

December 2025 SV CWA Newsletter

Note from the President

As we close out 2025, I'm filled with gratitude and pride for everything we've accomplished together this year. From our first membership event in February to celebrating California Women for Agriculture's 50th Anniversary in November, this year has been a testament to the strength, creativity, and passion of our members.



February kicked off with a delightful wine tasting from Odonata, setting the tone for a year of connection and learning. **April** brought the beauty of spring to life during our Green Valley Floral tour, reminding us of the vibrant agricultural community we're privileged to support. In **May**, we celebrated the stunning landscapes of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties through our photo contest. Congratulations again to Kara Fanning, Jessica Lara, and Claire Hughes for their incredible submissions! **June** marked one of our most meaningful traditions—the Scholarship Reception—where we honored outstanding students who represent the future of agriculture. Investing in their education is a promise to the next generation of leaders.

As summer turned to fall, we embraced CWA's milestone year with enthusiasm. **September** was a time of reconnection at the Statewide Meeting and Ag Boosters BBQ in Fresno, raising funds and celebrating decades of advocacy. **October** brought creativity and community during our 3rd Annual Pumpkin Painting Event with Monterey County 4-H, where laughter and learning filled the air. In **November**, we enjoyed camaraderie during our Annual Bus Trip to Santana Row and proudly represented our chapter at the unforgettable 50th Anniversary Statewide Meeting in La Quinta—a celebration of five decades of empowering women for agriculture.

Our final meeting of the year was a membership meeting: Wreath Making and Cookie Exchange! Thank you for those that came out during this busy time of year!

Looking back, 2025 was a year of growth, joy, and purpose. Thank you to every member, partner, and supporter who made these moments possible. Together, we've honored our legacy and built momentum for the future. Here's to continuing our mission in 2026—advocating for agriculture and uplifting the incredible women who make it thrive.

Looking forward to 2026, I want to congratulate our new and returning Board Members:

President: Miranda Sampson
Vice President: Cheryl Penrose
Secretary: Mary Ann Hooker
Treasurer: Amy Rianda
Assistant Treasurer: Helen Dunston
Membership Director: Dana Hart

Thank you to our retiring officers for your time and commitment to the organization: Lauryn Nimis, 2025 Vice President, and Erin Garcia, 2025 Assistant Treasurer.



Warm wishes for a joyful holiday season and a bright new year! - *Miranda Sampson, 2025 President*

Your 2026 Board

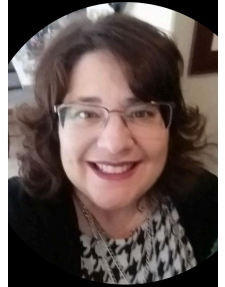


President - Miranda Sampson (left)

Miranda is a young professional who currently works as an ERP Support Analyst at Tanimura & Antle. She graduated from California State University, Monterey Bay in 2022 and joined Salinas Valley CWA (SVCWA) in 2023. She served as SV CWA Secretary in 2024, and President in 2025. Her goal in SVCWA leadership is to bring the women of the Salinas Valley together at more events and farm tours, uniting women and highlighting the variety of Salinas Valley agriculture. This is something she hopes to continue in 2026 with the support of her board.

Vice President - Cheryl Penrose (right)

Cheryl works for Visionary Vegetables as their Accounting Manager. She dabbles in other responsibilities around the office like Landscape Architect and Maintenance Coordinator. Cheryl has been the fearless leader of SVCWAs Annual Bus trip, coordinating sponsorships, donations and day of activities. This is SV CWAs largest fundraiser of the year and SVCWA cannot make it happen without Cheryl!



Secretary - Mary Ann Hooker (left)

Mary Ann is a farm kid...Born in Oxnard and grew up on her grandfather's farm. Her mom bought the farm in Gonzales 55 years ago. She moved to San Jose for college and remained in the area for over 3 decades, working for a small non-profit as well as at a software publisher and mainframe manufacturer. She manages the family farm and has been involved in ag organizations since graduating from college. She loves the chapter's involvement with promoting ag education within the community through Farm Days, scholarships, and supporting local youth.

Treasurer - Amy Rianda (right)

Amy is a retired accounting professional. In her heyday, she worked as an Accountant for CLA. Now in her retired era, she's been traveling and spending time with her family. This will be her third year as SVCWA Treasurer, and her career in accounting transfers perfectly into this role.



Assistant Treasurer - Helen Dunston (left)

Helen works for Pacific Valley Bank (PVB). She was very involved in SVCWA years ago, even serving as President for a year. Now with her kids grown, she is excited to get involved back with the organization.

