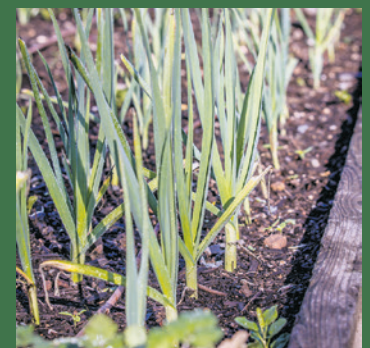




Special Promotional Section

Farming *for the* Future:

*Stories of
Agriculture,
Environment
and Community*

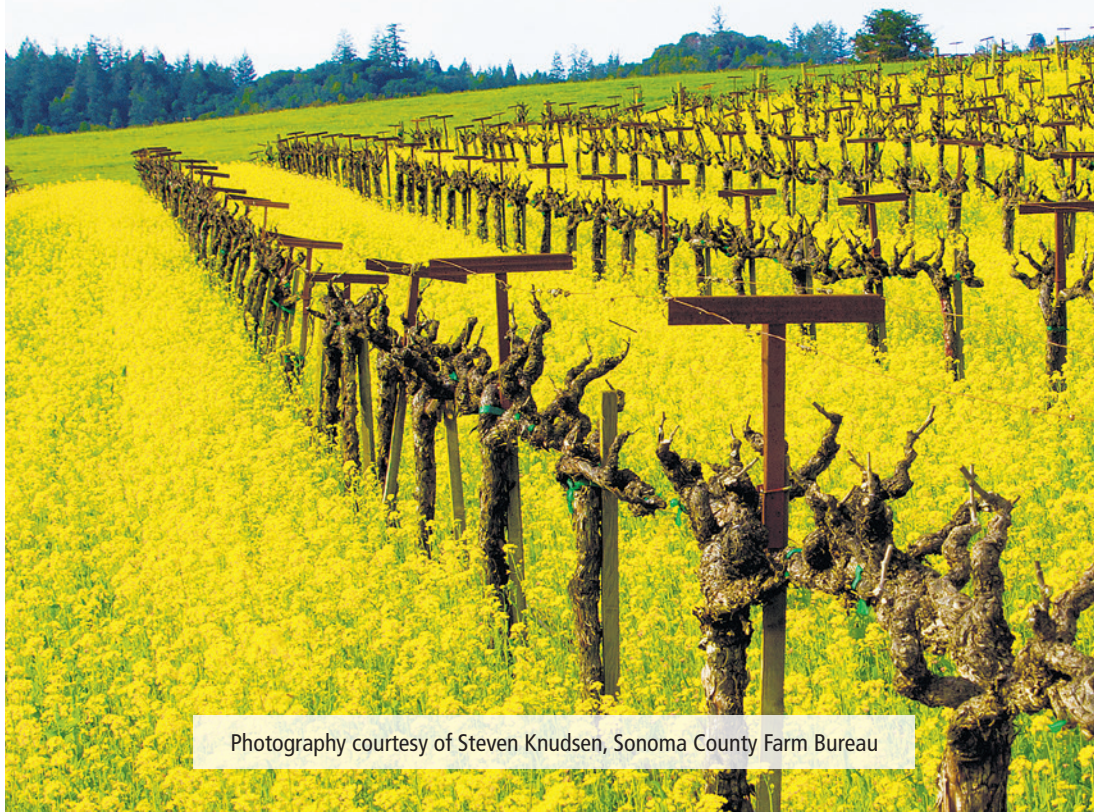


Sonoma County's heritage of agricultural diversity and stewardship is the direct result of the hard work of farmers, ranchers, and the agricultural organizations that support them. A mosaic of farming systems support economically vital agriculture, while ensuring healthy ecosystems that benefit the entire community.

Land stewardship is a foundational principle of many of our local farmers and ranchers. Taking care of the land in a way that benefits the natural environment also benefits a farmer's bottom line. Productive lands and thriving streams provide better yield, while supporting local fish, wildlife, soil, and water.

We are a coalition of agricultural support organizations who have a long history of collaborating with and supporting agriculture in Sonoma County. We are proud to support private landowners with tools and resources to maintain our county's flourishing agricultural landscape.

