



**LOOKING AHEAD**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**BREAD & SOUP DINNER**  
**and LWVUS PROGRAM**  
**PLANNING**  
League Office 6 P.M.

**FEBRUARY 1, 2014**  
**BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY**  
**“A New Vision for Open**  
**Space”**  
MTC Auditorium, Oakland  
  
More details in this VOTER

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**HOLIDAY PARTY**

and

**POTLUCK**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**  
**6 P.M.**

**CAROLYN HEDGECOCK’S**  
**HOUSE**

***CONTACT MARY MILLER***  
***ABOUT WHAT TO***  
***BRING TO SHARE***

**ENTERTAINMENT BY**  
**THE BOARD!**  
**LEARN ABOUT SUSAN B.**  
**ANTHONY'S TRIAL FOR**  
**THE AUDACIOUS ACT OF**  
**VOTING!**

## Presidents' Message



If you missed our last meeting be sure to go to our website, [www.lwvfnuc.org](http://www.lwvfnuc.org) to see an overview of President of Ohlone College, Doctor Browning's, talk updating members and guests on the status of the College's use of bond money from Measures A and G.

We are dedicating much of this issue to providing you with information for the LWV US Agriculture Position Update Study. As noted in this space last month this is focused on 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process. We will be forming a study committee in the first quarter of 2014.

In addition to the material here presented by our Voter Editor, Alex Starr, you can go to <http://www.lwv.org/content/about-agriculture-update-and-committee>. This URL points to both reading and multimedia resources providing a broad and relatively neutral overview of the issues. Thanks Alex for putting together such an informative issue.

Carolyn Hedgecock  
Sam Neeman

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PO Box 3218 Fremont, CA 94539

Office: 3375 Country Drive, Fremont

510-794-5783

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

Editor Alex Starr

Layout Design: Jane Mueller, Well Chosen Words

# 2014 Bay Area League Day

Saturday, February 1, 2014

10:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Registration and refreshments: 9:30 – 10:00 AM

MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607

## A New Vision for Bay Area Open Space

Open space is more than just a beautiful landscape or a place to hike. Within the more than a million acres protected permanently from development in the Bay Area, a new vision of the value of open space is emerging. An Ecosystem Survey being conducted by the Santa Clara and Sonoma open space districts is developing data on the cost-benefit value of investing in nature. Connectivity between open lands allows for greater use by the public and wildlife. Some open lands are being used as a baseline to study the effects of climate change. Habitat conservation plans are being developed to enhance the provision of water supply by preserving and enhancing watersheds and improving flood protection.

### TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

- Extent of lands now permanently protected and areas still at risk
- Economic value of open lands: agricultural production, tourist visitation, public health, etc.
- Role of natural areas in offsetting sea level rise
- Importance of connections and linkages between open spaces

Join us for our annual look at the nine counties of the Bay Area, and REGISTER.



### REGISTRATION :

Send check payable to LWVBA by **Friday, January 24th** to LWVBA, Attn: Bay Area League Day

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL LEAGUE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTRATION WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLINE USING PAYPAL AFTER DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>. THE COST IS \$35 PREPAID (\$20 WITHOUT LUNCH) AND \$40 (\$25 WITHOUT LUNCH) AT THE DOOR. THE DEADLINE FOR PREPAID REGISTRATION WILL BE FRIDAY, JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>. IF REGISTERING BY MAIL, PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO LWVBA, ATTN: BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY AND MAIL TO 1611 TELEGRAPH AVE., SUITE 300, OAKLAND CA 94612. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL ALEC MACDONALD AT (510) 839-1608 OR [WWW.LWVBAYAREA.ORG](http://WWW.LWVBAYAREA.ORG)

**LWVFNUC will pay your registration fee (you pay for your lunch). Please let Alex Starr know if you wish to register. Reimbursements will be made after the event.**

**Alex Starr – [apstarr@ix.netcom.com](mailto:apstarr@ix.netcom.com) - 510-656-6877**

## LWVUS - AGRICULTURE UPDATE

Information that follows is from LWVUS Members Only website. Appropriate excerpts are identified.

