BY 2020

20K

15K

10K

5K



**14,990 ACRES
CONSERVED**

92% of every dollar donated goes directly to farmland conservation.
Make a gift today at cafarmtrust.org

Thank you to our generous, 2017 year-end gift campaign supporters! You have helped us tremendously as we strive to reach our 20,000 acres by 2020 goal. This year you contributed five times more than our goal, paving the way for the 2,000 acres in our pipeline to move into the first phases of development – this means more acres, producing food forever, will soon be on deck for completion.



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