

Marin County ♦ 195 YEARS OF FAMILY FARMING



For 5,000 years, Coast Miwok fish, hunt, and gather wild foods before the arrival of Europeans.

Courtesy of National Park Service



1830 - 1845: Ranchos are granted to Mexican settlers who raise cattle for hides and tallow.

Courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley

1850: Dairy, beef, and crop farming was undertaken by easterners who came out west with the Gold Rush, and as they moved on, they were replaced by Irish, Swiss, and other immigrants.



Courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley



1862: Marin is the largest dairy county in California, providing a quarter of the state's butter.



1890: Dairy production becomes the predominant agricultural activity.

1875: First commercial oyster business operates at Millerton Point on Tomales Bay.



1921: The Marin County Farm Bureau is established.

1920: M.B. Boissevain is the first University of California farm advisor in Marin.

Courtesy of the U.S. National Museum of West Marin History



1939: 875 acres of artichokes are dry-farmed on the Point Reyes peninsula.

1983: The first certified Farmers' Market at the Civic Center opens.



Today, Marin has 13 certified farmers' markets. The Sunday Civic Center market is one of the largest in California. The New York Times referred to it as one of the top ten markets in the country.

1980: Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) is formed to preserve farmland.



1995: Many Marin dairies sell their milk to Clover Stornetta and supply 20% of the Bay Area's milk.



2000: Robert Giacomini and family of Point Reyes Station make California's first farmstead blue cheese.

2001: Marin Certified Organic Agriculture becomes accredited by the USDA.

Today more than 20% of Marin agriculture acreage is certified organic.



2011: Sonoma Marin Cheese Trail, home to the largest concentration of artisan cheesemakers in California.



2013: More than 45,000 acres of Marin County farmland are preserved by MALT.

2013: "GROWN LOCAL, Marin County" is launched as a unifying campaign for all Marin County producers.

1820 1830 1840 1849 1850 1856 1860 1862 1870 1875 1881 1884 1890 1920 1921 1938 1939 1950 1962 1972 1980 1983 1994 1995 1999 2000 2001 2004 2005 2009 2011 2012 2013 2015



1820 - 1840: Spanish and Mexicans settle in Marin. The San Rafael missionaries operate the first ranching activity in the area.

1849: Marin ranchers drive cattle to the Sierra to feed miners during the gold rush.

1856: Joseph B. Sweetser and Frank DeLong plant 44,000 fruit trees and 8,000 grape vines in Novato.



Courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley



1860: Marin is fourth in the state in potato production (133,500 bushels), mostly from northern Marin.



1870: North Pacific Coast Railroad connects coastal towns to San Francisco, transporting a variety of agricultural products.

Courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley

1881: First Marin County Agricultural Commissioner is appointed.



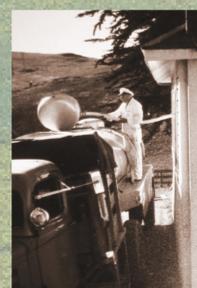
1884: Invention of milk bottle makes handling and distribution of milk easier.



1938: 800 acres of peas are farmed on the Point Reyes peninsula.

Courtesy of U.S. Navy

1950: 200 dairies operate in Marin County. Today there are 25 cow, 2 goat, 2 sheep, and one water buffalo dairy in Marin.



Courtesy of the U.S. National Museum of West Marin History

1972: County creates A-60 zoning to slow development of farmland.



1994: Straus family of Marshall operates the first organic dairy west of the Mississippi. Today 73% of the cow dairies are organic.

1999: Marin Organic is formed to promote local and organic food production.



2004: First grass-fed livestock certification in California created by Marin Agricultural Commissioner's office.

2009: Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden is launched by Conservation Corps North Bay, College of Marin, and UCCE Marin.



2014 - 2015 the Agricultural Institute of Marin breaks ground on the "Pavilion," a permanent home for the Marin Civic Center Farmers Market.