We have been working together to share with the community the multiple benefits and values of Sonoma County agriculture, and are pleased to feature the following stories as part of an ongoing series to highlight the landowners and organizations supporting agricultural stewardship in our region. **We are honored to work in partnership with many innovative stewards of the land who help to protect the beauty and bounty of Sonoma County.**



Photography courtesy of Steven Knudsen, Sonoma County Farm Bureau

GOLD RIDGE



Brittany Jensen
Brittany Jensen
Executive Director
Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District



William J. Keene
Bill Keene
General Manager
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation
and Open Space District



Kim Vail
Kim Vail
Executive Director
Sonoma County Farm Bureau



Karissa Kruse
Karissa Kruse
President
Sonoma County Winegrowers



Kara Heckert
Kara Heckert
Executive Director
Sonoma Resource Conservation District



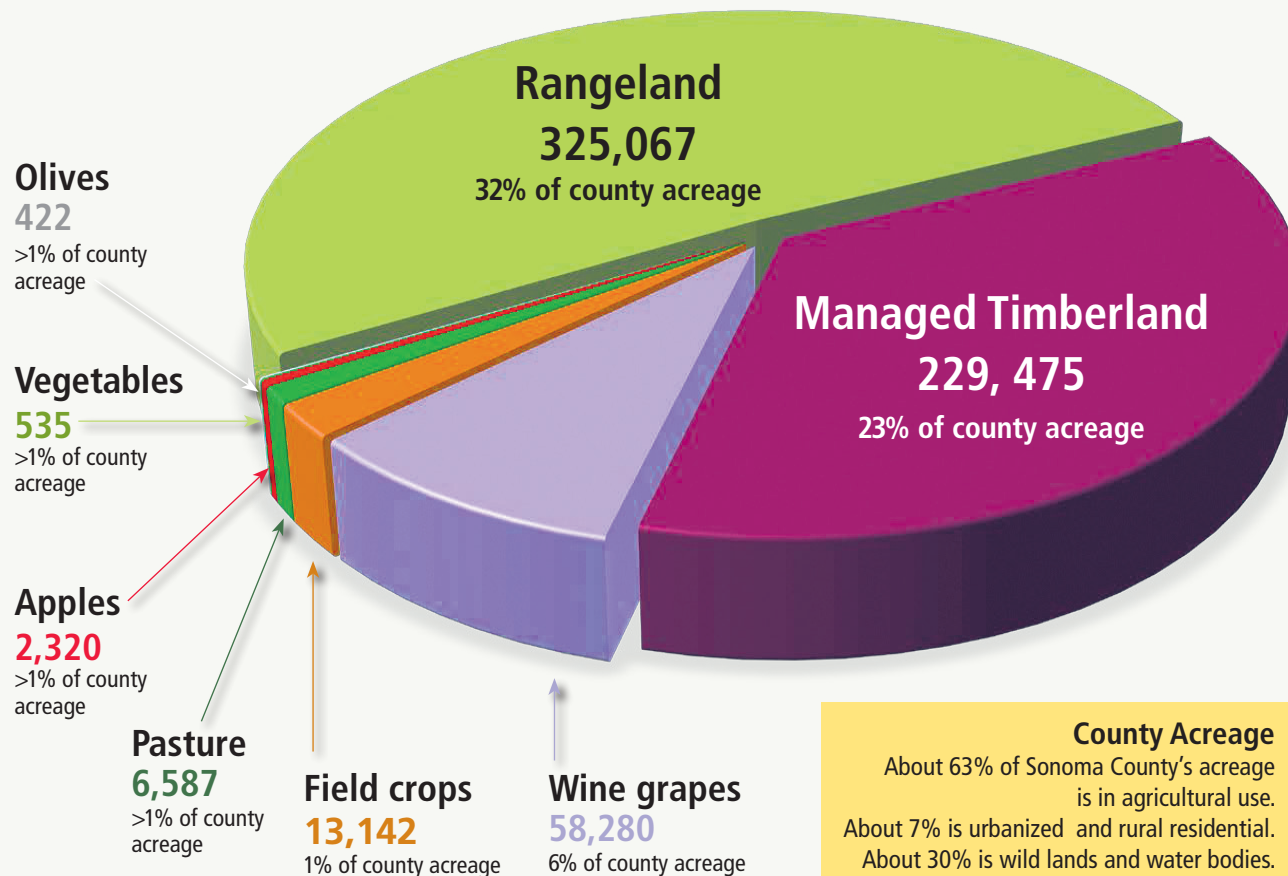
Jennifer Wals
Jennifer Walsler
District Conservationist
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Stephanie Larson
Stephanie Larson
Director
University of California Cooperative Extension,
Sonoma County

Diverse Agriculture in Sonoma County

2014 Crops Grown by Acreage



Did You Know...

\$900 million was the value of all Sonoma County's crops before processing in 2014.

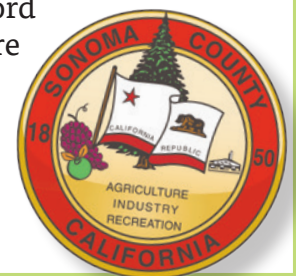
6,812 of Sonoma County residents work directly in agriculture.

155 people are fed by **1 farmer**, on average nationally.

