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Slow Food®

SNAIL OF
APPROVAL
2024

EVENT: AWARDS



Top row: Americana Sebastopol, [the bejkr], Bricoleur Vineyards Culinary Garden, Fourteen Magpies Handmade Jams & Preserves. **Middle row:** Goguette Bread, Psychic Pie, Sarmentine Artisan Boulanger, Single Thread Farm. **Bottom row:** The Spinster Sisters, Culinary Farm at St Francis Winery & Vineyards, Wise Acre Farm, Volo Chocolate.

6th Annual Snail of Approval Awards

Join us to honor 12 local restaurants, farms, and artisan producers at the 6th Annual Snail of Approval Awards ceremony.

Meet the honorees and enjoy their samples and displays while learning about their local food businesses. More about [Snail of Approval, who has it, and what it means](#).

Sebastopol Grange

6000 Sebastopol Ave, Sebastopol, CA 95472

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Light bites and beverages will be served

\$15

Purchase tickets

The 2024 Awardees

- [Americana Sebastopol](#) Sebastopol
- [\[the bejkr\]](#) Sonoma
- [Bricoleur Vineyards Culinary Garden](#), Windsor
- [Fourteen Magpies Handmade Jams & Preserves](#) Santa Rosa
- [Gouquette Bread](#) Santa Rosa
- [Psychic Pie](#) Sebastopol
- [Sarmentine Artisan Boulanger](#) Santa Rosa
- [Single Thread Farm](#) Healdsburg
- [The Spinster Sisters](#) Santa Rosa
- [Culinary Farm at St Francis Winery & Vineyards](#) Santa Rosa
- [Volo Chocolate](#) Windsor
- [Wise Acre Farm](#) Windsor



EVENT: MEMBERS MEETING



This photo is from a previous Members Meeting.

Annual Members' Meeting
and Silent Auction

Our last in-person meeting was years ago! Now that we re-grouped and re-started our Chapter, we invite you to our first post-pandemic in-person Members' Meeting.

Friday, March 29, 2024

6:00-8:00 pm

Wischemann Hall

465 Morris St, Sebastopol, CA 95472

The main dish will be provided.

Potluck opportunities for all attendees!

Speaker: **Carmen Snyder**

Executive Director of [Sonoma County Farm Trails](#)

"Challenges of Agricultural Sustainability in Sonoma County"

Recap of 2023 and looking forward to what's ahead

Project updates: Apple Press, School Press, Turkeys, and more

Opportunities for you to get involved

Silent Auction

Donations needed: Experiences, travel, food, wine, art, products, wellness...

Email your donation ideas to: info@slowfoodrr.org

EVENT: CIDER RELEASE PARTY





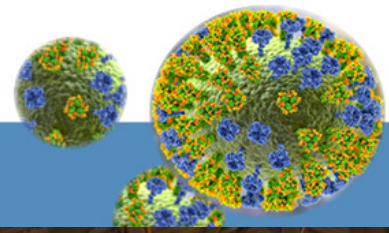
"Farms to Cider" Release Party

It's release time for Farms to Cider produced by Golden State Cider. [Farms to Cider](#) is made from a wide variety of apples gleaned from over 100 orchards in Sonoma County. It's bright amber with aromas of white tea and wildflowers and hints of honeysuckle and cedar.

Proceeds from Farms to Cider will be donated to [Farm to Pantry](#), a local organization dedicated to eradicating food insecurity. Their volunteers gleaned many of the apples used in the cider

Saturday, April 13, 2024
Golden State Cider Taproom
Located in The Barlow
180 Morris Street #150, Sebastopol, CA 95472

Time and other details to come.



AVIAN FLU



Photos are from the *Press Democrat*.

Left side: Jim Reichardt with daughter Jennifer and son Eric Healthy ducks and chicks before the flu hit their Liberty Ducks operation.

Right side: Weber Family farm workers clean and prepare the barns after 550,000 chickens have been euthanized and 3.2 million eggs destroyed. Weber estimates the Farm will have lost \$20,000,000 by the time things get bac to normal.

