



Small Farm News

Small Farm Program • Cooperative Extension • University of California



Growers give 'good' grade to Specialty Crops Conference

Editor's Note: In this special edition of Small Farm News, we present a review of the 2007 Specialty Crops Conference.

Presentations on the latest specialty crops, fresh takes on market analysis, and tools for new enterprises brought approximately 60 small-scale farmers and agricultural professionals from throughout California to the 2007 Specialty Crops Conference, held Dec. 12 at UC Davis.

In addition to the UC Small Farm Program advisors and director, speakers at the conference included Dr. James Gorny, the new executive director of the UC Davis Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center; Sibella Kraus, president of the nonprofit organization Sustainable Agriculture Education; and Josef Brinckmann, vice president of research and development for Traditional Medicinals, a company that markets teas, digestives and other botanical products.

One of the day's highlights was a chance to touch and taste pitahaya—also called dragon fruit—after a presentation on pitahaya research by Ramiro Lobo. Lobo emphasized the importance of taste testing new, high-value fruit varieties before selling to consumers: "If you pay \$20 for a fruit like that and it doesn't taste good, you're not going back for another



Paul Bertler selects a piece of pitahaya to taste, as a participant at the Specialty Crops Conference in December.

Summaries of each presentation from the 2007 Specialty Crops Conference begin on p. 3

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From left, tour participants Michael Yang, Pilar Reber, Irma DeBonis and Mahesak Nunthatee check out a sample of Romanesco broccoli at the Berkeley Farmers Market.

Market tour: Buyers offer advice for small farmers

For a small number of farmers, the Specialty Crops Conference continued for a second day on a tour of Bay Area markets. The full-capacity, limited-seats tour was designed to introduce participants to a variety of marketing opportunities open to small-scale, specialty crops producers. Farmers participating in the tour came mostly from the greater Bay Area and Central Valley regions—though one made the trip from as far away as North Hollywood.

Wholesale

The tour's first stop was the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market, where general manager Michael Janis explained that working with small, local growers has become an important goal of the market association. After a quick orientation, the group set out to explore the market independently.

A small group of participants caught up with Earl Herrick, founder and owner of Earl's Organic Produce, to ask his advice for farmers who want to start selling to wholesalers. He said integrity and consistency are necessities for developing a relationship with a wholesale buyer.

"We like to feel that we always support the small grower," Herrick

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SPECIAL EDITION: SPECIALTY CROPS CONFERENCE IN REVIEW



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Director's Message

What would you like from a Specialty Crops Conference next year?

The Specialty Crops Conference closed the year for the Small Farm Program on a clear high note. I was particularly impressed by the breadth of topics and the depth of the material covered by the speakers.



Shermain Hardesty

The second day of the Conference involved a quick-paced tour to five alternative markets for smaller producers. Small Farm Program advisor Richard Molinar and I designed this tour to give producers an opportunity to get out and meet face-to-face with possible vendors. I hope that producers who attended went

away from the Conference enriched with ideas regarding crop opportunities, marketing alternatives and planning tools. Maybe we inspired someone to try out a new market niche!

One of the best parts of my job is having the opportunity to continually learn new things. I am committed to providing high quality continuing education for smaller farmers through our Small Farm Program. I hope that smaller producers can make time during the slower winter season to not only restore, repair and revitalize their working operations, but also to refresh their knowledge, tools and marketing efforts.

Share your input and ideas for future events by calling (530) 752-8136 or e-mailing sfcenter@ucdavis.edu

We need your input as we consider repeating the Specialty Crops Conference. A total of 83 people registered for the event, with about two-thirds of them being producers. Although we were pleased with the attendance for this first-time conference, we could easily have accommodated more producers.

Please consider the following questions, and let us know what you think:

- Should we hold the Specialty Crops Conference again next winter in Davis?
- Or should we hold smaller regional meetings, such as a traveling Specialty Crops Jamboree?
- What are the top three topics you would like us to address?

