
April 2024

Salinas Valley California Women for Agriculture



MEarth Carmel Facilities

Note from the President

MEarth held their 12th annual MEarth Day event Saturday, April 6th! It was a wonderful opportunity to engage with community members about living sustainably and preserving our environment and was a fun and exciting event for the whole family! If you were unable to attend, stay tuned, because our chapter will be holding an enrichment event with them in May! We will be sending more details regarding this event soon!

Our general meeting will be Tuesday, April 9th where Katie Herzog will be our guest speaker! Katie farms agave on Reverie Ranch in Parkfield, California. She is an artist and recently had a solo exhibition at the Monterey Museum of Art.



The Grower Shipper Foundation Ag Against Hunger will host The Ag Woman of the Year Luncheon this year on April 19th. Our chapter was fortunate to be included as a sponsor of this event and both our Vice President Lauryn Nimis and I will attend! We are so excited to support this organization and celebrate women in the industry!

Salinas Valley CWA Membership Form Link

(<https://www.salinascwa.org/join>)

2024 Meetings

Meetings will be held the second Tuesday of every month from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. We will alternate months for general and board meetings. **Tuesday, May 14th will be our next board meeting.** All members are welcome to attend. Meetings will be both in person at Duda Farm Fresh Foods (1260 Growers Street, Salinas) and via Webex.

The agenda for the May board meeting, further directions and map to Duda's facilities, and the WebEx link will be sent as a separate attachment.

Guest Speaker

Katie Herzog farms agave on Reverie Ranch in Parkfield, California. She is an artist, a Girl Scout Troop Leader, a mother of two Elementary school-aged kids who are both in Parkfield 4H, and runs a monthly zoom meeting for women agave farmers throughout California and Mexico. She is a member of the California Agave Council and recently had a solo exhibition at the Monterey Museum of Art.



Member Spotlight

The April member spotlight is Gina Basaldua! Gina grew up in the Salinas Valley as the daughter of a local farmer. She attended California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Crop Science along with two minors in Agribusiness and Plant Protection Science. Following graduation, Gina joined Taylor Farms in 2007 as a Harvest Coordinator managing the first phase of the automated romaine machine. That same year, with the automated harvest in her background, she added the baby leaf program to her job description where she was responsible for managing all spinach, spring mix, arugula and various other tender leaf crop acres, from seed to harvest. In her most recent role as Tender Leaf Grower Relations Manager, Gina has been instrumental in managing and developing new varieties and blends that have helped Taylor Farms in providing the finest quality vegetables that feed millions of people across North America. She feels the best part of her role is that she gets to work closely with growers on ground selection, forecasting and crop nutrient efficiency.

When Gina is not in the fields, she enjoys spending time with her husband and three daughters, Grace, Francesca and Cecilia. She donates her time to various local organizations such as relay for life, ag against hunger and 4-H/FFA clubs. She has served on a few other local scholarship committees. She also enjoys coaching volleyball, something she looks forward to doing with each of her daughters. It important to her to teach and show her daughters the importance of giving back to our communities. Both of her parents dedicated their lives to service; something she hopes to pass on to her children.

Her advice to the younger women entering the industry is, "keep pushing and give it your all. Working in the produce world has had its share of highs and lows for me. I have been working for Taylor Farms for 18 years and I can say with full confidence that I still love it. Its not always easy being the only girl in the room, but like any profession, know your worth, build your skillset, be assertive with what you know and build strong relationships. You got this!"

2024 Scholarship

This year our organization will be continuing our commitment to education by offering two scholarships for women in Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties - the Women Pursuing Degrees in Agriculture Scholarship and Farm Worker Scholarship. This month the scholarship committee will be reviewing applications. Receipts will be announced next month.

Photo Contest

Our annual photo contest is open for entries! The top three photos will be awarded prizes and the first place photo will be featured on the cover of Coastal Grower magazine! Anyone can enter so please share on social media to let your friends and family know. Our photo contest release form is linked below. Our photo contest committee is looking for more members. If you'd like to help please contact committee chair Quincie Gourley 831-595-7754. **All photo submissions are due by May 3rd, 2024.**

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/2bb4dc9e/files/uploaded/CWA%20Photo%20Contest%20Release%20From%202024.pdf>

Bus Trip

We are seeking members interested in helping with our annual bus trip. The bus trip serves as a fundraiser for scholarship as well as a recreational activity for our members. **The 2024 bus trip is scheduled for November 9, 2024.** If you are interested in helping please contact salinasvalleycwa@gmail.com.