Membership Director - Dana Hart (right)

Dana Hart is VP/Relationship Manager at Pacific Valley Bank. She joined SVCWA in 2025 and has since been an active member. Dana is a native of the Salinas Valley and has deep roots in the agricultural community. She is actively involved in supporting local non-profit organizations driven by her faith and family. She feels honored to be part of the SVCWA and is looking forward to the opportunity to contribute to the growth of the membership in 2026. Additionally, she aims to shine a spotlight on the remarkable women and the work being done in the agriculture industry.



Email salinasvalleycwa@gmail.com if you're interested in being highlighted for our Membership Spotlight next month!

2026 Meetings & Events

Our Annual Planning Meeting is January 17, 2026 from 10 am-12 pm at Visionary Vegetables 19045 Portola Dr, Salinas, CA 93908. All members are welcome to attend to help us plan our year!

On February 10, 2026, we were invited to speak at San Benancio 4-Hs monthly meeting. The information talk will be about 10 minutes and will highlight local crop production and the lifecycle of ag in the Salinas valley. We will also integrate career opportunities in the industry, within all facets of ag related business, into the talk. If you're interested in joining President Miranda Sampson at this talk, please email salinasvalleycwa@gmail.com.

We're also seeking ~10 **SV CWA (+spouse/teen) volunteers** for a **4-H Baking Contest in King City on February 28, 2026, ~7am-12pm**. Volunteers will help coordinate and judge the event. If you're available that morning and would like to support local youth, please email salinasvalleycwa@gmail.com so we can get a count of volunteers. More details will follow in a separate message.

Looking far ahead, our chapter has been selected to host the 2027 January Convention and State Wide Meeting (SWM). For those who haven't attended a SWM before, the events take place over a weekend. Friday brings local tour stops (ag tours or other production related features of our area) with lunch provided. Saturday consists of meetings and breakout sessions, with an evening gala and State Officer installation. Sunday is the actual state meeting, introducing the board, with speakers. The club looks forward to brainstorming ideas for the weekend at our Annual Planning Meeting in January, and we hope to get support and ideas from our members! If you could attend any SWM, this will be the one!

Committees

Interested in joining a committee? Email SalinasValleyCWA@gmail.com.

Scholarship

In our continuing commitment to promote awareness and education, the Salinas Valley Chapter of California Women for Agriculture (SVCWA) offers two scholarship programs for women in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties.

We are excited to announce our Committee Co-Chairs: Miranda Sampson, Stephanie Martinez; and our Committee Members: Gina Badaldua, Jacqueline Martinez, and Sara Manzo. We're excited to include new members to update + enhance our scholarship applications and awards.



Our 2026 Scholarship Committee had their first meeting in December. Applications will be opened in mid to late January.

Photo Contest

Our Photo Contest is looking for our 2026 chair and committee members. If you're interested in participating or want to hear more about the responsibilities, email SalinasValleyCWA@gmail.com!

For those who love to participate, start thinking about your submissions for next year! Maximum of 2 entries per person, photos should reflect agriculture, and photo format should be vertical with at least 300 dpi.

Bus Trip

Our Annual Bus Trip was on November 1, 2025! Thank you to all our big sponsors who made the day successful and possibly our most money raised yet - over \$30,000! Our bus trip primarily raises money for our scholarship program, but also helps our organization operate throughout the year. A huge thank you to our premier sponsors!



In the Community

Calling All Veterinarians: Loan Repayment Opportunity in Monterey, San Benito & Santa Cruz Counties!

The **Antibiotic Use and Stewardship Branch (AUS)** of the **California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)** is excited to share an important opportunity for veterinarians and veterinary students.

Rising educational costs and competitive salaries in small animal practice have led to a significant shortage of livestock veterinarians. To help address this, the **USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)** has reinstated the **Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**.

What's in it for you?

Eligible veterinarians can receive **up to \$120,000 (plus taxes)** toward student loan repayment in exchange for a **minimum 3-year service commitment** in designated shortage areas.

Why this matters locally:

Monterey and San Benito Counties have been nominated as a **Type-II veterinary shortage area**, which requires only **30% full-time equivalent (about 12 hours/week)** dedicated to eligible livestock species. This nomination also includes work with animals in **Santa Cruz County**.

- **Eligible species:** Beef cattle and/or small ruminants (at least 6 hours/week)
- Remaining hours can include other livestock species (e.g., backyard poultry, potbellied pigs)

Who can apply?

- Veterinarians with current eligible student loans
- Veterinary students graduating before **Fall 2026**

If you know a veterinarian or student who may qualify, please share this opportunity! CDFA AUS is open to assist with the application process and to answer any questions. Reach out online:

<https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/AUS> by email: cdffa_aus@cdffa.ca.gov or by phone: Office: (916) 576-0300