Shermain D Hardesty

Growers grade conference — FROM PAGE 1

one," he said.

More than a few participants gave the fuchsia- and white-fleshed varieties a thumbs-up.

"I'd have this again," noted Ed Pearson, a farmer from Marin County. He and wife Susan Pearson attended the conference out of general curiosity and to keep up with the newest crop trends.

Many participants expressed an interest in the presentation on the American botanicals market as a reason for attending the conference.

The idea of planting botanicals as a high-value cover crop brought Joe Votek, a vineyard manager, to the conference.

"I usually (only) go to viticultural meetings," he said. "I'm glad I came."

Conference participants were asked to evaluate the conference by survey. Overall, approximately 87 percent of survey respondents rated the conference as "Good" to "Excellent." Some suggestions made by survey respondents included longer presentation times for speakers and having a farmers' panel—suggestions which will be taken into consideration for future Small Farm Program conferences.

For more information from each presentation, check out the presentation summaries beginning on p. 3 in this issue of *Small Farm News*, or visit www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/conference to view PowerPoint presentations from the conference.

Niche Meat Conference

The 2008 Niche Meat Marketing Conference will be held March 26 - 27 at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center in Modesto. Topics for presentations and group activities will include grass-finishing, processing, and pastured poultry. The conference's keynote speaker is Jim Gerrish, former head of the Forage Systems Research Center at the University of Missouri. Registration costs \$80, which covers lunch both days and proceedings. For more, contact Roger Ingram, (530) 889-7350 or rsingram@ucdavis.edu.



2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

For more information, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (888) 424-7828.

It's not too late!

The deadline to return your agricultural census form was Feb. 4. But if you missed the deadline, USDA NASS has announced it is still accepting census forms.

Though the UC Small Farm Program is not involved in conducting the census, our program's funding and research count on you being accurately counted!



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The Small Farm Program is a statewide research and outreach program that serves the needs of California's small-scale farmers. For more, visit www.sfc.ucdavis.edu

Produce safety requires examining risk

Dr. Jim Gorny, executive director of the UC Davis Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center, presented on the topics of produce food safety and postharvest handling.

Postharvest handling can affect both produce quality—which Gorny defined as a negotiable set of characteristics—and produce safety, which is nonnegotiable since any product labeled as food implies that consumption will not cause injury. The issue of food safety is important in the eyes of the law, as well as buyers, consumers, regulators and the media, and is critical to business survival.

Gorny examined why concerns about food safety have increased and detailed the watershed event of the 2006 E. coli O157:H7 foodborne illness outbreak associated with fresh spinach consumption. Though detection measures have improved, he noted that testing is a poor firewall against preventing future incidents. Even with random sampling, if 60 samples are taken from a lot that is 0.5 percent defective, there is a 74 percent likelihood that the sampling would not reveal any contamination.

Food safety programs, Gorny posited, focus on risk management along a continuum, with the goal of zero illness. He advocated that food safety cannot be viewed as a black-and-

More Info:

- <http://ucgaps.ucdavis.edu>
- <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu>



Adjacent land use is an important consideration in food safety GAPs. Figure shows positive E. coli samples relative to a farm lot, from an investigation into the 2006 E. coli O157:H7 foodborne illness outbreak.

white issue of safe versus unsafe.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for produce safety rely almost exclusively on a preventative approach as there are no kill steps available for produce. Thorough washing of produce reduces produce food safety risks, but it will not eliminate hazards. When it comes to food safety, GAPs should address all aspects of produce production and postharvest handling, including site selection, adjacent land use, site preparation, soil amendments, water supply, harvest practices, employee hygiene, postharvest cooling and packing house operations.

Deciding what to grow? Examine terminal market prices online

Mark Gaskell, University of California Small Farm advisor in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, presented ideas for determining what to grow based on market potential and gave tips on how to examine historical prices for a particular crop.

