



SLOW FOOD SONOMA COUNTY :: NORTH ::

JUNE 2018 NEWSLETTER



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The California Grain Campaign



We are farmers, millers, bakers, market managers and makers collaborating to bring California-grown whole grains to you. We provide resources on how to grow, use, and procure whole grain in California, and our 20% x 2020 Campaign will ensure a market for the small-scale grain farmers who revived a great diversity of grain. --California Grain Campaign

On a sunny day in early April, about 15 of us stood in a circle around a young woman from the California Grain Campaign. She listed the parts of grain: bran, endosperm, and germ. "Who wants to be the bran? Go stand over there." One by one, we volunteered to be the antioxidants, fiber, and flavor components of bran. Next came the germ, with its component vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids. And finally, the endosperm with starchy carbohydrates. By now, most of us were standing in small groups. "Now the endosperm and the carbohydrates, go stand over there. After commercial milling, you are all that's left of the grain."

The lack of nutrients in refined flour was shocking to most of us, and we listened with great interest to Mai Nguyen, one of the founders of the Grain Campaign. Later, we tasted biscuits made with four wheats: Sonora, Chiddam Blanc de Mars, Spelt, and Red Fife. Each flavor was distinct, and all were delicious.

Mai explained that over the past decade, specialty grain growers and processors have popped up throughout California as part of the growing local food movement. But because the grains require different milling and baking techniques, there were few sales outlets for them. Grain farmer Mai Nguyen and baker Dave Miller created the Campaign in the fall of 2016 to increase demand for regionally grown grains by targeting farmers markets.

Nguyen and Miller were joined by farmer Nate Siemens, advocate Leyna Lightman, miller Nan Kohler, and farmers market manager Diana Rodgers. The team developed the idea that grain processors (bakers, pasta makers, etc.) selling food in the state's farmers markets can, and should, play a role in supporting the region's grain growers. Increasing California-grown grains at farmers markets will help farmers in their businesses, markets in their diversity, bakers in their craft, and customers in their whole diet. Grains contain fiber and a multitude of nutrients that are not being replaced in the ubiquitous refined flour. We all benefit from a diversified local food shed.

To help vendors meet the 20 x '20 goal, the Campaign provides updated lists of the California grain shed, growers, mills, and distributors who can serve participating bakers. [The Campaign website](#) also provides technical assistance to bakers on how to work with California-grown whole grains and flours.

Slow Food California is partnering with the California Grain Campaign in its 20 x '20 campaign, which encourages farmers market bakers to use 20% locally grown whole grain in their products by 2020.

Individual chapters are helping by introducing our local market managers and baked goods vendors to the Campaign. Chapter members can also volunteer to staff an educational booth at their farmers markets during a Campaign Roadshow, and help organize events and workshops that showcase California-grown heritage grains.

As long shadows spread across the vineyard at Bernier Farms, conversations began to wind down. Quite a change from earlier in the evening—when lively voices and gentle guitar music set the tone at our farm-to-table dinner under the trees. Free-flowing wine plus creamy and crisp hors d'oeuvres kept us happy while busy volunteers prepared and served fresh garden salad, grilled rabbit, and spring vegetables. Heartfelt talks by farmers who'd benefited from our Local Farmer Project connected us to where this sumptuous meal had originated—and how much our project meant to them. Eventually, lights strung from tree to tree took over for the now-set sun, and we reluctantly left this pastoral farm, memories of sweet strawberries and an evening well spent following us home.

--guest at Slow Dinner on the Farm, May 12, 2018



Upcoming Events

Detailed invitations will be sent approximately 4 weeks before each event.

JUNE

10 Tour of Kicking Bull and Paine Farms, 10:30 am, Sonoma. [Sign up now: More Information](#)

23 Around the Slow Table, Cookbook Version: *John Ash From the Earth to the Table*, 6 pm, Windsor. [Sign up now: More Information](#)

JULY

7 Picnic at Gradek Family Farm, 3 pm, Healdsburg

17 Slow Books: *Yes, Chef: A Memoir*, by Marcus Samuelsson and Veronica Chambers, 5:30, Healdsburg

AUGUST

26 Annual Meeting and Bodega Red Party, 3 pm, Healdsburg

SEPTEMBER

23 *Scampagnata* ("day in the country") in collaboration with the North Bay Italian Cultural Foundation, Warm Springs Dam, Healdsburg

Spotlight on Sonoma County North Member/Producer: Belden Barns



Our chapter currently has 15 members who are producers and are listed on our [website](#). Each newsletter highlights one of these producers.

