



Stanislaus farmers keep going even during - Modesto Bee, The (CA) - April 23, 2020 - page 1

April 23, 2020 | Modesto Bee, The (CA) | Jeani Ferrari, The Modesto Bee

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically illustrated the importance of our agricultural foundation in Stanislaus County.

“Agricultural foundation” is a broad term that includes farmland, farmers, processors, packers, workers, distributors, transporters and the many businesses that support the industry, all considered essential by our state and nation.

During this crisis, Stanislaus residents have food on their tables, produced here with the highest food safety standards in the world. Unlike other industries, our food producers enjoy a reliable U.S.-dominated supply chain led by our irreplaceable farmland in this county. Our grocery stores are open and our pantries and refrigerators have a variety and quality of food most of the world’s population will never see.

Without the farmland, Stanislaus County would have no agricultural foundation — no farmers, processors, distributors — or the dozens of commodities and foods. More than 40 vegetables and legumes are grown in Stanislaus County, from asparagus to turnips and tomatoes to Swiss chard. Without the farmland we don’t have the two-dozen tree crops, a dairy industry or field crops that feed the hogs, pigs, sheep, lambs, chickens, turkeys and cattle.

Opinion label

In 1999, Farmland Working Group was formed as a non-profit organization with a bold mission statement: to preserve the agricultural foundation of our region and promote smart growth in our urban communities through education, outreach and action. The organization’s printed materials start with a broad vision: “Striving to protect food, families and farmland.”

Farmland Working Group recognizes the urgency of preserving Stanislaus County’s highly productive farmland for the long-term. Counties throughout the state see value in protecting their farmland. Merced County has over 10,000 acres protected with conservation easements, San Joaquin County has protected nearly 3,000 acres and Yolo County has protected more than 11,000 acres.

The list goes on. One dozen counties and 48 cities in our state have urban limit lines. Due to the work of the California Farmland Trust, Stanislaus County has 300 acres protected.

Farmland Working Group continually urges our elected officials to protect our county’s farmland for the long-term. This can be accomplished with urban limits lines and farmland mitigation.

An important region of the Great Central Valley, Stanislaus County is one of few places in the world with the ability to produce a variety of foods, year-round. It has the capacity to feed its own population and provide essential foods for our nation and the world.

We celebrated Earth Day, April 22, sheltered in our homes. Farmers and farmworkers were farming. Farmland Working Group encourages you to share its passion, preserving the agricultural foundation of our region, the irreplaceable farmland.

Jeani **Ferrari** is a founding member of Farmland Working Group.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

Ferrari, Jeani. "Stanislaus farmers keep going even during coronavirus pandemic." *Modesto Bee, The (CA)*, sec. opn_columns_blogs, 23 Apr. 2020. *NewsBank: Access World News*, https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info%3Aid/infoweb.newsbank.com&svc_dat=AWNB&req_dat=FD4FECC962F43B889B0A2A6759261F3&rft_val_format=info%3Aofi/fmt%3Akev%3Amtx%3Actx&rft_dat=document_id%3Anews/17ACB5B8 Accessed 23 May 2023.

Copyright (c) 2020 Modesto Bee, The