Finding a niche for a specialty crop could mean growing a new variety, introducing a product to a new geographical region, marketing the product to a new segment of consumers, or growing and marketing a crop for a new market window—either earlier or later in the season than competitors. Beyond finding a niche, market signals can help guide crop selection. Gathering information on historical prices for this crop and comparing those prices to the potential costs of growing the crop can help a farmer analyze whether making the jump to a new crops will be worth the risk.

Gaskell walked participants through how to use the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Market News website (FVMN), at <http://marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv>.

“What I wanted to leave you with today is a tool for how to



Gaskell's presentation walks viewers through using the Market News website, <http://marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv>

Did you know?

The Fruit & Vegetable Market News Service now includes organic labels on commodities. Users can choose to search for commodities by “Type” as either All Products, All Organic or No Organic. This option became available Dec. 3, just days before Gaskell included it in his presentation at the Specialty Crops Conference.

evaluate on your own,” he said.

Prices for commodities are collected on a daily and weekly basis at terminal markets throughout the United States and internationally, including markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles. To search for prices on the website, click “Go” to run a custom report, and then choose a location, daily or weekly prices, commodities and click “Go.” Next, enter which start and end dates to search through, and click on “run.”

A new screen will show prices of the commodities, listed by date and with information about the products’ origin, package size, and other information such as mode of transportation.

Presentation Summaries

Domestic market prime for American-grown botanicals

Josef Brinckmann, vice president of research and development for Traditional Medicinals, gave a presentation on the North American botanicals market.

Botanical crops that are cultivated, grown or harvested wild in North America include aloe vera, American ginseng root, black cohosh rhizome, capsicum fruit, cranberry fruit, Echinacea herb and root, flax seed, garlic bulb, ginger rhizome, hop strobile, jojoba seed, lavender flower, peppermint leaf, saw palmetto fruit and spearmint leaf. One of the top botanical imports of the United States in terms of volume is garlic, at approximately 140 million kg imported annually, almost entirely from China.

In 2006, the United

States imported nearly \$762 million worth of teas and spices and over \$200 million of medicinal plants, with China as the top supplier. Other top-dollar natural ingredients imports included saps, herbal extracts and related substances imported primarily from India, essential oils imported largely from Argentina and India, coconut butter and coconut oil from top exporters Malaysia and the Philippines respectively, and fresh and dried garlic products from China.

According to Brinckmann, Traditional Medicinals sources none of its herbs from its headquarters in Sebastopol, and very little from California as a whole (with the exception of lemon and orange peels because, he said, California produces the “best citrus peels in the world”). The smallest farms that work with the company are about 70-90 acres in size. For small-scale farmers who want to try their hand at growing botanicals, Brinckmann suggested focusing on a diversity of fresh, culinary herbs that can be marketed locally and to chefs. Because of the technology necessary to cultivate and process medicinal plants according to pharmacopoeial quality standards, most smaller farmers would need to work with a processor/distributor, but such higher grade levels are not necessary for the food market.

More Info:

[GACP for Herbal Raw Materials](http://www.ahpa.org/Portals/0/pdfs/O6_1208_AHPA-AHP_GACP.pdf)

• http://www.ahpa.org/Portals/0/pdfs/O6_1208_AHPA-AHP_GACP.pdf

[World Health Organization GACPs](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2003/9241546271.pdf)

• <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2003/9241546271.pdf>



Specialty crops fill regional, seasonal niches

Manuel Jimenez, UC Small Farm advisor in Tulare County, presented on an array of specialty crops.

The term “specialty crop” can be defined different ways, but Jimenez presented an understanding of the term that many conference presenters were using: A specialty crop can be a new variety of crop not previously grown widely in the region, a traditional crop for a new market—as in the case of heirloom varieties, varieties with exceptional taste, or products grown primarily for health attributes—or a traditional crop grown out of season.