Detailed background material can be found at: <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/agriculture-update>

The Agriculture Update will focus narrowly on: 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process.

### Agriculture Update: Suggested Readings

The Committee has identified three specific background documents that provide a broad and relatively neutral overview of the complex set of issues addressed by U.S. agricultural policy and three websites that provide similar types of information, but from the website sponsor's point of view. The Committee would like to point out that although we have done our best to identify "neutral" background resources, each of the documents and websites is presenting information that is consistent with the mission of the authors and/or sponsoring organization, so League members must be willing to read widely to get a balanced understanding of the agricultural policy challenges facing the U.S. in particular and the world in general.

While these documents and websites are not a formal part of the Update's reading materials that will be issued later, the committee feels that they will provide useful background reading for members that are not familiar with agriculture issues.

### Documents

*N.B. These detailed documents can also be downloaded in text only if you cannot use the PDF format.*

1. The first recommendation is the administration's perspective on the key agricultural policy issues that need to be addressed in 2013 as reported in **Challenges**

### and Opportunities in U.S. Agriculture

(Chapter 8 of the Economic Report of the President- 2013). Although the content of this 28-page report goes beyond the specific topics in the Update Scope, the Committee considers it an excellent introductory document offering background on such topics as the role of agriculture in the U.S. economy, structural changes that have taken place since the 1920s, the development of new markets (e.g., organic, local), the contribution of research and development to productivity growth, agriculture in world trade, and the challenges of agricultural risk management. The document can be downloaded in PDF using the following link:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/ERP-2013/ERP-2013-chapter8/content-detail.html>.

*Editor's Note: I skimmed this LONG article. The conclusion at the end might interest you.*

### Conclusion

*Taken directly from the report.*

Although farming has become a progressively smaller share of the U.S. economy, the President believes that a vibrant U.S. agricultural sector is vital for the Nation's prosperity. U.S. agriculture has remained a bright spot in the economy during the Great Recession and its immediate aftermath and despite the most severe drought in more than a half-century. Much of the sector's success can be attributed to growth in global demand for American agricultural exports. In 2012, agricultural exports reached a near record level and are projected to continue to expand. The world's population is expected to reach more than 9.2 billion people by 2050, with most of the growth occurring in countries that are net food importers. President Obama believes that expanding overseas market access is

crucial for the continued strength of American agriculture. Persistent gains in efficiency have defined American agriculture and nearly tripled farm productivity in the second half of the twentieth century. To continue this tradition and maintain the strength of the sector, the Nation must continue to invest in agricultural R&D, helping farmers find new ways to grow more with less and to continue their stewardship of natural resources for future generations. The agricultural sector is increasingly vulnerable to price volatility because of the globalization of agricultural commodities, volatile weather conditions as a result of climate change, and changing consumption patterns. To cope with these challenges, U.S. agriculture must stay at the forefront of agricultural innovation.

2. The second document is a Union of Concerned Scientists policy brief entitled *The Healthy Farm: A Vision for U.S. Agriculture*. **This is an 8-page position statement by the UCS and is, therefore, not entirely neutral.** We selected it because it looks at farming from a variety of perspectives (production, economics, and environment) and a variety of farming systems (industrial, conventional, organic, etc.), offering examples of technologies and management practices able to contribute to the UCS vision of a healthy farm. The report contains many useful references and links. [http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food\\_and\\_agriculture/The-Healthy-Farm-A-Vision-for-US-Agriculture.pdf](http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food_and_agriculture/The-Healthy-Farm-A-Vision-for-US-Agriculture.pdf) *Editor's Note: easier reading than the US Govt's report. It contains lots of pretty images and a few charts. More user friendly and with a definite slant to the material.*

