



Walker Creek runs through MALT-protected farmland just before it meets Keys Creek and Tomales Bay. Photo: Michael Woolsey.

## Farmland's Other Green Side

Thirty-five years ago a visionary movement coalesced in Marin County, enabling farmers and ranchers to stay on their land despite the throb of development radiating in all directions from San Francisco. “Marin became a globally important model for how farming on the edge of a major urban population can survive and even thrive,” recounts agricultural expert Ellie Rilla, a retired University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) advisor and MALT board member.

Agricultural benefits flowed—fresh food straight from the land, new farmers markets, value-added items like cheeses, jams and sausages. Visitors began flocking to Marin not just for the national seashore experience, but also to see and appreciate the beauty of working landscapes. Because of MALT and its partners, large portions of West Marin were saved—and continue to be protected—for family farming. And while farming is in decline in many areas of the country, in Marin it is a \$101 million business and growing, thanks in no small part

to the commitment of MALT supporters who have pitched in to protect the land.

MALT’s founders knew their work would be good for Marin’s farming economy and community. But what few people could foresee 35 years ago was that protecting farmland would convey significant, measurable ecological benefits, in addition to grass-fed beef, heirloom tomatoes, organic milk and pastured eggs. Scientists now know that West Marin—its public open space and working land together—anchors the “green infrastructure” for the entire region.

### Where Wildlife Roam—And Fish Spawn

“One of the first things you notice about the agricultural approach in Marin is the benefit to nature ... biodiversity, fresh water, fresh air, migratory corridors,” says David Lewis, UCCE director.

## Message from the Executive Director



**M**ALT's vision for Marin is a thriving agricultural

community in a healthy and diverse natural environment. It's a vision our board of directors established to codify what we've come to understand over the last 35 years of MALT's

history: Here in Marin County successful farming and ranching and environmental conservation go hand in hand.

As our cover article explains, MALT partners with our landowners to protect the land not just for farming and ranching, but also for wildlife, ecological diversity and water quality. We do this project by project, ranch by ranch.

It's critical work, and its environmental benefits spill over into agricultural benefits. Stream restoration efforts on Long Meadow Ranch will not only create riparian habitat and improve water quality, but will also provide off-channel water sources for livestock, which is especially important in our current state of drought. A successful ranch operation here means one more ranch that continues to be part of our local agricultural economy, which relies on a critical mass of working farms and ranches to survive and thrive.

Multiply that single example by 75 farms and ranches, and we're talking about landscape-scale change that benefits our whole community.

When MALT has accomplished its mission of protecting Marin's farmland for agricultural use, this is what we envision Marin will look like: an economically successful agricultural community supporting a healthy and protected ecosystem.

We're well on our way to realizing that vision, and I'm inspired every day to protect more land, to support our farmers and ranchers, to keep local food on Bay Area tables, and to help sustain Marin's vibrant agricultural economy.

Thank you for your continued support and for bringing this vision to life.



Jamison Watts

## Farmland's Other Green Side

*...continued from page 1*

Every one of MALT's 75 farms and ranches provides essential habitat for native species of plants and animals. Yet, as MALT executive director Jamison Watts points out, "If you look at those properties on a map, you see large connected blocks of permanently protected farmland forming, which in turn are connected to protected open space areas like Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area." Here fish can spawn in miles of healthy streambeds, wildlife can travel and forage across the landscape, and native plants

**"Marin became a globally important model for how farming on the edge of a major urban population can survive and even thrive."**

can proliferate beyond fencelines. Thanks to the protections of MALT easements, this landscape-scale conservation will coexist with agriculture forever.

MALT currently protects farmland in six Marin watersheds: Tomales Bay, Estero Americano, Stemple Creek, San Antonio Creek, Novato Creek and Bolinas Lagoon. Of special focus for conservation are waterways like Pine Gulch Creek, which flows south to Bolinas Lagoon and provides critical habitat for endangered and threatened species like coho salmon and steelhead trout.



Keys Creek, Tomales. Photo: Michael Woolsey.

As reported in the fall 2014 MALT newsletter, MALT-protected Paradise Valley Ranch and two neighboring farms have historically been allowed to draw water from the creek to irrigate their farmland, but not store the water. Yet farmers and fish both need the water the most during the dry summer months. In June, a multiagency project nearly 20 years in the making broke ground, allowing the three farms to construct storage ponds and pump systems to draw water from the



Long Meadow Ranch's Scottish Highland cattle. Photo: Michael Woolsey.

creek during winter storms and store it for the dry season—a deal that was finally sealed when MALT protected Paradise Valley Ranch in late 2014. The result: improved fish habitat and the assurance of continued farming along the creek's banks.