When choosing a new specialty crop, an important consideration is an analysis of the current situation. What are the competition’s strengths and weaknesses? What are the grower’s own strengths and weaknesses? Other topics to analyze include the crop’s differential advantage, the customers’ needs, and possible market segments or niches.

This presentation included photos of specialty and exotic varieties, including cucurbits, solanum, cool season vegetables, tropical crops, and berries.



Case study compares marketing costs of farms selling by wholesale, CSA and farmers market

Shermain Hardesty, director of the UC Small Farm Program, gave a presentation reviewing grower returns in alternative marketing channels.

Direct marketing by farmers—especially through farmers markets—has become increasingly popular, but that same growth has brought about recent questions of whether farmers markets are really the most profitable marketing option for farmers. To that end, Hardesty completed a case study of three farms that each market their products three ways: farmers markets, wholesale, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). All three of the farms were well established, diversified organic growers in Northern California—one small (20 acres, 2 full-time employees); one medium (70 acres; 7 employees); and one larger (240 acres, 30 employees).

The case study excluded the costs of production, and focused on the costs associated with postharvest activities—packing and storage, transportation, and marketing and administra-

tion.

Across all three farms, labor was the highest marketing expense. For the small farm, labor was 77 percent of all marketing costs, ranging from 67 percent in wholesale to 82 percent for farmers markets.

The study also found that farmers markets generated the lowest net revenue return for all three growers, while wholesale provided the highest net revenue return for all.

The net rate of return for CSA revenues was remarkably similar at 55-57 percent for all three farms.

Hardesty emphasized that while producers can earn “full retail” prices through direct marketing, they need to remember that the price premiums are not pure profit. However, she noted the report was not meant to be an indictment of direct marketing. Farmers markets can provide an outlet for produce unmarketable to wholesale channels, and can support new farmers developing a customer base and higher volume production for enterprise growth. New direct marketing options might find success focusing on less labor-intensive avenues, such as farm-to-institution sales, hybrid CSAs, and public markets.

All three farms were well established, diversified organic growers in Northern California

Produce in rainbow colors provide wide array of nutrition and flavor, too

Aziz Baameur, University of California Small Farm advisor in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties, gave a presentation on the consumer appeal and healthful aspects of colorful produce.

The appeal of buying produce from small-scale growers can include many criteria, but Baameur's presentation focused on the aesthetic appeal, nutritional value and superior taste that brightly colored fruits and vegetables can provide. What's more, colors can provide clues as to a vegetable or fruit's health benefits, and which vitamins, antioxidants or phytochemicals the plant product contains.

His presentation focused on three main types of healthful substances in plant pigments: chlorophylls, carotenoids, and anthocyanins. Chlorophylls, found in green



vegetables, have been found to decrease DNA damage and lower risk of some cancers. Carotenoids, found mostly in yellow, orange and red produce, are antioxidants and include the well-known lycopene and beta carotene, as well as the abundant lutein. Anthocyanin is a flavonoid pigment often found in purple, blue and some red fruits, which has garnered recent health interest as a dietary antioxidant.

While colors can play a role in the attractiveness of fruit or vegetables, flavor—a perception that is mainly determined by taste and smell—still plays a determinant role in consumer selection. Baameur's recent work with a rainbow's array of colorful carrots and peppers has shown that consumers are open to new alternatives and choices in their produce.

Pitahaya researcher examines varieties

Ramiro Lobo, University of California Small Farm advisor in San Diego County, presented on pitahaya research and production.

Also known as dragon fruit, pitahaya is the fruit of a trailing cactus grown primarily in Central America and Southeast Asia. Two types of pitahaya are commonly found in California, red skin with either red or white flesh. Because domestic production is very limited, current demand exceeds supply and market prices are considerably high for this fruit. As a result, pitahaya has great potential as a new crop for growers in parts of California.