60 is the average age of Sonoma County farmers.

71% of Sonoma County farms are 50 acres or less.

Sonoma County is one of only two counties in California that actually has the word Agriculture on its county seal.



Partnering

with the Soil

Diversified Crop Farming in the Laguna de Santa Rosa

At a 10-acre farm on the outskirts of Santa Rosa, Kevin McEnnis grows some of the sweetest organic tomatoes on the market. His secret to a crop that sells out every year is a technique called dry farming and McEnnis' conscientious labor of the land.

Dry farming is more or less how it sounds — growing plants without watering them once they have been established. Instead of receiving water through irrigation, the roots of the tomatoes rely upon the moisture already in the soil.

"It stresses the plants so they produce smaller, sweeter fruit," McEnnis said. "It's a much lower yielding crop system. That's the disadvantage, but the quality is better."

Using less water to farm is certainly appealing in California, where farmers in the last few years have been fighting drought conditions. However, not every crop on every farm can be dry farmed.

It takes certain soil and weather conditions to succeed at dry farming. For example, the hairy leaves on the tomato vines are able to capture moisture from the fog that routinely shrouds Quetzal Farm. And the subsoil is a heavy clay that retains water.

Caring for and improving the soil is a huge part of the job. McEnnis hops aboard a small, 1940s electric tractor (retrofitted with boat batteries) to remove weeds. He plants cover crops that increase soil organic matter, water holding capacity, and supply nutrients.

He and business partner Keith Abeles forgo the pesticides, which some farmers rely upon to keep harmful weeds and insects away from their crops. Quetzal is a certified organic farm that grows over 20 varieties of hot peppers, chili peppers, and sweet peppers, as well as onions, cucumbers, summer squash, and other crops.

For those crops, McEnnis uses drip irrigation and soil moisture monitoring to ensure they only get water when they need it. A water flow meter was installed at the well to track usage and identify leaks. The farm also taps into recycled water from the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant

to pre-irrigate their fields before the growing season and to water hedgerows and cover crops.

McEnnis' efforts go beyond his vegetable fields.

Scan the perimeter of Quetzal Farm, and there are the native plants, hedgerows and willows that McEnnis and Abeles planted to provide habitat for insects and birds. In 2007 they worked with the Sonoma Resource Conservation District to remove invasive plants, establish native vegetation, and rehabilitate a seasonal wetland.

This restored wetlands area at the front of the farm helps slow down and clean water that runs off the nearby road before it drains into the Laguna de Santa Rosa Watershed, the largest freshwater wetlands complex on the northern California coast.

By simply pulling Harding grass, an invasive species with few benefits, McEnnis has improved groundwater recharge and created new habitat for wildlife.

In 2014, they began working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to enhance their cover crop and mulching program and plant more native plant hedgerows.

As a former human rights worker who watched farmers in Guatemala and Mexico burn rainforests for cropland, McEnnis is fulfilling his resolve to find a better way to farm.

"It really made me think about making farming more sustainable," McEnnis said. "I knew we needed to come up with better farming for people to live better."

PARTNERS

- *Sonoma Resource Conservation District*
- *USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*
- *Sonoma County Farm Bureau*



Kevin McEnnis examines the soil moisture in his fields.



Quetzal Farm grows many specialty peppers.



McEnnis and Abeles stand by their electric powered tractor.



Sustaining the Family Legacy

Sonoma Valley Ranch Protects the Land through Diversified Agriculture

When the southern-style plantation house at Beltane Ranch was built in 1892, the grounds surrounding it provided a refuge from San Francisco, where city dwellers tasted the homegrown wine and watched livestock from the wrap-around porch.

Today, visitors to the Glen Ellen ranch can go back in time and explore a family-run enterprise building upon its heritage with diversified and sustainable agriculture, open space, water conservation and educational programs.

"A lot of things that have been important to the property, and to our family, are what guide us today," said Lauren Benward Krause, who runs the bed and breakfast property with her brother, mother and 92-year-old grandmother.

Originally 1,600 acres, the ranch stretched from the Sonoma Valley floor between Glen Ellen and Kenwood to the Napa County line where Lauren and her brother Alex Benward explored its creeks, waterfalls, oak woodlands and old homesteads as kids.

In 2004, the family sold 1,300 acres to the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District so the land would remain "forever wild" and not wind up in the hands of developers. Two private parcels were also sold.

Most of Beltane Ranch's 105 acres remain undeveloped and uncultivated as open space, populated with oak woodlands and oak grasslands. The vineyards account for 25 acres and the orchards and vegetable gardens a couple of acres.

The lush green gardens provide much of the food served at the bed and breakfast year round.

