

THE  
**AG LAND TRUST**  
MAGAZINE

SPRING-SUMMER  
2026



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THE  
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MAGAZINE

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## **PRESERVING FARMLAND SINCE 1984**

### **Our Mission Statement**



It is the purpose of the Ag Land Trust to assist in the preservation and protection of all productive and important agricultural, open space, and historical lands in Monterey County (and adjacent areas). Such action will contribute directly to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of the County while enhancing its unique character as a desirable place to live and work.

[www.aglandtrust.org](http://www.aglandtrust.org)





SPRING-SUMMER 2026 / THE APPRECIATION ISSUE



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Economic Contributions of Monterey County Agriculture





- IN MEMORIAM -

ALT BOARD MEMBER

# Richard William Nutter



Richard championed farm worker safety, import/export standards, and the burgeoning packaged salad industry. He pioneered farmers' markets and helped establish organic regulations including the California Organic Food Act, thereby shaping sustainable practices nationwide.

April, 1978, I was serving my third month on the Monterey County Planning Commission. We were sitting in the old Board of Supervisors Chambers in the Salinas Courthouse at the corner of Alisal and Church Streets when a tanned and fit fellow came into our hearing room and made an impromptu but detailed and articulate presentation on then-current agricultural issues in Monterey County.

That fellow was my friend Richard William Nutter. He was then in his seventh year as the Agricultural Commissioner for Monterey County. We became friends that day, and we remained friends for 48 years, until his sad passing on January 31, 2026.

Richard was a great man. And I do not use that term lightly. Richard was a 5th generation





Richard is a Californian whose pioneer family roots in Santa Cruz County (Soquel) and Central California go back over 100 years. He was a decorated combat veteran in the Korean War, graduated from U.C. Davis, and he returned home to serve for 15 years with the Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner's office helping the farmers and farm workers of the Pajaro Valley and Watsonville.

He was principled, very intelligent, and thoughtful. He was a devoted husband, a father of five children and grandfather and great-grandfather to children all of whom he loved proudly and deeply. In 1971, Richard was appointed to serve as the Agricultural Commissioner of Monterey County. He said it was "the best and toughest job I ever had". He served the agricultural industry here for the next 27 years (1971-1998), the longest serving Agricultural Commissioner in the history of Monterey County. He brought great credit to Monterey County, to the office that he held, and to California's agribusiness industry.

Richard championed farm worker safety, import/export standards, and the burgeoning packaged salad industry. He pioneered farmers' markets and helped establish organic regulations including the California Organic Food Act, thereby shaping sustainable practices nationwide. He established the first Affirmative Action hiring program in the Agricultural Commissioner's office to "make sure I hired the very best people for Monterey County". From 1989-92, he and I served on the congressional planning committee created to facilitate the establishment of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. He was a great man.

The U.S. House of Representatives gave special tribute and recognition to his lifetime of public leadership upon his retirement from the Agricultural Commissioner's office in 1998.

In 1984, Richard helped me and other founding members of the Ag Land Trust to conceptualize the long-term farmland preservation goals that have been advanced by ALT for the past 40+ years. He became one of our most productive members who joined our Board of Directors in 1993. He served as our Chairman of the Board of Directors for many years and he continued to strongly advocate for the permanent preservation of our invaluable Central Coast farmlands. He was decisive and committed to protecting agriculture for future generations.

Richard loved Monterey County and the Central Coast. While others just talked, he worked diligently throughout his career to save our farmlands from irresponsible urban sprawl and to protect our quality of life for our children. I will miss him very much.

The Nutter Family encourages tax-deductible donations to the Ag Land Trust for the: "Richard Nutter Agricultural Education Fund" Ag Land Trust, P.O. Box 1731, Salinas CA. 93902

**Marc Del Piero,**  
CEO & MANAGING  
DIRECTOR,  
AG LAND TRUST





ALT AWARDED  
**\$7.3 MILLION**  
TO PRESERVE OVER  
**700 ACRES**  
OF PRIME FARMLANDS  
FROM URBAN SPRAWL

The Ag Land Trust just received really good news from the California Department of Conservation.