Though there are approximately 25 species of pitahaya, and an estimated 70 clones identified in Southern California, there is little reliable, consistent information about varieties and their relative performance. Lobo is currently testing 18 varieties of pitahaya for commercial production, concentrating on self-pollinating varieties that show good yield potential and acceptable flavor characteristics.

Pitahaya plants are commonly propagated by cuttings, and the plants need training and trellising to maximize production. Several types of trellis systems or materials can be used, including live tutors, single posts, T supports, ladder-type supports and wire support systems. No major pest problems have been observed yet.

Though no final results are available yet, the pitahaya plants have adapted well to growing at the South Coast Research and Extension Center in Irvine, where Lobo is testing them.

Most varieties set fruit without hand pollination, and are producing well in full sun, without shade.

Additional research will evaluate the effects of using shade and plastic covers on overall yield and fruit quality.



New tool allows farmers to screen potential crops

Ramiro Lobo, UC Small Farm advisor in San Diego County, presented information about a recently developed guide for examining enterprises.

Of San Diego County's 5,255 farms, 82 percent are considered "small," by USDA definition. Lobo highlighted the current situation of avocado and Valencia orange growers to demonstrate the challenges faced by the County's agricultural industry and by small-scale producers in particular. Increased availability of substitutes, increased competition from foreign producers, high establishment and production costs, and expensive natural resources continue to put downward pressure on profits and force local producers to look for profitable alternatives to replace non-profitable crops.

The new enterprise screening guide was developed to help growers assess the potential of new crops and new enterprises through self-evaluation. By carefully considering the tool's 43 questions, a

farmer could match his goals and farm resources with the requirements of the new enterprise and make an informed decision about whether to risk investing in the new crop.

The guide starts with a descriptive section that asks the user to respond to prompts such as "Describe in as great detail as possible the product that you are considering producing" and "Who are/will be your competitors?" The second section is comparative, asking the user to rate the potential crop on a scale of 1-5 with multiple questions on topics of marketing ability, information access, production availability, availability of resources, and risk management. A final section helps users identify questions or areas of concern that are critical for success. The tool also includes a completed example, in which a farmer evaluates two alternative crops for the family farm with sample responses to help new users.

Once and future goals: Tasting of Summer Produce to New Ruralism

Sibella Kraus, president of the nonprofit organization Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE) and director of the Agriculture at the Metropolitan Edge Program at UC Berkeley, was the conference's luncheon speaker and traced connections between the farmer-to-consumer movement of the Tasting of Summer Produce events in the 1980s to today's agricultural planning concepts related to New Ruralism.

Kraus is the founder of the Tasting of Summer Produce, an annual trade show for specialty crop growers, retail buyers, and chefs that began in San Francisco in 1983 and was held at the Oakland Museum through 1989. The event's purpose was to introduce local, seasonal specialty crops and to facilitate market connections, but it also acted as a precursor to the farmer-to-consumer movement.

Out of that movement came continued development in urban-rural agricultural linkages, including the rise of farmers mar-

kets as downtown amenities, the increasing popularity of CSAs, and the growing interest in school gardens. Agriculture also began to focus on the importance of place, with marketing strategies based on regional specialties (e.g. Capay Valley Grown) and the health- and environment-focused movement toward local food systems.

Kraus' most recent projects have focused on projects related to New Ruralism, a planning framework which advocates the preservation and enhancement of urban edge rural areas as places indispensable to the economic, environmental and cultural vitality of cities. Urban edge agriculture, she said, has long been a de-facto land bank for suburban development. Kraus stated that mapping and planning agriculture is

important in order to strategically preserve key lands.

"We don't just let cities happen," Kraus said, of working with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments to define rural landscapes for its regional land use project. "We can't just let agriculture happen or—as it might be—not happen."

A current SAGE project is an investigation of the San Francisco Sustainable Foodshed, a feasibility study of the potential for the City of San Francisco to feed itself locally.