### **On the Way to the Bay**

Thirty miles to the north of Paradise Valley Ranch, in the Tomales Bay watershed, is Long Meadow Ranch. This year kicked off a multiyear partnership among MALT, Point Blue Conservation Service's STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed) program, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Marin Resource Conservation District. Students and staff will restore 5,000 feet of Keys Creek where it runs through Long Meadow Ranch on its way to Tomales Bay.

In decades to come, trees like alder, box elder and California bay laurel will weave themselves into a living canopy over the creek, which will keep water temperatures cool for fish, reduce erosion along the creek's banks, improve downstream water quality, and reduce evaporation and slow runoff, allowing more water to stay on the land and out of the bay. Biologists hope that once this habitat is created a variety of fish, waterfowl and nesting birds—especially yellow warblers and bank swallows, whose habitat is shrinking—will find it irresistible.

Because Long Meadow Ranch is a working landscape, another important item on the project list is to create new

sources of drinking water—employing solar-powered pumps—outside the stream corridor for the ranch's iconic herd of Scottish Highland cattle. This type of balanced restoration and management approach provides quality habitat for wildlife, captures carbon dioxide, and filters water in our streams, bays and estuaries, while also supporting a sustainable ranching operation and our local foodshed.

Such partnerships, involving MALT, ranchers and scientific organizations, build on the foundation of land protection that MALT secures. Together we're improving not only the land's ability to provide a bounty of local food, but also its natural benefits for the whole region. In the years to come we will continue to evolve our model of farming on the urban edge, dedicated to protecting Marin's remaining agricultural open spaces and the nature that thrives there.

### **Explore More**

#### **Why Marin Farms Matter**

[www.malt.org/marinfarms](http://www.malt.org/marinfarms)

#### **Stewardship at MALT**

[www.malt.org/stewardship](http://www.malt.org/stewardship)

#### **Connected Blocks of MALT-Protected Farmland**

[www.malt.org/connectedblocks](http://www.malt.org/connectedblocks)



Courtesy of McEvoy Ranch

## Remembering Nan Tucker McEvoy by Sue Conley

I first met Nan in San Francisco when she was the executive chairman of the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

She had just purchased a ranch near Petaluma and was planning to grow olive trees. This project interested me because I had just moved to Point Reyes and was in a group that was trying to start a farmers market in West Marin. She invited me for lunch at the ranch alongside a collection of characters, including an agro-ecologist, a *Chronicle* photographer, the gardener, a cookbook writer and a congressman.

I ate many lunches at the McEvoy Ranch and they were always like that first one. You never knew who would be around the table. The conversations were lively, and the food simple and delicious. Nan always had insightful stories about her time in Washington or a local issue she had read about in the paper that day.

Nan was dedicated to the preservation of agricultural land and had been on the board of American Farmland Trust. One day, I brought Ellen Straus by to meet Nan and those two really hit it off. They were kindred spirits on so many levels. Both were fierce champions of civil rights and proponents of democratic ideals. They both believed in environmental stewardship and insisted on maintaining organic certification

on their own property. We laughed and talked politics into the afternoon.

I enjoyed many lunches with Nan after that, some with Ellen and some alone. Nan was impressed with the success of MALT, and opened her ranch for MALT tours and events. After she reluctantly sold the family publishing business in 1999, Ellen and I asked her to make a donation to the organization. She did not hesitate, saying that she would be comfortable with a gift of \$1 million.

**Nan was dedicated to the preservation of agricultural land.**

This was the largest donation from an individual that MALT had ever received and Nan requested that we not publicize it. That's the way Nan lived. She quietly made a big difference in things that she felt were worthwhile. Now that she is gone, I am happy to announce Nan's grand gift—one of her many legacies.

*Nan Tucker McEvoy of McEvoy Ranch died in March at the age of 95. Since her passing, more than \$12,000 has been donated to MALT in Nan's memory. Sue Conley is co-founder of Cowgirl Creamery and a MALT board member.*

## FARM FIELD STUDIES

CONNECTING KIDS WITH FARMS



Through hands-on activities K-12 students make connections among the environment, agriculture and the food they eat during Marin Organic's Farm Field Studies field trips. Fall and spring trips are booking now—learn more at [www.marinorganic.org](http://www.marinorganic.org).

MALT is proud to sponsor Farm Field Studies.



## Local and organic in POINT REYES

Head to West Marin Saturday mornings for the Point Reyes Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. through November 7. Featuring local, organic farm-fresh food, plus chef demos, live music and kids' activities.

Sponsored by MALT.

Save this list—tear here ↴



**MALT Day at the Pumpkin Patch**  
*Sunday, October 18*

Choose an organic pumpkin, enjoy farm crafts with the kids, and sip some ice-cold Lagunitas beer at the MALT Watering Hole. It all happens at picturesque Nicasio Valley Farms, protected by MALT since 1986. A portion of proceeds from the day's pumpkin sales goes to MALT, helping us save more Marin farms.

