



Press Release

For Immediate Release

October 29, 2015

A Taste of Agricultural History for Sonoma County Youth

The Sonoma RCD in partnership with the Gold Ridge RCD and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District developed the new TEAM (Teaching Environmental and Agricultural Memories) Conservation program learning site for elementary youth. The Sonoma RCD has just completed its first string of field trips to the historic Crane Melon Barn and Farm in Santa Rosa.

The Sonoma RCD is proud to announce this development as the newest youth education program under our regional LandSmart® program. October 2015 marked the unveiling of a series of unique field trips designed to inspire and encourage a connection with, and an appreciation for, natural resource conservation and local agriculture.

“These trips present an invaluable experience to young minds as we invite them to engage with our diverse agricultural landscape, the farmers, and soils that are the fabric of the dynamic community we reside,” said Christine Kuehn, RCD Program Coordinator.

The RCD is offering a handful of these trips annually during melon harvest season at the Crane Family property, protected forever with a conservation easement from the Ag and Open Space District. Sorrel Allen, Agricultural and Open Space District Community Engagement Specialist, said, “It’s wonderful to watch this Crane farm field trip bring words like conservation and agriculture to life. The farm becomes a real life classroom, where students dig into the soil, taste the delicious heirloom Crane Melon, meet the farmers, and act out the nearly 160 years of Crane family farming history.”

The Crane Family has farmed within the upper headwaters of the Laguna de Santa Rosa since the mid-1800s. The famous Original Crane Melon’s legacy began in 1920 on the rich adobe clay soils of southern Santa Rosa. The Crane Family’s dedication to support this program and our students is a special partnership and one the RCD is grateful.

Landowners and farmers, Rick and Cindy Crane said, “We feel it is so important to teach children where their food comes from, especially the food that is grown here in Sonoma County. We believe this opportunity was beneficial for the children to see firsthand a working farm and what it produces. Hopefully, the public will learn how important our agricultural land and identity is in Sonoma County.”



Funding for this program is made possible by the voters of Sonoma County who fund the Agricultural and Open Space District's work with a quarter cent sales tax. For more information contact Christine Kuehn, Program Coordinator at ckuehn@sonomarc.org or 707-569-1448.

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