One of her prime goals in current projects related to New Ruralism is to promote the synergy between smart growth and sustainable agriculture.

"I want to make sure that (in the future) the experience of local agriculture is not just a distant memory, and the taste of a luscious summer strawberry is not just an artifact found in a museum," Kraus said.

"We can't just let agriculture happen or ... not happen."

—Sibella Kraus,
SAGE president



From left, *opo*, varieties of bittermelon, Chinese eggplant, sinqua, and moqua.

Ethnic markets hold ideas for 'new' crops

Richard Molinar, University of California Small Farm advisor in Fresno County, and Michael Yang, program representative for the Small Farm Program, presented on specialty fruits and vegetables with special attention to crops popular among Southeast Asian populations in the Fresno area.

About half of the family farms in Fresno County—the top agricultural producer of all U.S. counties—are operated by ethnic minority farmers. Of those, approximately 39 percent are of Asian descent, primarily Hmong, Lao and Chinese. Molinar and Yang evaluate vegetable varieties common among the ethnic Asian farmers and consumers in the region. Some of the most commonly grown Asian vegetables in Fresno County are daikon, gailon, bittermelon, donqua, sugar peas, long beans and eggplant varieties. Growing these or other specialty fruits and vegetables could provide a profitable niche for a small farmer, provided a market opportunity is found among interested ethnic consumers or those consumers unfamiliar with the products.

Molinar and Yang highlighted an array of other ethnic crops—

with photographs, tips and samples—and reviewed some of the crops' potential for profit and for failure.

Some prime Asian vegetables come from the fruits and greens of the Cucurbitaceae family including bittermelon, which can be grown trellised for fruit or untrellised for tips and has a quinine-like bitterness; snake gourd, which turns from green to red when overripe; sinqua, a tasty squash that can also be dried as luffa; *opo*, which can grow very straight and long fruit when trellised; moqua, a hairy fruit which is eaten immature, before acquiring a waxy coating; and donqua, a Chinese wintermelon that grows up to 30 lbs. untrellised.

Other crops he highlighted included: okra leaf, which has a mucilaginous consistency like okra, with edible shoot tips; purslane, which can be used fresh in salads, soups and stews; Ceylon spinach, or Malabar spinach, which he described as having succulent leaves for soups and stews; methi, or fenugreek, an herb or spice used in East Indian cuisines; and long beans, or yardlong beans, which can be shades of green, red, or mosaics.

Market tour — FROM PAGE 1

said. “But the bottom line at the end of the day is quality.”

Once a relationship is established, he said his company likes to promote the farmer’s story in addition to his produce.

“We try to make them rock stars,” he said. “It’s not just George Cunningham’s Valencias—it’s George Cunningham’s third-generation, 55-acre organic farm Valencias.”

A panel of wholesale buyers also sat down to give advice to the tour’s farmers.

Several of the buyers suggested small farmers work hard at finding a wholesale buyer or distributor tailored to the needs and strengths of their farms. They suggested visiting the market to see what type of products each company buys and sells to find a good fit.

“But it takes more than one type (of buyer),” said Frank Ballantine, general manager for Greenleaf Produce. “Because you won’t make it with just one—you need some place (for your seconds).”

The wholesale buyers emphasized that small-scale growers need to focus on food safety, and advocated they establish their own food safety programs, with third-party certification of a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system.

Food Processing

The tour’s second stop was at a small food processing company called Innovative Foods, where Ed Hirschberg focuses on concept development and food technologies for larger scale production.

“My goal is to help you figure out from our discussion how to do your own value-added products,” Hirschberg said.

Tour participants were invited to sample an array of food products from freeze-dried pitahaya slices and carrot-persimmon sorbet to a cherry-walnut bar made with raisin paste, sweet potato crystals and dried mushrooms. Hirschberg uses processes such as drum drying, freeze drying, air drying, infusing, and refrigeration to create products from fresh produce that are used in Meals Ready to Eat (MREs), sold as snacks and mixed into breakfast cereals.