Freshly picked asparagus, kale, lettuce, Brussel sprouts, heirloom tomatoes, peppers and melons are just a few of the menu items. Guests can enjoy peaches and apricots from the orchards, as well raspberries that come from bushes first planted in 1936.

In the vineyard, Alex Benward, who oversees the ranch operations, educates guests about grape growing, as well as the sustainable practices the family has embraced across the property in an effort to provide "balance" and take care of the land.

"We have such an appreciation and respect for the ranch, and we understand if we mistreat it, it won't be here for future generations," he said.

That philosophy and desire to do things better made Beltane a perfect fit for the Sonoma County Winegrowers' drive to become America's first 100 percent sustainable wine-growing region by 2019. And last September, Beltane earned their certification as a sustainable vineyard. Currently, 64% of Sonoma County's vineyards have gone through a sustainability self-assessment while nearly half of Sonoma County's vineyard acres are now certified by a third party. All of these vineyards, like Beltane, adhere to a comprehensive set of 138 sustainability best management practices on water conservation, water quality, energy efficiency, treatment of



Siblings Alex Benward and Lauren Benward Krause are continuing their family's agricultural legacy with a strong commitment to sustainability and preservation.

employees and neighbors, business viability and other operations. The region's commitment to sustainability and their successful progress have led to widespread global recognition, including being awarded California's highest environmental honor, the Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA).

At Beltane these sustainable practices are in full sight as you walk their property. Benward plants cover crops to replenish the soil naturally with nutrients in the fall, uses drip irrigation sparingly in the summer to water the vines at night when water is less likely to evaporate, and combats spring frost with wintertime rain stored in a man-made reservoir. Elsewhere on the ranch, the

two cows and five horses are moved to different pastures so that certain grasses have a chance to grow. Even low-flow fixtures have been installed in the bed and breakfast.

In 2011, the ranch earned accolades as "a shining example of successful agriculture," by then Assemblyman Jared Huffman, who especially praised the ranch for its composting program.

Although composting has always been practiced at the ranch, Alex Benward has grown the program in size over the years. Every few weeks, he uses a machine to turn two massive bins so the food scraps and garden waste naturally break down – a process that can take 8 to 10 months. Then, it all goes back onto the garden.

"We compost everything from the garden, the kitchen, and the chickens. Everything is turned back into the soil one way or the other," said Lauren Benward Krause. "Both our mom and grandmother would chuckle that we're talking about composting since that was the only sensible thing to do with waste from their generation's perspective."

PARTNERS

- Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- Sonoma County Winegrowers
- Sonoma Resource Conservation District

Vineyard Facts

64%

Vineyard acres sustainably self-assessed (37,392 acres)

48%

Vineyard acres certified sustainable by a third party audit (27,761 acres)

80%

Sonoma County vineyards that are 100 acres or less

40%

Sonoma County vineyards that are 20 acres or less

4 to 1

For every four acres of vineyards, Sonoma County grape growers also farm an additional acre of other diversified agriculture, including apples, almonds, figs, hazelnuts, lavender, limes, oranges, pears, apples and dairy.

Catching Rain for the Cows

Bodega Dairy Looks to the Sky for a Community Solution

This winter, when rain started falling at the Hughes' dairy, the barn did more than keep 200 Jersey cows dry – it funneled about a million and a half gallons of rainwater into a man-made storage pond.

A network of pipes carried the water from the barn's roof to the new pond, providing the dairy with a new source of water to replace its 7,000-gallon-a-day diversion from a nearby creek where migrating salmon and steelhead can be found.

"Forty years ago here, there was no question about what I could do," Richard Hughes said about his legal right to pull water from Salmon Creek. "This new pond is a hedge for the future, not just for my own sake but also for helping the fish and the environment."

Farmers across northern California like Hughes have been looking for solutions to water security and resiliency. Initially, Hughes was skeptical when the Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District approached him and his wife, Marilyn, with the idea of building a 1.4 million rainwater catchment pond at their dairy to conserve water for wildlife and the Bodega community.

Despite four years of planning, paperwork and construction, Hughes describes his experience as one where government agencies listened to his knowledge of the land and concerns to create positive change.

At its capacity, the pond will give the Hughes 180 days of water in the dry months to give to their cows, wash out the milking barn and other barns where their cows spend the winter.

The hope is the extra water left in Salmon Creek will help support the steelhead and salmon, whose numbers have plummeted in the region's

streams and creeks over the last few decades. More water in the stream should provide salmon and other creek life more spots to keep cool in, to hide in and to breed in.

For anyone who knows Richard and Marilyn, the project was a natural fit for the dairy nestled in the hills overlooking coastal Bodega.

