

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Ask Laura Newsletter Column
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Q: Do you have any resources that can help me learn more about local farms and crops in Santa Cruz County?

A: We have a brand new resource guide, titled “Fresh • Starts • Here”, that can help with your question! The guide highlights Santa Cruz County agriculture, and includes short profiles of five of the area’s many farmers, what they grow, where they farm, some background on their farming operation, and a link to their website. The guide also has portraits of some locally grown crops, for example, apples, berries, broccoli, leafy greens, onions and leeks, and tomatoes, among others. Each crop portrait includes information on how to choose and store the product, as well as some preparation ideas.

There is more! In addition to information about local farms, farmers, and crops, the guide contains nutrition information, and highlights some of the health benefits associated with eating fruits and vegetables. Four physicians and a registered dietitian from the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) Santa Cruz are also profiled in the guide, in which they share health and healthy eating tips.

And there is still more! If you are interested in knowing what fruits and vegetables are in season in Santa Cruz County, and how to find local produce, for example, at farmers’ markets, u-pick operations, and community supported agriculture operations (CSAs), the guide can help you. If you would like information on family meal planning, or how many servings of fruits and vegetables are recommended each day, the guide can assist you. There are also simple recipes – some from farmers and doctors – to help with home meal preparation and healthy eating.

This unique resource guide was developed in collaboration with UC Cooperative Extension, the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau and local farmers, and PAMF Santa Cruz. We hope that it will provide you with the information you are looking for. And please stay tuned! Spanish language and internet accessible versions of the guide are planned. If you have additional questions or would like more information, please contact me by phone, (831) 763-8005, or email, ljtourte@ucdavis.edu.