The recommendations for Round 11A of the state's farmland preservation grants program were announced, and **ALT was awarded \$7.3 million**. The CA Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) program was created by legislation authored by our State Senator John Laird. The money will be paid directly to landowners of **over 700 acres near Chualar, Pajaro, and Gonzales** who have voluntarily agreed to sell their "development rights" to the Ag Land Trust so as to limit urban sprawl developments from consuming more of our county's prime farmlands. Since our founding in 1984, ALT has permanently protected over **51,000 acres** of productive farmland on the Central Coast.





AGRICULTURE  
BUILDING SPONSOR  
Sponsored By: Ag Land Trust



Photos clockwise: Salinas Valley Fair Agricultural Building Sponsor; ALT CEO Marc Del Piero and Slavic American Cultural Organization (SACO) President Kurt Vojvoda at the SACO Christmas Party; KSBW Share Your Holiday Donation from Ag Land Trust, Heather Golden Jensen, Camille Polson, Bob Roach, Aaron Johnson, Marc Del Piero, Lauren Seaver (KSBW Morning Anchor); Joyce Madeiros, Vince Ferrante, Congressman Jimmy Panetta, Marc Del Piero and Russel Jefferies (SACO Annual Banquet)





# Economic Contributions

OF MONTEREY COUNTY AGRICULTURE



**Robert Roach**  
DIRECTOR,  
AG LAND TRUST

The Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner has published an annual Crop and Livestock Report since 1929. The county's Crop Report has grown from single typewritten sheets to a comprehensive report that provides vital information on the state of our local agriculture.

However, the Crop Report does not tell the whole story. It is only a measure of the gross value of agriculture at the farm gate and does not reflect any costs of production. Nor is it an indicator of profit or loss and it does not assess the full impact of the dollars earned as they circulate within our local economy. To analyze these multiplier effects the Agricultural Commissioner commissioned the first Economic Contributions Report in 2011 and has updated it periodically. The two local professors who created the first report here went on to found a company that now makes such reports for many California counties.

Agricultural producers use their revenue to purchase equipment, supplies and services in the county. These business-to-business transactions are considered indirect effects. The second type of multiplier effects are the induced effects, which represent the local consumption spending of the agricultural businesses' owners and employees. The bottom line of the report shows that Monterey County Agriculture's total annual contribution to the local economy for 2023 was **\$11.7 billion, which equals \$32 million/day, and 81,315 full-time equivalent jobs.**

The 2025 edition of the Economic Contributions Report uses two nationally available data sets for the analysis. 2023 was the year of the latest data available, so the direct effect is the gross value of agricultural production of that year. The report's figures diverge from the County Crop Report because of data classification differences. The total economic output of farm production is calculated to be **\$4.77 billion**, with an additional **\$1.3 billion** of indirect effects and **\$1.06 billion** of induced effects for a total contribution of **\$7.13 billion**. Direct

Monterey County  
Agriculture's total  
annual contribution  
to the local  
economy for 2023

**\$11.7  
billion**

**81,315  
full-time**

equivalent jobs  
in 2003

employment in farm production created **29,294 full-time jobs**. Adding employment from indirect and induced effects results in a total of **47,909 jobs created** through agricultural production.

The Crop Report data stops at the farm gate but the Economics Report also considers the impact of locally sourced, value-added food processing. The cooling and processing of salad products and other vegetables and the production of wine from local grapes adds value to the raw products. This added value is the direct effect and with the multiplier effects, food processing and wineries produced another **\$4.58 billion** of economic output and created an additional **33,406 jobs**. Adding the total impacts of farm production and locally sourced value-added processing results in the conclusion that our agricultural industry created **\$11.7 billion of economic activity and 81,315 jobs** in 2023, which was not even a very good year for agriculture.

In 2023 the gross value of production **fell by 6.1%** due to flooding and other adverse factors. But in 2024 the value **rebounded by 14.7%**! The Economic Report also considers how resilient our agriculture is to negative impacts, such as may be caused by weather, markets, pests or regulatory impacts by calculating a statistical measure of the diversification of our agriculture. Diversification helps buffer against economic shocks. The good news is that we have a high level of diversification in our agricultural industries and that it has held steady over time.



The roots of these billions of dollars of economic output and the many thousands of jobs are in the land. That is why it has been the mission and purpose of the Ag Land Trust since 1984 to assist in the preservation and protection of all productive and important agricultural lands within the county. **Over 50,000** acres have been permanently protected to date, to ensure the future economic vitality of the county's most important economic driver. ■

For more detailed information, please refer to the “Crop and Economic Report” section on the Agricultural Commissioner's website. I encourage all readers to review the full report for comprehensive insights.