Over the years, the couple have transitioned from raising a conventional Holstein herd, to a conventional Jersey herd and then to the organic Jersey herd they have today. The last switch to organic made sense to the Hughes, who were approached by Straus Family Creamery, which was looking to buy higher fat content milk. Hughes' dairy is now one of eight local, family farms that provide high-fat, organic milk to Straus Family Creamery for its array of organic milk products.

"I felt we were going the wrong way in my operation," Hughes said of their decision to raise cows that produce organic milk. "I got tremendous milk production from the Holsteins, but it was based on high concentrated feedings, and required some hormone and antibiotic use." This has been an industry standard, however Hughes and many others have since developed better methods for caring for their cattle. "Some hormones I never used, like rBST, and never will."

The transition to an organic dairy involved increasing the cows' access to pasture and stopping the use of all hormones and antibiotics. Under the organic regime, the Hughes carefully breed the cows for strength, excellent milk

production and overall good health. Their resilience prevents the herd from serious illness and helps to ensure organic treatments on minor ailments will be effective. Being at Hughes' dairy you feel in your bones that these are happy cows.

Allowing the cows to graze on pastures also involved work to protect Salmon Creek. Hughes installed smooth wire fences to keep cattle away from the stream, forgoing barbed wire fences that can snag litter, accumulate debris, and form a dam-like structure when the banks overflow. And he partnered with government agencies to plant native trees near the creek banks to combat erosion and create habitat for wildlife.

Even the silage fields, which provide food for the cows, have undergone a transformation. A plow once used to turn the soil, pulling up grass roots and disturbing valuable soil structure, has

Plumbing on the roofs of five structures conveys water to the Hughes' pond. In even a light sprinkle, this system catches a significant volume of water.



The Hughes' 1.4 million gallon pond installed in 2015.

PARTNERS

- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service • Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District • CA Department of Fish and Wildlife • State Coastal Conservancy • Department of Water Resources • North Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council**
- **Sonoma County Farm Bureau**

Pasture Club

Given the high demand for organic products, small dairy size, high costs of imported feed, and good climate for growing grass, many Sonoma and Marin county dairy owners have transitioned to organic in the past decade. Organic certification standards require minimum days that cows spend in an open field grazing so that the cattle receive the bulk of their nutrition from the pasture. For some dairies, this raised concerns about how to grow enough grass to feed the herd without contributing to overgrazed pastures, which can lead to poor soil health, erosion and weeds. In the face of these challenges, dairymen in the two counties created the Pasture Club. Mike Griffin from Organic Valley and Garry Mahrt, an organic dairyman and certified range manager out of Two Rock, brought their fellow pasture grazers together to brainstorm as a group.

The Pasture Club, run by farmers for farmers, helped members experiment with new practices, held educational meetings, shared information, and developed best management practices

that are now common among organic dairies. A primary goal of the group was to determine how to improve soil health and soil water holding capacity to improve forage – work that is now being used to inform “Carbon Farming.” The Pasture Club – its members and its impact – is a tremendous example of the type of collaborative stewardship and leadership that can be found in Sonoma County.

A first-generation dairyman, Hughes farms organically and works to conserve water and soil on his ranch.



“If I can develop balance with the plants, the land, and nutrients in the soil, then I get good grass that goes to the cows, and I get good quality milk.”

“Environmental stewardship

refers to an acceptance of personal responsibility for actions to improve environmental quality and to achieve sustainable outcomes. Stewardship involves lifestyles and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment.”



Creating a Collaboration of Sustainable Forestry and Environmental Restoration

A Healdsburg Family Forest

Oliver Max stands among his family's 600 acre forest in Mill Creek which he sustainably harvests.



When Oliver Max's dad bought some land outside of Healdsburg in the early 1970s, it was in rough shape. Nearly all trees of value had been cut for timber, the roads were in disrepair and the creeks were a mess after being pushed full of dirt to serve as roads.

Forty years later, Max is working to ensure he manages the land in a way that is beneficial for the forest, the animals and the endangered fish that once thrived in its streams.

"It's easy to see the impacts of past generations," Max said as he walked through a redwood grove. "It's a pretty incredible property we've got here, and it's our job to take care of it."

Simply drive through his forested, mountainous property and you can literally feel the work Max has done. Working with the Sonoma Resource Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Max used gravel from his family's 2,200-acre property to intentionally create a bumpy ride along his 26 miles of gravel roads.

Far more than a fun ride, the rolling dips prevent water from running down the road, cutting ruts in the soil, and carrying dirt and sediment into the creeks during heavy rains. He has also installed pipes, surrounded by rock, to help channel the water down the hillsides and closed some roads so heavy machinery stays clear of the creeks.

In 2012, he worked with the Sonoma Resource Conservation District to stabilize and plant banks that were eroding and place redwood log structures in Salt Creek to improve fish habitat – reducing sediment downstream and creating pools, shade and cover for young salmon and steelhead.

