

Connecting small and local farms with wholesale buyers: Lessons from the Greater Sacramento region



When: Thursday, March 9, 2023 – 8:00 to 1:00 p.m.

Where: UCCE Norton Hall, 70 Cottonwood Street, Woodland, CA

Description: This half-day program features panels of wholesale and institutional buyers, growers and food hubs in the Greater Sacramento area sharing what they've learned about purchasing food from small and local farms. Buyers, growers, and others interested in the regional food economy are encouraged to attend, and the program will include a networking activity. Participants will learn about:

- Best practices for purchasing from small or local farms
- What institutional and local wholesale buyers are looking for from growers
- The role of food hubs in the local purchasing landscape

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This event is hosted by [UC Cooperative Extension Capitol Corridor](#) with support from [UC Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program](#) and [Valley Vision](#).

Agenda	
8:00 – 8:30 AM	Coffee and networking
8:30 – 9:15 AM	Opening remarks: <i>Supporting a regional value chain</i> Carole Ly & Santana Diaz, UC Davis Health Lon Hatamiya, Hatamiya Group & Yolo Food Hub Network Thaddeus Barsotti, Farm Fresh to You
9:15 – 10:00 AM	Panel: <i>Purchasing with purpose</i> Jim Newton, Yolo Food Bank Juan Cordon, Vacaville Unified School District Cathleen Olsen, Winters Joint Unified School District Phil Alonso, Interfaith Food Ministries Moderator: Becca Whitman, The Raley's Companies
10:15 – 11:00 AM	Panel: <i>Working with wholesale buyers</i> Jim Durst, Durst Organic Growers Maggie Mason, Durst Organic Growers Kristin Draz, FogDog Farm Jonathan Jones, Delta Microgreens Eric Walker, Farmboy Organics Moderator: Margaret Lloyd, UC Cooperative Extension
11:10 – 11:55	Panel: <i>Growing the strength of regional food hubs</i> Tracy Harding, Capay Valley Farm Shop Yousef Buzayan, Community Alliance with Family Farmers Heather "H" Frambach, Kitchen Table Advisors & SupplyChange, LLC Moderator: Lon Hatamiya, Hatamiya Group
11:55 – 12:30	Group discussion
12:30 – 1:00	Lunch



Speaker Biographies

Carole Ly — *Sustainability & Data Sciences Analyst, UC Davis Health*

Carole has a split assignment with two departments within UC Davis Health: the Center for Precision Medicine and Data Sciences and Food and Nutrition Services. Prior to joining UC Davis Health, Carole oversaw the school meals program at a public school district in Southern California for nearly eight years, during which time she transformed its cafeterias into full-scale scratch-cooking operations characterized by plant-forward, globally inspired lunches and higher quality sourcing standards. Carole earned her MA in Education from UCLA and MS in Nutritional Biology from UC Davis. With a background in teaching and curriculum development, nutrition education, and institutional food service, Carole is interested in leveraging the power of data science to tell meaningful stories about community issues.

Santana Diaz — *Executive Chef, UC Davis Health*

Seasonal. Local. Creative. These words fully define the passion and characteristics that guide Chef Diaz. Chef Diaz's vision has always been to bring a true farm-to-fork, restaurant-style culinary experience to all facets of every food venue that he has had the privilege to lead. Chef Diaz joined UC Davis Health in late 2017 after setting up and executing the Golden 1 Center food program with the most successful farm-to-fork production in sports. His drive to create an impactful program via health care intrigued him and offered him more opportunity to work with the local farmer and rancher community. Five years later, Diaz oversees one of the largest production kitchens in the region – serving more than 6,500 meals a day – and has transformed standard hospital food into sustainable, healthy eating for patients, employees, and the shared community. His experience with fine-dining restaurants and hotel management in the California Bay Area, coupled with large-volume sports and entertainment work, have yielded Diaz the opportunity to bring the high-volume “eats” to a healthier platform – while not losing the most important aspect of the meals: taste.