Belden Barns has earned a fine reputation for exceptional hand-crafted wines. Just look at the impressive selection in their online wine shop: estate viognier, pinot noir, gruner veltliner, syrah, grenache, and blanc de noirs sparkling wine, among others. Want to taste them first? Nate Belden, who with his wife, Lauren, launched this family business in 2014, says they are currently in the permitting phase of their public tasting room, but are happy to arrange private tastings.

Dating back to the late 1800s, this historic farm, which sits at 1,000 feet on the northwest shoulder of Sonoma Mountain, has enjoyed several incarnations: dairy farm, prune orchard, and rural retreat, complete with a dance hall and stagecoach stop. Today, Belden Barns includes not only wine but farmstead goods. "While we had confidence we could make wine at a high level, we wanted to create a family business that celebrated the totality of farmstead agriculture," Lauren says. "After all, wine is to be enjoyed with food."

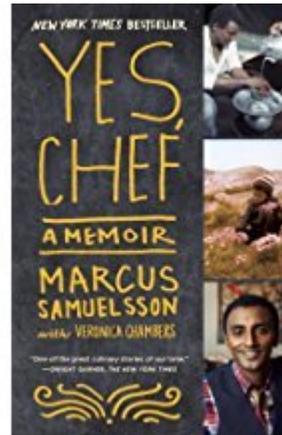
To that end, Jenny and Vince Trotter joined Belden Barns in 2015 to develop the Farmstead. So far, Farmstead offerings include a wide range of hard-to-find legumes (e.g., flageolet beans, Tiger's Eye Beans, Fast Lady Peas), popcorn, cornmeal, corn flour, and polenta. "We are so happy to be partnered with the Trotters," Lauren adds. "Our family believes in life's magical possibilities, and we proudly invite you to join us for wish-worthy experiences in our storybook setting."

www.beldenbarns.com

Slow Books: "Yes, Chef: A Memoir"

On July 17, Slow Books will discuss *Yes, Chef: A Memoir* by Marcus Samuelsson and Veronica Chambers. Look for an invitation in June.

Every Saturday afternoon, a boy who loves to cook walks to his grandmother's house and helps her prepare a roast chicken for dinner. The grandmother is Swedish, a retired domestic. The boy is Ethiopian and adopted, and he will grow up to become the world-renowned chef Marcus Samuelsson. This book is his love letter to food and family in all its manifestations. At his Harlem restaurant, Red Rooster, Samuelsson has fulfilled his dream of creating a truly diverse, multiracial dining room—a place where presidents rub elbows with jazz musicians, aspiring artists, and bus drivers. It is a place where an orphan from Ethiopia, raised in Sweden, living in America, can feel at home.



Snail of Approval



Congratulations to our newest Snail of Approval recipient **Red Horse Pizza**, a mobile organic pizza kitchen specializing in thin crust sourdough pizza and seasonal dishes. We acknowledge them for going above and beyond in the support of good, clean, and fair food in Sonoma County.

You can find their food truck at HenHouse Brewing Co. in Santa Rosa on Friday, Saturday & Sundays. [Learn more.](#)

Who's next? Let us know who you think should receive a *Snail*. Email snailofapprovalsc@gmail.com.

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to members who joined Sonoma County North since April 2018.

Ellen Moskowitz

Sharie Sbrazza (who joined in August 2017 but was temporarily missing from our roster)

Tucker Taylor

Vanessa Wong

Our apologies if you are a new member and not on this list—and please let us know!

slowfoodsonomacountynorth@gmail.com

Join or [renew your membership online](#) and list Sonoma County North-CA as your chapter. If you prefer to renew locally by check, please download our [membership form](#) and follow the instructions.



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