Today he and other property owners in the area welcome University of California Cooperative Extension fish biologists into the creeks to tag and monitor coho salmon, whose population has plummeted to less than 15 percent of what was observed in the 1940s.

"There's a number of species we've pushed to the brink of extinction. The fish are one in particular," Max said. "We bear the responsibility of that as humans."

In 2014, Max began harvesting some of the trees on his land – a decision he said he reached after realizing he

could help the forest thrive – through active management and selective harvesting. He and his forester have developed a non-industrial timber management plan, which provides the framework for sustainable forestry operations over the next 100 years. The operation has been Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified (SCS-FM/COC-00001G), which ensures that products come from responsibly managed forests that provide environmental, social and economic benefits.

Standing in an area where he cut about 30 percent of the trees last summer, Max is surrounded by towering redwood trees that now have the space, light and water to grow faster and larger. Before the harvest, you couldn't see through the area, it was choked with smaller trees all competing with each other. As part of the post-harvest clean-up, he thinned out smaller tan oak and madrone trees, freeing up growing space for the remaining trees and reducing fuel for potential wildfires. The last step was to plant 7,000 redwood seedlings in the 70-acre area that was harvested in 2014 and 2015. The trees will now be left to grow for at least 15 years, and the growth will more than replace the volume that was initially harvested, setting the stage for a future 30% harvest. As this cycle continues, the forest will be populated with larger and larger trees of all species.

Leaving his large redwoods in the ground certainly isn't a get rich scheme. It takes decades for redwoods to grow, and Max knows he is making an investment in the land for future generations.

"Our goal is to manage the property with a long-term view," said Max. "We are managing not for today, but for the future."

PARTNERS

- Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- UC Cooperative Extension
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Max and many other property owners welcome UC's Russian River Salmon & Steelhead Monitoring Program biologists into over 40 streams to monitor fish populations.



Max has worked with local resource agencies to reduce erosion on 26 miles of road, improving water quality and fish habitat.



Restoring Native Fish and Wildlife Habitat

A Dry Creek Family Vineyard

Gio Martorana
amongst his
vineyard rows in
Dry Creek Valley.

Gio Martorana grew up fishing, swimming and swinging from trees in the creek that runs through his family's vineyard. It was the perfect spot for a boy looking for adventure when his parents told him and his older brother to go outside.

Grape Creek was also home to the turtles, frogs, crawdads, and fish that sought cold, clean and shaded water. But over time, Martorana discovered the creek was no longer a place where these species could survive.

"All of a sudden, everything disappeared except the Coho and the steelhead," said Martorana, who took over Martorana Family Vineyards in 1996. "One day, a bird even dropped."

Martorana knew something had to change.

He is just one of many landowners in the Dry Creek Valley region working to restore habitat for threatened and endangered species. His efforts have transformed his 31-acre winery into an organic grape growing family business that thinks about its impact on the environment.

Visitors to the tasting room about 8 miles outside of Healdsburg are greeted by two signs mounted on the wall describing his stewardship efforts. Martorana also leads tours along the banks of the creek and through his vineyards in the hopes of educating others about the simple solutions that can be taken to help nature.

"A lot of effort has gone on to help these fish," Martorana said. "I believe everybody needs to know what's going on in Sonoma County."

For decades, like many wineries have done and continue to do, the Martoranas would spray water on their vines when frost threatened to kill their crop. Their water came from Grape Creek, a tributary of Dry Creek where Coho salmon and steelhead spawn.

In 2009, working with the Sonoma Resource Conservation District as part of the Russian River Coho Partnership, Martorana installed a wind machine for frost protection of his vineyard that sounds like a helicopter when it runs. But the noise — even in the early hours of the morning — is a small nuisance to keep water critical for fish passage in the creek. For the cost of \$28,000, the fan has returned 1



ABOVE: While natural looking, these rocks and logs have been strategically placed to create deep, cool pools for fish to hide and rest. RIGHT: A wind machine provides frost protection for Martorana's vineyard, rather than taking water from nearby Grape Creek that is critical to Coho salmon survival.

cubic foot per second of water to the stream, just enough.

Martorana also removed some of the vines from his land to create a larger riparian area along the banks of Grape Creek. By adding soil and planting native grasses, the bank is no longer a steep, eroding cliff where sediment from the vineyard easily flowed into the water below, smothering fish eggs and negatively impacting the water quality.

Pesticides and chemicals haven't been used at the vineyard for the last decade. The compost that fertilizes the vines is made up of food scraps from San Francisco, and crops of peas, oats and mustard grow in between the vines to replenish the soil with nutrients and provide a habitat and food source for insects.

