



Above: Cattle on pastures with storm clouds by Bob Connolly.

SBALT NEWS

National Ag Day celebrates 50th Anniversary

By Lynn Overtree, Executive Director

March 21st was the 50th anniversary of National Ag Day, AND the beginning of spring!

Are you a farmer? A rancher? Or someone who works in an industry that supports agriculture, such as one of our local processing plants, equipment supply, or research and development? If so, thank you!

If you don't work in agriculture, do you have a vegetable garden, an orchard, or maintain a flock of chickens for eggs? Then you know how much work goes into producing some supplemental food for yourself.



Multiply that by the number of people that our commercial growers are feeding!

If you answered "no" to all the questions above, there is still a food-related question

that you will answer "yes" to: Do you eat?

We are all intimately involved with agriculture. We cannot survive without food production. Whether you are omnivore, vegan, or paleo – you rely on agriculture.

According to the National Census, farmers made up 30% of the U.S. population in the 1920's and less than 2% today.

In San Benito County, agriculture generates 11% of the jobs, second only to manufacturing which generates 18%. By land cover, agriculture is far in the lead of all industries with nearly all of the County in production as farmland or rangeland.

The land is where San Benito Agricultural LAND Trust comes in. Land is foundational to agriculture. We must ensure that we preserve a critical mass of agricultural land to support our producers and associated businesses who provide food to us, our state, our

nation, and beyond.

SBALT works with interested landowners to permanently prevent the conversion of

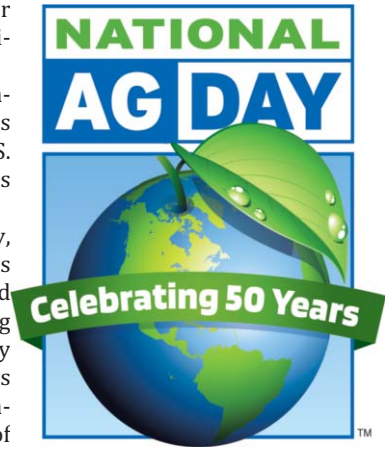
agricultural land by purchasing conservation easements or fee title, as in the case of the Rancho Larios and Nyland. The lands we protect are forever there to produce food for all people.

It takes a lot of staff time to work with landowners, negotiate the deals, write the grants for funding them, and monitor the protected lands...forever.

Our Board and staff work continuously to raise the funds that make SBALT a successful local land trust. We are thrilled to have so

many people participate in this effort as donors and volunteers. We always have room for more, so please join us! Learn more about ways to protect this magnificent place at www.sanbenitolandtrust.org

Thank you for supporting San Benito County agriculture! ■



HEADSTONE OF THE MONTH

A sweet headstone at San Juan Cemetery.



Or-i-gin Pussy Willow

According to an old Polish legend, a mother cat was crying at the bank of the river in which her kittens were drowning.

The willows at the river's edge longed to help her, so they swept their long graceful branches into the waters