Lon S. Hatamiya — *President & CEO, Hatamiya Group*

Lon specializes in international, national, and regional economic analysis, with an emphasis on economic strategy, technology, food, and agriculture. He served as Secretary of the California Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency, the state's primary promoter of economic development and job creation. Hatamiya also served as the Administrator of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Prior to FAS, Hatamiya served as Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the USDA. He is also a third-generation family farmer, who produced peaches, prunes, walnuts and almonds in Yuba and Butte counties in Northern California. A native of Marysville, California, Hatamiya graduated from Harvard University with a B.A. in Economics. He earned his M.B.A. from the Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA, and his J.D. from the UCLA School of Law. Email: lon@hatamiyagroup.com

Thaddeus Barsotti — *Co-CEO, fieldTRUE*

As a second-generation farmer, Thaddeus Barsotti continues the work his parents began as an advocate for local sustainable food systems. Born in the farmhouse in Capay, Thaddeus showed an early proficiency in the machine shop and is responsible for designing some of the custom tractor modifications and tools used on the farm today. After college, he moved to San Francisco to help start

the company's first retail store, followed by his next major role with the business as farm manager, actively focusing on selecting, growing, and testing specialty produce varieties. A well-spoken and passionate champion for a healthy agricultural landscape that connects directly with consumers, Thaddeus shares his farm experiences with our CSA members in a weekly farm news, leads classes for future farmers, participates in panels and conferences and speaks with the media as an industry expert. He holds a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering from Cal Poly–San Luis Obispo. Thaddeus and his wife, Moyra, have three children.

Cathleen Olsen — *Director of Food Service, Winters Joint Unified School District*

Cathleen grew up on a family farm in Petaluma California. She is a UCD graduate and retired Restaurateur. Cathleen is currently the Director of Food Services for the Winters Joint Unified School District and a Trustee for Winters Farm to School. In 2011, she championed the start of the Winters Farm to school Program. Its mission is "Local Food for Local Kids." Winters Farm to School provides funds for the purchase of farm direct vegetables, fruits and nuts for the school food programs and school gardens. She has developed a strong network of farmers that have helped her accomplish her goals. Currently 97% of the fresh fruits and vegetables purchased are locally sourced, 65% coming directly from farmers.

Phil Alonso — *Executive Director, Interfaith Food Ministry*

Phil (he/him) has been Executive Director of Interfaith Food Ministry (IFM) of Nevada County for 5 years. IFM runs a food distribution program and has the mission to feed the hungry and reduce food insecurity. Since receiving Bachelors and Master's degrees in Political Science and Public Policy, Phil has gained 20 years of experience working with non-profit social service programs in the fields of homelessness, child abuse prevention, and food insecurity. Most recently, Phil has steered IFM through the COVID Pandemic, has diversified IFM's revenue streams and food procurement sources, and continues to expand and evolve services to meet the rising need. Phil grew up in the East Bay Area, then went to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and has lived in Sacramento, Placer, and Nevada Counties. Phil, his wife, two daughters, two dogs, and two cats live in Grass Valley, CA. He enjoys coaching his daughters in soccer, family camping trips and road trips, and cooking and eating big family meals. You can reach Phil at philed.ifm@gmail.com.

Juan Cordon — *Director of Student Nutrition, Vacaville Unified School District*

Juan has been a Director of Nutrition for over 25 years in different school districts and also has a wide variety of experience overseeing large scale food service operations in different food service segments. He has combined all of his experience to focus on serving students the best possible meals at school using local and high-quality products.

Jim Newton — *Procurement Manager, Yolo Food Bank*

Jim has 20 years of restaurant experience. During the pandemic, he starting volunteering with the Yolo Food Bank which led to his role as the food bank's warehouse manager. Today Jim serves as the food bank's procurement manager, where he enjoys working closely with growers. You can reach Jim at jim@yolofoodbank.org.