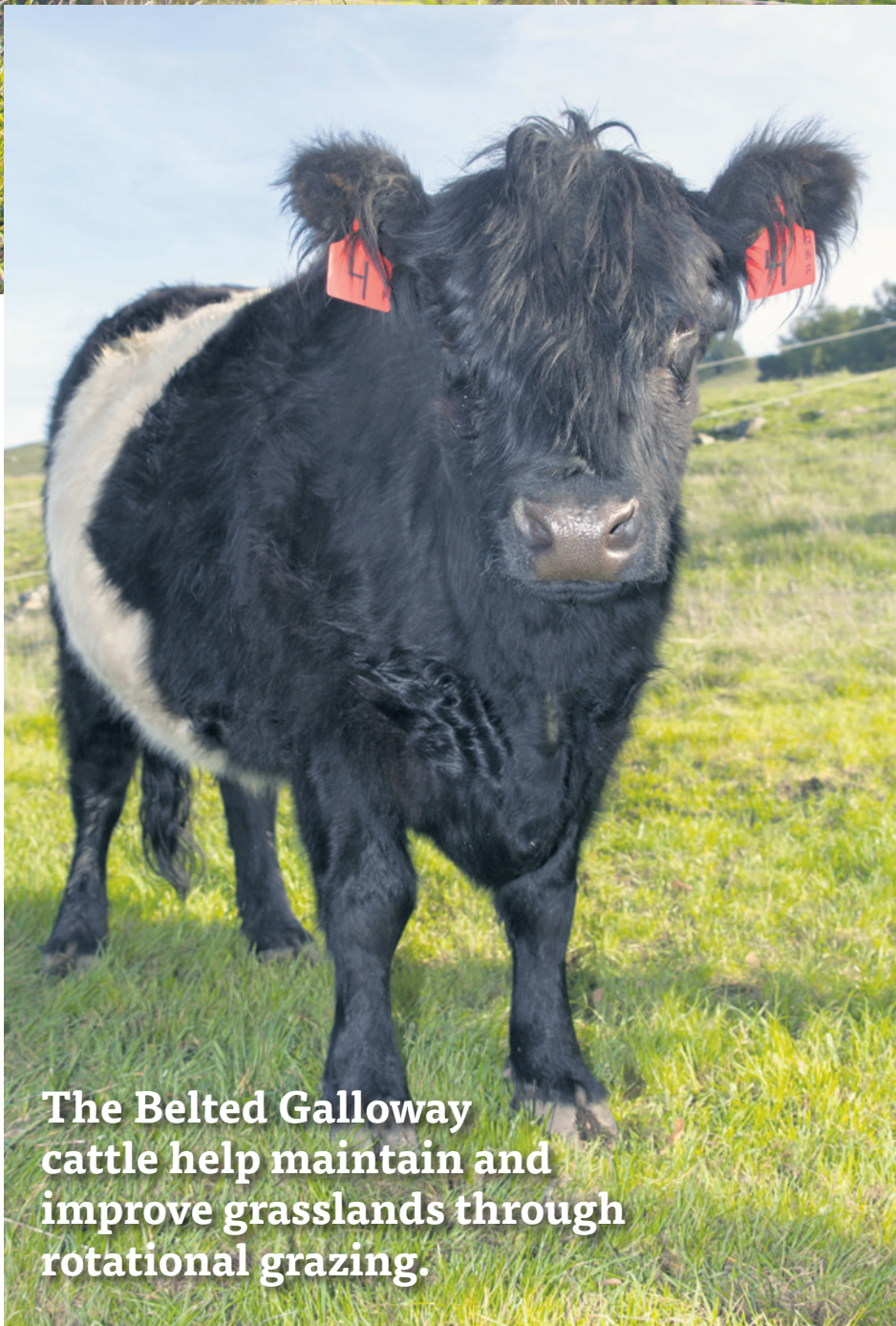
Along the creek, Martorana has worked with the Sonoma Resource Conservation District, and the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife to place rocks and wood strategically in the water to create deep, cold pools for fish to hide and rest. A fish ladder helps the migrating Coho salmon and steelhead pass through the area. Even the flashboard dam that once stored and blocked water flows in the creek to irrigate the vines now serves as a fish refuge.

"There's been a lot of complexity created for fish in the creek— pools, shade, large woody debris. These are all things fish need to survive," said Martorana, "and I am happy to give them a helping hand."

**PARTNERS • Sonoma Resource Conservation District • CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
• UC Cooperative Extension • National Fish and Wildlife Foundation • Trout Unlimited
• Sonoma County Water Agency • Sonoma County Farm Bureau • Sonoma County Winegrowers**

Cultivating with Cows

Native Grasses, Wildlife Flourish on Sonoma Mountain



The Belted Galloway cattle help maintain and improve grasslands through rotational grazing.