3. The third document is a short article from Scientific America entitled *Will Organic Fail to Feed the World?* The article presents a summary of a recent analysis of 66 studies comparing conventional and organic methods for 34 different crop species. There are numerous live links providing definitions of terms and

additional reading.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=organic-farming-yields-and-feeding-the-world-under-climate-change&page=2> *Editor's Note: Short (2 pages) and to the point. The subtitle is: A new meta-analysis suggests farmers should take a hybrid approach to producing enough food for humans while preserving the environment.*

## Websites

*Editor's Note: This is for the serious work with a lot of time to surf the web.*

1. Know Your Farmer is a site supported by USDA in their effort to inform the public about local food systems (what they are, how they can be promoted, resources available to consumers and farmers, etc.). A good place to enter this website is the "tools and resources" page, from where you can navigate to other parts of the website:

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF\\_RESOURCES](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_RESOURCES)

2. The National Sustainable Agriculture Council supports the promotion of "sustainable" agriculture as defined by U.S. Code Title 7, Section 3103. Although the materials on their website do support their mission, we find that their articles are well documented and do a good job of following Farm Bill legislative efforts that would help or hinder the sustainable agriculture movement. We suggest that you enter their website via the page that defines sustainable agriculture and then navigate to other topics of interest.

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/about-us/what-is-sustainable-ag/>

3. The "Food Dialogues" website is a creation of the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance and brings together thought leaders and practitioners from all points of view for moderated, civil webinar discussions. It could be characterized as presenting the "farmer/rancher" point of view; but in moving around the site it becomes clear that there is no "single" farmer/rancher point of view. This is the most difficult of the websites to navigate and caution must be taken to select a variety of webinars and views to get a balanced picture on issues covered. Starting at the home page of this

website gives you an opportunity to link to some of the recent topics discussed on their Facebook page: <http://www.fooddialogues.com/>. From the home page you can also click on the “learn about agriculture/food sources” tab which brings you to links addressing a number of issues that will be covered by the Update.

## **MULTI MEDIA INFORMATION SOURCES**

Below are some example multimedia resources. **These are not meant to endorse any particular practice or viewpoint, but to give you an indication of the breadth of the topics.** Please feel free to share your thoughts on the Agriculture Update Forums at <http://forum.lwv.org/>.

### **AQUACULTURE**

Mote Aquaculture Farm (video 7:28 minutes)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwLGE0Q5\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwLGE0Q5_o)

Salmon farming in British Columbia (video 5:58)  
<http://salmonfarmers.com/virtual-video>  
By the BC Salmon Farmers Association

Farmed Salmon: Unhealthy and Unsustainable, Ocean Futures Society, (video 5:13 minutes)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YD9KDE92J8>

### **ORGANIC FARMING**

USDA Certified Organic Farm, Spring Chicken Media, (video 9 minutes)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5Fappg2caw>

Joel Salatin Polyface Farm (by USA Today) (video 4:02 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxTfQpv8xGA>  
Covers the system he employs on his farm from beef, to broilers, to laying hens and pigs

See also the first part of 2008 Food for Thought lecture at Oregon State Univ. below under Sustainable Agriculture.

## **GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD**

The Eyes of Nye - Genetically Modified Foods (video 24:58 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKm2Ch3-Myg>

Good “primer” on the concept of genetically engineered foods – it’s presented by Bill Nye in a comprehensively broad, simplified and even entertaining manner, making it viewer friendly. Disclosure: At the end, he does endorse farming responsibly, testing each case and labeling foods.

Wikipedia article on the genetically modified food controversies that seems to include most points of view (text)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetically\\_modified\\_food\\_controversies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetically_modified_food_controversies)

See also middle part of the 2008 Food for Thought lecture at Oregon State Univ. below under Sustainable Agriculture.

