



Vegetable row crops on the Silva Ranch with grazing lands in the distance. *Photo by Lynn Overtree*

## SBALT REPORT

# Taking stock of San Benito's bounty

By Karminder Brown

As this strange and difficult year draws to a close, two things have become strikingly clear: 1) agriculture and those who labor in the industry are absolutely essential to our food supply, and 2) outdoor, open spaces are essential for the physical and mental health of our communities.

Here in San Benito County, we are blessed with abundance in both categories. There are few places

in the world that produce as wide a variety of crops and animal products throughout the year -- here it's almost always harvest time! Our agricultural lands also provide residents and visitors with stunning views and a connection to wide, open spaces that support wild animals, wildflowers, watershed protection, and carbon capture, while also producing nutritious food.

Farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers, are

an integral part of our County's history and heritage, along with the indigenous people who tended these fertile lands for millennia before the arrival of missionaries and settlers.

We cannot take San Benito's agricultural lands for granted. The San Benito Agricultural Land Trust (SBALT) seeks to preserve the most valuable ag lands, in balance with competing needs for housing, transportation, and commercial growth. We hope you will join us to support this effort.

If you are on SBALT's mailing list, look for our Year-End Appeal in your virtual or physical mailbox and make a generous donation to help protect more of San Benito County's unique agricultural lands. You can also contribute any time through SBALT's website [www.sanbenitolandtrust.org](http://www.sanbenitolandtrust.org).

Thank you and best wishes for safe and happy holidays! ■



Francisco Mejia washes carrots at Phil Foster Ranch last spring. *Photo by Cathy Summa-Wolfe*



Above: San Benito rangelands support cattle grazing and wildlife habitat, and provide open space views. *Photo by Lynn Overtree.*

At left: Shoppers at the Pinnacle Organic Saturday farmstand enjoy the wide variety of vegetables and fruits that are available year-round.