On the northwest slope of Sonoma Mountain, David Anderson and Marie Chandoha are doing their part to restore native habitat to this majestic mountain. Healthy grass grows abundant on their pastures, young woodland oaks are thriving and wildlife is returning to the area.

"This is really a marvelous piece of nature," said David Anderson, who along with his wife, Marie Chandoha, purchased the land eight years ago with help from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District through the sale of a conservation easement. "What we've been trying to do is help the ecosystem here become more vibrant."

Key to their management of the rocky and sloped pastures is a small herd of Belted Galloway beef cattle that they brought onto the farm to maintain and improve the grasslands. Rather than letting the cows roam wherever they want, the couple has meticulously created 29 pastures and set up a rotational system to ensure grazed grasses and plants are given enough time to regenerate.

The cows, which are sometimes called Oreo cookie cows because they are black on the front and back, with a white belt around the middle, graze anywhere from two days to four weeks in a pasture before they move onto the next one.

The couple are trying to restore the rangeland to systems where native perennial grasses flourished for thousands of years – their deep roots keeping the grass green all summer long, providing both a food source for the cattle and sequestering carbon underground.

Aside from personally hammering more than 1,000 metal posts into the ground to create his pastures, Anderson has installed shelters around hundreds of young trees to protect them from grazing cattle and deer. He and Chandoha have planted more than 1,000 trees in the last five years – an effort to grow a new generation of oaks, bays, and other species.

The couple also upgraded the farm's water system from a network of PVC pipes and garden hoses to underground pipes and a massive 100,000-gallon tank that supplies the entire farm using gravity and solar power to move the water where it is needed.

A new state-of-the-art barn built with reclaimed wood and solar panels on the roof is the perfect spot to hold the educational workshops Anderson envisions at the farm in the future. The barn's solar panels power the entire farm, with extra electricity sent back into the utility's power grid.

The work being done on their property, called A Place of Hope and Beauty, was made possible, in large part, because of the conservation easement Anderson and Chandoha helped to negotiate when they bought the property in 2008. The easement lowered the price so the couple could buy the land, and the District was

Carbon Farming

Common agricultural practices — such as driving a tractor, tilling the soil, over-grazing a pasture, or using fossil fuel-based fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides — can result in the release of carbon dioxide, which contributes to climate change. Alternatively, this same carbon can be stored long term (decades to centuries or more) beneficially in soils through a process called soil carbon sequestration. Carbon Farming, as it is often called, involves implementing practices that are known to increase the rate at which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and convert carbon dioxide to plant material and/or soil organic matter. Carbon Farming is successful when the amount of carbon stored in the soil, as a result from enhanced land management and/or conservation practices, exceeds carbon losses to the atmosphere. The benefit to farmers who farm carbon has been richer soil, increased soil water holding capacity, healthier crops, and well-fed grazed livestock.

Learn more:
carboncycle.org/carbon-farming/

able to support Sonoma County farming and ranching by keeping this piece of land in agriculture.

Anderson and Chandoha worked with the District to help craft an easement that would allow for unlimited agriculture on half of the 160-acre parcel, while the other half will remain “forever wild.” Further, the couple have committed a portion of the property to be used as a public trail with the potential to connect Crane Creek Regional Park and North Sonoma Mountain Regional Park and Open Space Preserve.

Anderson and Chandoha, who married on the property a year after they bought it, see themselves as humble stewards of the property — and have devoted themselves to enhancing, improving and reviving the land for future generations.

“I am discovering that nature has an incredible capacity to regenerate,” Anderson said. “It’s really remarkable; and you want to do everything you can because no matter how much you give, it gives so much more.”

PARTNER

Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District



ABOVE: Anderson points to the ongoing restoration effort along one of his property’s riparian areas.

RIGHT: Anderson explains how high-intensity rotational grazing allows native grasses, such as purple needlegrass, to regenerate and thrive in the pasture.



Safeguarding seedlings from hungry deer allows them to grow into mature trees.

Conservation of Working Lands in Sonoma County

36,948 ACRES

of agricultural land preserved by the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

635 LANDOWNERS

received resource conservation assistance from Gold Ridge and Sonoma Resource Conservation Districts from 2014-2015 on over **28,000 acres**

\$18 MILLION

invested in local conservation programs by the Gold Ridge and Sonoma Resource Conservation Districts

\$8.6 MILLION

NRCS dollars spent on easements in Sonoma County (1997-2015)

\$19 MILLION

NRCS dollars spent on conservation practices in Sonoma County (1997-2015)

Working together to protect
agriculture, steward the land, and build community
... now and for future generations.



GOLD RIDGE



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT
SONOMA COUNTY



SONOMA COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT



SONOMA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT



United States
Department of
Agriculture

UC
CE

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Cooperative Extension