## **NANOTECHNOLOGY**

Nanotech Risks, Discovery Channel, 2009 (video 2:10 minutes)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qc0KLV8CW08>

Andrew Maynard, chief science advisor for the Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies, talks to Jorge Ribas about the technology's risks

Agricultural nanotechnology and the future of food, webinar by the Institute for Trade and Agriculture Policy, May 2013 (video 57:43 minutes).  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0R9az7P6h0>

Technical webinar about nanotechnology applications in food and farming, potential risks, and regulatory recommendations

## **LABELING**

U.S. FDA Food Labeling Regulations (English)  
(video 3:46 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJhZWXAndko>

This is a brief video introduction on the various components of U.S. FDA Food Labeling Regulations. Its audience is to give producers an understanding of regulations but I think the info is appropriate for our population.

Commonwealth Club of California Oct. 2012  
panel on Prop. 37: "GMO: Label or Not?"  
(audio 1:10 hours)

<http://www.commonwealthclub.org/events/2012-10-25/gmo-label-or-not>

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

2008 Food for Thought lecture at Oregon State Univ. (video 1:24 hours)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WP-QSGrTu7s>

UC Davis genetic engineering expert, Professor Pamela Ronald, and her organic farmer husband, Raoul Adamchak, discuss how the best practices of both organic farming and genetic engineering can be used together to improve farming. Note: the lecture can also be searched through the "transcript" button for key terms and what times they are covered in the video – it appears to be voice recognition, so is not 100% accurate, but is still a very neat feature.

Out to Pasture: The future of farming (video 34:11 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrRqi8-Y8ak>

Out to Pasture contrasts industrial-style confined animal production with farms that raise food animals outdoors in diversified operations, striving to be sustainable.

Who Killed the Honey Bee? (BBC Documentary) (video 58:50 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjef4QiKWfg>

An investigation into colony collapse disorder and die-offs of bees

## CROP INSURANCE

Crop Insurance 101 (video 3:35 Minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TixSJUOh6YM>

Tom Zacharias, President of NCIS, explains the basics of crop insurance

## ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Michigan Farmer Fights Livestock Factory Farm Pollution (video 3:06 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6iAhrP0-rY>

Beef Documentary (video 6:33 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onITAppbWye>

Uploaded on Sep 21, 2011. Farmers discussing the science behind a cattle feedlot and the care involved in raising the cows. The environmental practices they observe and are constantly improving upon are showcased.

Inhumane Feed Lot Beef vs. Humane Grass Fed Beef (video 3:31 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUDCh7nSUEQ>, FOX News segment discussing health and practice differences (some graphic scenes)

Living Downstream from a Pig Farm (video 3:01 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eu15Mf696zI>

Hog Production at Smithfield Farms (video 4:11 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOboXPYWetk>

Undercover at Smithfield Foods (video 3:36 minutes)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_vqIGTKuQE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_vqIGTKuQE)

Humane Society discussion of Smithfield gestation crates

Dec. 2	Board Meeting	7 PM League Office
Dec. 9	Holiday Party and Potluck	6 P.M., Carolyn Hedgecock's House Contact Mary Miller for what to bring
Jan.27	Bread & Soup & Program Planning Program	6 P.M. League Office

ALL MEETINGS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND WHEEL CHAIR ACCESSIBLE  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014 9:30-2 PM**  
**BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY**  
**“A NEW VISION FOR OPEN SPACE”**  
**MTC AUDITORIUM, 101 EIGHTH STREET, OAKLAND**  
LWVFNUC WILL PAY THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR MEMBERS WISHING TO ATTEND.  
MEMBERS PAY FOR THEIR OWN LUNCH OR BROWN BAG IT.  
THE MTC AUDITORIUM IS ADJACENT TO A B.A.R.T. STATION.

**Mission**

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**Diversity Policy**

LWVFNUC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of our communities in our membership and actions. We believe diverse views are important for responsible decision making and seek to work with all people and groups who reflect our community diversity.

**Join the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TODAY!**

Any person, man or woman, who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League may join. To be a voting member, one must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen. Members under 18, or non-citizens, are welcome as non-voting Associate Members. Dues include membership in LWVFNUC, Bay Area League, and the California and National Leagues. Financial support for dues is available through our scholarship program. Contact Andrea Schacter, Membership Chair, for information.

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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 New Member       Renewal  
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