Becca Whitman — *Director of Sustainability, The Raley's Companies*

The Raley's Companies is an innovative, regional, family-owned grocery chain, operating in 7 states and 4 Tribal Nations with 237 stores in its footprint. Becca is accountable and responsible for the creation of corporate policy, strategy, implementation and leadership of initiatives to strengthen Raley's brand, energy conservation and governance efforts. Within Raley's, she also led community investments and managed the company's nonprofit, Food For Families. Becca is a proud graduate of Chico State with a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Communication and a Master's in Communication. She serves on the Board of Directors for California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, Ratio Institute, Sacramento Police Foundation, on the Trustee Council for California Farmland Trust and serves as Treasurer on the Executive Committee for Good Shepherd Church in Sacramento. You can reach Becca at RWhitman@raleys.com.

Jim Durst — *Founder, Durst Organic Growers*

Durst Organic Growers has been growing fresh market vegetables and hay and grains in their corner of Yolo county, California since 1988. To Jim and Deborah, farming organically is a way of life that includes: nurturing healthy soils, care for employees and their families, care for the farm and planet's ecosystem, and care for our local community. Organic farming practices that continue to evolve over years of experience working with soils allow them to grow nutrient dense produce, whose flavor captures the taste of sunshine, living soils, and clean water; bringing the goodness of nature to your table. Jim and Deborah believe it is their responsibility to provide a safe, supportive working environment for all employees. Farm work is not easy and we understand the unique gifts each and every employee brings to the farm workplace. Every employee is appreciated and valued. And our responsibility extends to the local community as well. Saying 'yes' to community needs by volunteering time, talents, and resources. We believe we all exist for the common good and everyone deserves a place at the table of organic, nutritious foods. Care of neighbor and community is the cornerstone of our ethic. You can find a variety of Durst Organic produce in neighborhood markets in communities across our country. Asparagus, snap peas, cherry tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes, melons and watermelons, and winter squash. All produce is grown in organically certified soils, harvested at the peak of flavor, and packed on site with care. "We want to be known by the flavor of the fruits of our labor."

Maggie Mason — *Marketing & Garden, Durst Organic Growers*

Durst Organic Growers is a mid-sized organic farm specializing in rotational grains and fresh-market vegetables. Their produce is distributed throughout the country to wholesalers, retailers, and processors, in addition to smaller local markets. Maggie is involved in a wide range of operations on the farm, generally focusing on their market garden program, seed trials and variety selections, pest management program, and communications. She shares the Durst's enthusiasm for practicing trial-and-error "observational science," life-long learning, building strong community & collaborative partnerships, and growing great tasting tomatoes. Contact Maggie at maggie@durstorganicgrowers.com.

Jonathan Jones — *Founder, Delta Microgreens*

Jonathan is a chef by trade and studied abroad in Switzerland to pursue a higher education in hospitality at Les Roches Hotel Management School. He attended the school for two years gaining a more in-depth look into the hospitality industry. During Jonathan's journey, he traveled to different countries from Switzerland to the Caribbean, took residence in Los Angeles and New York, and continued learning all

that he could about the industry. He finally settled back home in sunny California on a mission to become an entrepreneur.

Kristen Draz — *Co-Founder, FogDog Farm*

Kristin founded FogDog Farm in 2016 with her partner William Holland after many years of building their agricultural knowledge and skills on small farms. They grow year-round on 6 acres in Placerville using low-till, organic growing practices and market their produce at an on-site farm stand, restaurants, and local grocery stores. Contact Kristin at fogdogfarm@gmail.com.