THE AG LAND TRUST

# Appreciation Dinner

As most people familiar with the Ag Land Trust (ALT) know, ALT is really an organization that was founded to help farming families and landowners to preserve and protect their farms and estates for future generations. ALT has always been committed to preserving agricultural lands as the cornerstone of the quality of life that we all enjoy here on the Central Coast.

Every year, ALT holds an "Appreciation Dinner" to thank all of our friends and the families who believe in our mission to protect agricultural lands around the Monterey Bay from urban sprawl. This year, the Appreciation Dinner was held at the beautiful City of Monterey Conference Center and catered by the Marriott Hotel. 111 of our friends celebrated our successful and permanent preservation of over 51,000 acres of ag land.



Photos this page: Angela Czaja, Major Eric Czaja, Mark Williams, Sandi Williams, Bob Fiore

Photos opposite page, clockwise: Nathan Harkleroad and Alison Edwards; Marc Del Piero; Thank You Cookies



APPRECIATION  
DINNER





During the Appreciation Dinner, our Board members, local elected and appointed officials, participants in our agricultural land grants and easement programs, and federal government and state government representatives exchanged greetings, good food, and information about ALT's ongoing projects to save the Central Coast's invaluable farmlands.

The Appreciation Dinner annually reinforces our collective recognition that hundreds of thousands of acres of California's most productive farmlands have been irreplaceably lost forever to sprawl developments. The work of ALT and our friends provides our agricultural community members with great beneficial financial and tax planning alternatives to preserve and enhance their families' estates in the "Salad Bowl of the World".

Photos this page, clockwise: Featured Wine - J. Lohr, Francioni Pessagno, Pisoni Lucy; Sandra Andrus and Carolyn Warren; Keith Johnston, Matthew Simonin, Johnny Johnston

Photos opposite page, clockwise: Meghan Lowry, Jake Young, Brady Moss; Dana Hart and Jason Hitchcock; Maureen Wruck, Joel Panzer, Kate McKenna, Supervisor Glenn Church; Anker and Cappie Fanoie with Michael Cling; Mayor Dennis Donahue, Brant and Virginia Jameson; Heather and Daryl Jensen.; Mike and Lucia Boggiatto, Geno Boggiatto, Austin Walter





Photos this page, clockwise:  
Virginia Roach, Jane Gamble, Stephanie Lee, Patricia Shiffman, and Louis Frizzell; Chris, Steve and Jim Storm; Mary Grace and Christopher Perry; Al and Melanie Nicora and David Gill; Supervisor Glenn Church and Kathy McKenzie



Photos opposite, clockwise:  
Councilman Tony and Guadalupe Barrera; Caesar Aldisert, Eileen Chauvet, Madison Creech, Anna Lucido; Cathy and George Amaral; William Stoffers and Carol Kurtz; Matt and Jamie Panziera; Mo and Terry Mohsin; Diana and Laurence London





**SUSTAINABILITY**  
is about meaningful,  
sensible, equitable  
survival for the  
long run.

## Preservation PLUS Progress

I have been thinking about the importance of growth in our communities and how Ag Land Trust can contribute. Progress is a fundamental part of our existence. Positive progression requires education, wisdom, common sense, and good judgement. It involves input from our historical decisions and the outcomes even in neighboring communities, what works and what doesn't. Where do lines get drawn?

We often hear the word "sustainability" a word that is used but not always understood. Simply put it is about meaningful, sensible, equitable survival for the long run.

The communities continue to grow and the need for housing and infrastructure to support that growth follows. The list of topics to consider when planning for the inevitable growth is enormous and always evolving. It's important to remember, on this central coast the agricultural industry is a tremendously generous contributor. The three staples for survival are always the same, Oxygen, Water and Food.

This is why organizations like Ag Land Trust and conservation easements are so crucial to our future. Our agricultural lands must be preserved to supply the food. Also, our open spaces, the forests, grazelands, deserts, including the oceans and

precious freshwater bodies-precious ecosystems must be preserved as well to supply all three.

Very quickly our precious prime farmland can be devoured by inadequate planning activities. Thousands of acres have already been permanently removed from production due to urban sprawl. This cannot continue and still be sustainable. There must be better planning for the future. Our lives and our grandchildren's lives depend on this.

