

Regional Identity to Help Market Local Produce

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Wadsworth and David Visher. Both have extensive agricultural marketing expertise.

Wadsworth has begun to meet with all interested parties (farmers, county agricultural staff, the county Agriculture Advisory Task Force, UC Co-Op Extension, Brentwood Chamber of Commerce) to build a consensus about what an East Contra Costa regional marketing campaign should look like, Lyddan says.

The program will market East Contra Costa's extraordinary produce and farm products around the Bay Area by creating a special identity for the local agriculture that consumers can recognize and demand when they shop.

"Many people know that Brentwood sweet corn is the best, and they look for it in their stores," says Lyddan. "Now we're working with farmers to extend the recognition that the Brentwood corn growers have achieved to other products grown in the region."

Unifying and creating a regional identity for local growers will allow them to command better prices and develop long-term relationships for wholesale and direct marketing.

The campaign is trying to place fresh local produce in Brentwood school lunches. Called "Farm to School," such programs create new opportunities for local farmers, improve child nutrition and increase community awareness of local agriculture. BALT is hoping to start a pilot lunch program this fall at Edna Hill School, Lyddan says.

"There is a growing movement for farm-to-school programs at the state and

Kids' Activities, New Offerings Highlight Farmers' Market

Children's activities, live music, hot food and prizes in weekly contests will be among the highlights at Brentwood Farmers' Market through Sept. 29.

The market is open 4 to 8 p.m. Thursdays at City Park, 2nd and Maple Streets.

Children's activities include crafts and the planting of winter produce.

New to the market this season are:

- Peach, nectarine and apricot chutney, cherry conserve and lemon marmalade and other preserves from Frog Hollow, a Brentwood organic farm.
- Table grapes from Turtle Post Ranch, including such varieties as Crimson, Fantasy, Flame Seedless, Summer Muscat and Thompson Seedless.

the federal level, and we have met with Sen. Tom Torlakson about coordinating local efforts with state programs," she adds.

Many local farmers have agreed to vol-

unteer time and donate materials to the regional agricultural marketing program. Additionally, the Land Trust has received offers of volunteer professional services from attorneys and graphic artists.

"With the exceptional momentum already underway, we believe that we can create a powerful regional identity for Brentwood agriculture and farm products that will support local growers, provide a stable source of fresh, local food for Bay Area residents and begin to create a strong, sustainable East Contra Costa County-Bay Area food system," Lyddan says.

Just as many stores carry locally produced wines, the Land Trust plans to persuade grocers to market locally grown food separately and under labeling identifying it as having come from the Brentwood region. That way, Brentwood residents can buy fresh local food while supporting local farmers.

For information about the Land Trust and its regional marketing and Farm to School programs, see www.brentwoodaglandtrust.org or call (925) 634-6738.

Street Work Ends as New School Opens

Development of the 311-home S&S Farms development on Grant Street and nearby street work are complete just in time for the opening of the neighboring new Marsh Creek Elementary School.

Senior Associate Engineer Brian Bornstein, says plans for the complex, developed by Braddock and Logan, were approved by the City Council in 2003.

Marsh Creek Elementary, called Grant Street Elementary during construction and for planning purposes while the City

worked on nearby streets, opened Aug. 1.

Street improvements included extending O'Hara Avenue and Grant Street and building Adams Lane between the two street extensions.

Marsh Creek Elementary is opening with a K-3 enrollment of 200 this school year and will eventually have a K-5 enrollment of 800, drawing students from the northeast portion of Brentwood.

Affordable Housing for First-Time Buyers

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also will either be required to build a certain percentage of affordable housing units as the City grows or contribute money for future affordable housing uses.

For more information on the program, call (925) 516-5400.

City Widening a Portion of Sand Creek Road

Construction crews are widening Sand Creek Road between Minnesota Avenue and the railroad tracks to four lanes with bike lanes on both sides, including parkway and median

landscaping.

Expected to be completed by October, the project is costing an estimated \$750,000, says Associate Engineer Frank Lideros.