Eric Walker — *Co-Founder, Farmboy Organics*

Eric and his twin Andrew run Farmboy Organics, a five-acre certified organic vegetable farm in Winters, CA. Started in 2022 they grow a mixed variety of vegetables for farmers market and wholesale customers. The 25-year-olds grew up on Eatwell Farm, a 105-acre organic mixed vegetable, fruit and animal farm in Dixon. Eric worked at Coyote Family Farm for a year and Andrew spent 18 months at Full Belly Farm. They value growing food for their community in the surrounding area and want to help everyone have access to local, high quality veggies. You can reach Eric at farmers@farmboyorganicsfarm.com.

Margaret Lloyd — *Small Farms Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension*

Margaret received her PhD from UC Davis in Plant Pathology, 2015. She also received a masters in International Agricultural Development and Plant Pathology from UC Davis. While at UC Davis, she established the Salad Bowl Garden, an edible garden at the entrance to the Plant and Environmental Sciences (PES) building on the main campus. Her first agricultural job was as a farm hand on a vineyard in the Santa Cruz mountains in California. It was such an inspiration that she redirected her course of work towards agriculture. After completing her undergraduate degree from Tufts University, she worked on a mixed vegetable farm in Hawaii for 9 months and then returned to start an apprenticeship with John Jeavons in Willits, CA. For three years, she lived and studied at the research farm which was off-the-grid, and farmed the 5-acre mixed vegetable farm, selling weekly at the Willits farmers market. Seeing the opportunity for Biointensive practices in the urban and suburban landscapes, she started a small Bay Area business called Home Farming International which provided workshops and one-on-one training in closed-system, complete diet farming. Margaret's hobbies include her goats, guitar, garden, two children and simple living.

Tracy Harding — *General Manager, Capay Valley Farm Shop*

Tracy has been with the Capay Valley Farm Shop since September 2017 as the general manager of the business-to-business wholesale food hub. Her love of wilderness, rural agricultural land, passion for sustainability, community organizing, environmental activism, and food systems development tie her professional and personal interests together.

Heather "H" Frambach — *Value Chain Manager & Ecosystem Building, Kitchen Table Advisors; Co-Founder, SupplyChange, LLC*

Heather, also known as "H," has always been inspired by the metaphor of the bridge. Influenced from an early age by her grandmother Maria Consuelo Nieto, who grew up crossing a pontoon bridge between

Mexico and Texas, H has learned to navigate and thrive in diverse spaces while staying true to her values. As a multiethnic and gender nonconforming person, H has a wealth of experience in the food system, from service jobs and farmers market management to urban agriculture policy and procurement director roles at Blue Apron and Imperfect Foods. H's mission is to promote supply chain justice and expose the opaqueness of the food system that perpetuates injustice. In her role with KTA, H has worked to build and implement the market access strategy from the ground up, using a power analysis and targeted approach grounded in the emerging field of value chain coordination. After witnessing the failure of many sourcing pilots by large companies and institutions, H recognized the importance of considering the varying needs and details of small farmers, farmers of color, and other producers, and being able to translate, or "bridge," those needs with those of buyers and culinary leaders. H's expertise in the field allows her to identify the questions and details that can make or break a pilot and ensure its success. In addition to her work with KTA, H is the chair of the board of Real Food Generation, serves on the California Farm to School Advisory Board, and advises various initiatives on supply chain justice and equity. In her free time, H enjoys weightlifting and reading, and can never resist a good dad joke. H lives in Oakland with her partner Madeleine.

Yousef Buzayan — *Farm to Market Senior Manager, Community Alliance with Family Farmers*

Yousef studied Agricultural Economics and International Ag Development at UC Davis and has interests in food systems and agricultural supply chains. As Farm to Market Program Manager, he provides technical expertise and assistance to farmers and foodservice operators on supply chain logistics, regulations, and best practices for Farm to Cafeteria sales. He has worked at farmers markets, served as a UC Davis agricultural ambassador and formerly directed the UC Davis Whole Earth Festival. In his spare time, Yousef plays basketball, follows fantasy football, listens to podcasts, and watches the US National Soccer teams.