**Time:** 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

**Place:** Nicasio Valley Farms Pumpkin Patch

**Cost:** Free; preregistration not required

**Age Appropriate:** All ages



**Yoga and Wellness Retreat**  
*Sunday, October 25*

Join MALT and The Healing Farm Retreats for a wellness retreat on the land. Unplug for a day of yoga, movement, teaching, farm touring and great food, learning how to live in harmony with our bodies and the land. Local, organic breakfast and lunch, including Stemple Creek Ranch grass-fed meats.

**Time:** 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**Place:** Stemple Creek Ranch, Tomales

**Cost:** \$175

**Age Appropriate:** 18 and up

Preregistration required.

Register online at [www.malt.org/events](http://www.malt.org/events) or call (415) 663-1158.



**National Heirloom Exposition** *September 8-10*

Explore the world of heirloom seeds and learn from expert speakers at this fifth annual expo. Stop by the MALT booth September 9.

**Place:** Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa

**Learn more:** [www.theheirloomexpo.com](http://www.theheirloomexpo.com)

**California Artisan Cheese Guild's SF Cheese Fest**  
*Saturday, September 19*

Get a taste of MALT-protected farmland via cheeses from Barinaga Ranch, Bleating Heart Cheese, Cowgirl Creamery, Nicasio Valley Cheese Co., Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co. and Tomales Farmstead Creamery—just a sampling of the 27 California cheesemakers at the SF Cheese Fest. MALT will be there, too.

**Place:** Dogpatch WineWorks, San Francisco

**Learn more:** [www.sfcheesefest.com](http://www.sfcheesefest.com)

**San Rafael Sunday Farmers Market**  
*September 13, October 25*

While you're shopping for local vegetables, meat, eggs and cheese, stop by our booth to learn what's new with MALT. Play a market game for a chance at prizes.

**Place:** Civic Center, San Rafael

**Learn more:** [www.agriculturalinstitute.org](http://www.agriculturalinstitute.org)

*We're already thinking about next year's events! Sign up for MALT emails at [www.malt.org/enews](http://www.malt.org/enews) and be among the first to see the 2016 schedule of hikes, tours and tastings. Remember, MALT members save up to 25% on events.*



Save this list—[here](#) ↑

## A Taste of MALT at Local Farmers Markets

A bounty of vegetables, fruits, cheeses, eggs and meats produced on MALT-protected land is available weekly at Marin farmers markets as well as San Francisco's Ferry Plaza market—many year-round. Farmers markets bring you into the heart of a community and keep agricultural open space alive. One of the joys of being a MALT supporter is enjoying the taste of food grown sustainably, with your support. Stop by any of these markets to say hi and pick up a bounty of farm-fresh goods to take home.

### San Francisco Ferry Plaza Farmers Market

*Saturdays 8 a.m.—  
2 p.m., year-round*

- Allstar Organics
- Andante Dairy
- Cowgirl Creamery  
(inside the Ferry  
Building)
- County Line Harvest
- Little Organic Farm
- Marin Roots Farm
- Nicasio Valley  
Cheese Company
- Point Reyes Farmstead  
Cheese Co.
- Stemple Creek Ranch
- Thistle Meats
- Tomales Farmstead Creamery

### San Francisco Ferry Plaza Farmers Market

*Tuesdays 10 a.m.—  
2 p.m., year-round*

- County Line Harvest

### San Rafael Civic Center Farmers Market

*Sundays 8 a.m.—  
1 p.m., year-round*

- Allstar Organics
- County Line Harvest
- Cowgirl Creamery
- Dolcini Red Hill Ranch/  
Chi'ken City by Kitty
- Little Organic Farm
- Marin Roots Farm

Nicasio Valley Cheese  
Company

Point Reyes Farmstead  
Cheese Co.

Stemple Creek Ranch

Straus Family Creamery

Tomales Farmstead Creamery

### San Rafael Civic Center Farmers Market

*Thursdays 8 a.m.—  
1 p.m., year-round*

- Dolcini Red Hill Ranch/  
Chi'ken City by Kitty
- Little Organic Farm
- Marin Roots Farm
- Straus Family Creamery
- Tomales Farmstead Creamery

### Marin Country Mart Farmers Market

*Saturdays 9 a.m.—  
2 p.m., year-round*

- County Line Harvest
- Cowgirl Creamery
- Fallon Hills Ranch
- Farmer Joy's Eggs

### Point Reyes Farmers Market

*Saturdays 9 a.m.—  
1 p.m., June–November*

- Cowgirl Creamery
- Dolcini Red Hill Ranch/  
Chi'ken City by Kitty

*Thank you for supporting local farms and farmers markets!*

# Companies Match Gifts to Save More Farms

Marin farmland is the fortunate beneficiary of an innovative employer perk: Corporate matching of employees' charitable giving. The arrangement essentially doubles the dollars donors are able to direct to MALT, doubling our ability to protect working farms and ranches in Marin.