My hope is that there is more effort to include land trusts in the initial stages of the planning for projects with stakeholders, developers, city and county planners. This is in the best interest for current and future generations.

Understanding all sides of the issues will help make better decisions with sound judgement. Ag Land Trust has been extremely beneficial to the challenges for planners. But there needs to be more effort to get this right. Thus far we have lost so much of our prime farmland already and more loss is slated for the near and far future.

**We will do great things when we work together!**

**Heather Golden Jensen**  
PRESIDENT,  
AG LAND TRUST





## MEET OUR BOARD MEMBER

# Henry Carrasco



The Ag Land Trust is pleased to announce the recent appointment of Mr. Henry Carrasco to our Board of Directors. Mr. Carrasco has served the agriculture industry in the Salinas Valley as an agricultural consultant for over five decades. Henry is a graduate of North Salinas High School and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Crop Sciences from Cal Poly SLO. He began his career as an entomologist here, and he has dedicated his life to the industry that is the cornerstone of our history and our economy.

Over the past fifty years, Henry became known for his strong advocacy for Central Coast agriculture and for his dedication to farm worker safety. He was a past President of the

California Agricultural Consultants Association (CAPCA). During the course of his impressive career, Henry has become recognized for his exceptional expertise and knowledge regarding integrated pest management, consumer safety, and the nuanced regulatory complexities currently facing farmers throughout California. Additionally, he has also served on the Boards of Directors of Legal Services for Seniors, the Monterey County Fair, and the Clint Eastwood Recovery Youth Program.

ALT is proud and grateful to have Henry's expertise to assist us in preserving and protecting the "Salad Bowl of the World"



MEET OUR

# DIRECTORS & STAFF



**Marc Del Piero, CEO & Managing Director**

Our CEO/Managing Director was our Founding President in 1984. A former county Supervisor, an attorney, and a past member of the State Water Resources Control Board, his family has farmed in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties for four generations.



**David Gill, Vice-President**

Our Vice-President is the co-owner of Rio Farms. A South County resident, he oversees farming on over 14,500 acres in the Salinas Valley.



**Heather Golden Jensen, President**

Our Board President is the principal owner of Golden Ag Assistance, LLC. She holds a California Real Estate license and has provide detailed technical consulting to hundreds of ag clients in Central California.



**Anker Fano**

Director Fano, a native of Monterey County, is the President and CEO of Pacific Valley Bank. He regularly provides detailed financial assistance and business banking services to the largest agri-business firms in Central California.



**Aaron Johnson**

Our Past Board President is the Senior Attorney and Shareholder at Aaron Johnson and Associates, Attorneys-at-Law. He specializes in land use, agricultural business law, complex real property transactions, and family law.



**Louis Frizzell, Treasurer**

Our Board Treasurer has been a licensed CPA for over four decades and provides financial planning services to numerous major farming concerns and landowners.



### **Laurence London, Secretary**

Our Board Secretary is an independent ag consultant and the owner of Fitotec Consulting, LLC. He has been licensed as a Pest Control Advisor, a Certified Crop Advisor, and served as an adjunct Professor of Ag Innovation at Hartnell College.



### **Tom AmRhein**

A lifetime resident of the Pajaro Valley, Mr. AmRhein spent 40 years in the strawberry industry and was President of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. He retired as Vice-President of Naturipe Berry Growers, Inc., the oldest Strawberry marketing organization in California.



### **Mike Novo**

Director Novo holds a degree in Geography and served as the Director of Planning for Monterey County for over a decade. He was responsible for ALL land use decisions within the 3,771 square miles of the unincorporated area of Monterey County.



### **Camille Polson, Director of Finance and Property Management**

Director of Finance and a native to the Salinas Valley, she has worked for Ag Land Trust since 2017. Camille is a proud Mom to a new son, and enjoys travelling with her family.



### **Robert Roach**

Director Roach served county farmers for 31 years. He was the Assistant Agricultural Commissioner for Monterey County. He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree, and is an expert in pesticide and plant quarantine issues and farmland protection.



### **Madison Creech**

Our newest employee, Madison Creech is our Administrative Analyst. A recent CSUMB grad, Madison was our student intern and now brings remarkable map making skills to ALT.

 [www.aglandtrust.org/about](http://www.aglandtrust.org/about)



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