Grocery Chain

After a brown-bag lunch, the tour group met with representatives from Whole Foods for a closer look at the new Oakland store and a review of the company’s efforts to work with, support, and promote small-scale farmers. Adesina Stewart, in-store educator, pointed out that Whole Foods markets in Northern California have more



At left, Mahesak Nunthatee, Erin Shea and Small Farm advisor Ramiro Lobo take a closer look at cauliflower varieties at the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market. Below left, David Schwartz passes a platter of samples at Innovative Foods. Below right, Whole Foods in-store educator Adesina Stewart discusses sourcing with Abe Abuhilal.



produce and more organic products than Whole Foods stores in any other region in the country.

Specialty Market

The tour’s next stop was Monterey Market, a neighborhood grocery store in Berkeley that specializes in seasonal, local and organic produce. Bill Fujimoto, second-generation owner of the store, often buys produce directly from farmers.

“When you plant something, you should already have it sold,” he said. “You should know who’s going to buy it and ... you should know its value. Whether I want to buy it or not is up to you and your product.”

When it comes to defining “local,” Fujimoto bases his definition on his ability to connect and communicate with grow-

ers. By speaking with farmers, he can find out a fruit’s maturity and can advocate for produce qualities that he prefers. That information helps Fujimoto maintain a base of loyal customers, who trust in his produce choices. For example, Fujimoto is able to sell un-shiny apples because his customers trust they will “eat good” even if they don’t look so good. Many farmers who sell to Monterey Market include the store as a stop on selling trips to Bay Area farmers markets.

Farmers Market

The day’s final stop was at Berkeley Farmers Market, where Ben Adler of the Ecology Center explained they sell only organic products that have not been genetically modified nor treated with methyl bromide. Tour participants also noted that some of the same farms whose produce was being sold at the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market and at Monterey Market also held stalls at this farmers market.

“The big message today was consistency and quality—I’d say that’s something I know to focus more on,” said Erin Shea, a tour participant and organic farmer from Healdsburg. “I would suggest this tour to people like me who are new growers or looking to sell in a new venue.”

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Address Services Requested



Join us at the California Small Farm Conference

Staff and farm advisors of the UC Small Farm Program are proud to help organize the California Small Farm Conference. We hope to see you there, where we'll be leading workshops for new farmers and experienced farmers alike. **Here's where we'll be:**

Sunday, Feb. 24

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Hoop Houses & Other Season Extension Opportunities
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Small Farm Food Safety
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Starting a Dairy Goat Operation
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Reception

Monday, Feb. 25

10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.	A Review of New and Specialty Crops in California <i>All SFP advisors will be presenting on specialty crops research</i>
1:15 - 2:45 p.m.	Surviving Compliance with State/Federal Agriculture Laws
1:15 - 2:45 p.m.	Integrating New Weed Management Strategies for Profit
3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Personal Risk Management for Women Farmers
3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Extending your Market Season
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Banquet <i>Presentation of 2008 Pedro Illic Awards</i>

Tuesday, Feb. 26

9:15 - 10:45 a.m.	Production Issues for New Farmers <i>Offered in English, Hmong and Spanish sessions</i>
11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Record Keeping and Business Issues for New Farmers <i>Offered in English, Hmong and Spanish sessions</i>

California Small Farm Conference

February 24-26, 2008, Visalia, CA

Featured Speakers:
 Dr. Preston Maring
 Huell Howser
 David Runsten

Conference topics include:

- Small animal production
- Food safety
- Cultural practices
- Pest management
- Marketing
- Improving farmers' markets
- Transitioning to organics
- Cultivating tree crops
- New farmer business strategies
- Specialty crops, and more

**To learn more: 888-712-4188 or
www.californiafarmconference.com**

Growing Opportunities