Helen Abe, a wealth management advisor at Merrill Lynch/Bank of America, was the first employee at the company to give to MALT through its matching program. Says Helen, "I believe in MALT and the wonderful things that it does. I love all of the land that's being saved for everyone's enjoyment."

Donor Ellen Hall and her husband love West Marin. Ellen works for Autodesk and takes advantage of the company's matching program to support MALT's work. "You can look up at the hills and see how they could be developed, but once land is developed it's gone forever," she says. "We need the people at MALT to make sure it's protected."

Pacific Gas & Electric supports MALT through corporate grants as well as corporate matching of employee gifts. PG&E employee Raymond Welch and his wife Kathleen Gaines are longtime MALT members and boost their giving through the company's match. "We like MALT because it's the leader in protecting open space in Marin," says Kathleen. Dave Canny, senior manager for PG&E's North Bay Division, explains the company's generosity: "In 2014, PG&E employees and retirees pledged \$54,000 to nonprofits, including MALT, throughout the North Bay. We're proud to be part of a company whose employees don't just say they care about their communities; they prove it every day by giving back."

Adobe, Chevron, Williams-Sonoma, Apple, Dolby, Google, Disney, IBM, Boeing, Wells Fargo and Microsoft are just a few more of the many corporations that support MALT through corporate matching.

**Does Your Company Match?** Look it up and learn how to claim your match: [www.malt.org/corporate-matching](http://www.malt.org/corporate-matching)



## MALT Welcomes Tamara Hicks to Board of Directors

Tamara Hicks and her husband, David Jablons, own MALT-protected Toluma Farms, a goat and sheep dairy in Tomales. In 2013 they added cheesemaking to the farm's business, marketing their artisan cheeses under the Tomales Farmstead Creamery label.

"Tamara is a very strong addition to MALT's board," said Jamison Watts, MALT executive director. "Her ideas, energy, and commitment to local agriculture and the next generation of farmers are invaluable to MALT."

In addition to managing the farm, Tamara is a clinical psychologist and serves on the boards of the California Artisan Cheese Guild and Agricultural Institute of Marin.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chris Kelly** Chair, Conservationist, Larkspur

**Janine Guillot** Vice-Chair, Financial Advisor, San Francisco

**Sam Dolcini** Secretary, Agriculture Businessman, Petaluma

**Neil Rudolph** Treasurer, Retired Investment Advisor, Mill Valley

**Bill Barboni II** Veterinarian/Rancher, Hicks Valley

**Sue Conley** Artisan Cheesemaker, Point Reyes Station

**Mike Gale** Rancher, Chileno Valley

**Ralph Grossi** Rancher, Novato

**Tamara Hicks** Dairy Farmer/Cheesemaker, Tomales

**Steve Kinsey** Marin County Supervisor, 4th District, San Rafael

**Rick Lafranchi** Businessman, Novato

**Peter Martinelli** Farmer, Bolinas

**Rebecca Patton** Conservationist, Palo Alto and Inverness

**Ellie Rilla** Retired Agriculture Advisor, Sebastopol

**Julie Rossotti** Farmer/Rancher, Point Reyes

**Gail Seneca** Writer, Inverness

**John Taylor** Dairyman/Engineer, Point Reyes Station

## MALT STAFF

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**Kelly Brown** Major Gifts Officer

**Julia Busiek** Communications Associate

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**Marisa Walker** Marketing and Communications Manager

**Lisa Whitaker** Accounting Associate

**Stacey Witchel** Director of Finance and Administration

## Co-Founded by Phyllis Faber and Ellen Straus

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# On the Land with MALT

Thank you for getting outside with MALT this spring and summer!

*For a list of upcoming events, see page 5.*

Carbon Farm Tour, Nicasio Native Grass Ranch; Ranches & Rolling Hills Landscape Art Show and Sale, Nicasio; Measure A Thank-you Hike, Thornton and Thacher Ranches; Member Hike, Millerton Creek Ranch; BioBlitz, Millerton Creek Ranch; Tour de MALT, West Marin



Marin Agricultural Land Trust is a member-supported, nonprofit organization created in 1980 to protect Marin County farmland. Some of the Bay Area's most highly acclaimed meats, dairy products and organic crops are produced on farmland protected by MALT totaling more than 47,000 acres on 75 family farms and ranches.

Photos: Denise Rocco-Zilber, Nancy Dionne, Michael Woolsey, Autumn Fuentes, Allison Young, Lech Naumovich.

To learn about Marin's working farms and ranches and the food they produce, visit:  
[www.malt.org](http://www.malt.org)