Avian Flu tragedy hits local poultry producers

In the past few months, a highly contagious strain of Avian Flu ravaged Sonoma County poultry producers. Over 1,000,000 hens, ducks, and turkeys have been euthanized. Sonoma County supervisors declared a local emergency, to gain assistance for producers and their employees. The ripple effect includes grain and feed providers, and the livestock waste business that provides organic fertilizer derived from poultry farms. This benefits rice farms, vineyards, nuts, stone fruit, citrus, and vegetables.

Also hit was [Liberty Ducks](#), run by our Slow Food Russian River Board member **Jim Reichardt** with his son and daughter. [Liberty Ducks](#) is a boutique duck producer. They have supplied fine restaurants throughout the Bay Area since 1992, and they also sell their ducks to home cooks via their website.

Avian flu, a virulent form called High Pathogenic Avian Influenza, is typically spread by migrating birds, especially waterfowl. They can shed the virus even without showing symptoms. It is transmitted in feces and saliva droplets and can be airborne.

Further reading:

- [Avian flu devastates California's poultry farms as new wave of outbreaks roils industry](#) (PBS News Hour, January 27, 2024)
- [Press Democrat](#) articles document the progression of the outbreak
 - [December 13, 2023](#)
 - [January 1, 2024](#)
 - [January 12, 2024](#)
 - [January 30, 2024](#)
- [Sonoma Magazine: Article about Liberty Ducks](#)

You can **donate** to help the farmers and workers:

- [Poultry Farms & Employee Relief Fund](#) through the Farm Bureau Foundation of Sonoma County.
- [Save the Liberty Ducks Family Farm](#) GoFundMe campaign

WINE UPDATE WITH PAUL





Healdsburg grapes ready to harvest; testing sugar and must.

Cooler heads prevailed

Despite global warming, every few years we get a cooler-than-normal vintage in Northern California which tends to throw everyone into a tizzy. The last year of this sort occurred in 2011 when the sun seemed to only come out in October. The year before that, 2010, had not been much warmer. Those two consecutive cool years, in conjunction with intra-industry pressure to restrain ripeness, changed the trajectory of local wines in a way that made the 2023 vintage victorious rather than tragic.

Evolution of a change in style

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, most local wines had been made in a much riper style, with alcohols commonly ranging from 14.5 to 15.5 percent alcohol by volume – the booziest wines seemed to get the highest scores from critics. I must admit that I helped grow and make some of these myself. There arose during that time a consumer-driven contingent of sommeliers and small producers called “In Pursuit of Balance” that pushed back against this super-

ripe style, but its message remained mostly on the fringe. When the lower-alcohol wines from 2010 and 2011 were released a full point or even two below “normal” alcohol levels, many assumed the worst. The vintages were panned in the press, and doomsayers dominated the conversation. To everyone’s surprise, consumers enthusiastically embraced the lighter wines, and within five years the change in style became largely permanent. By the spring of 2016, “In Pursuit of Balance” had disbanded – their work was done.

Fast forward to 2023 and you can see the impact that this pivotal period had on our industry. The chemistry of picked fruit from 2023 is nearly identical to that of fruit in 2010/2011. However, rather than descriptions like “nasty” (The Wine Spectator) and “a total disaster” (Robb Report) that were used to describe the earlier vintages, we see descriptions like “exceptional” (Wine Institute) and “vintage of a lifetime” (Wine Industry Advisor). What changed?

No more high alcohol "fruit bomb"

Well, as mentioned before, consumer preference played a huge role and demand drove supply. Power to the people. Is it as simple as that? Maybe, though I should also note that making lower-alcohol wine is cheaper and less risky for producers. Whatever the reason, I think it can safely be said that the high alcohol “fruit bomb” profile, so ubiquitous only 20 years ago, is mostly a thing of the past. As a consumer and a producer, I am grateful for this shift. Lucky for us, cooler heads prevailed.

By Paul Sequeira

CAROLE'S APPLE BITES





Apple Press sketch

2023 Applecore Recap

This first newsletter of 2024 is an opportunity to recap the past and look toward the future.

Community Apple Press

It's a time to celebrate Applecore's accomplishments at the Community Apple Press (CAP) with our weekend busyness of helping patrons press their apples and containerize their apple juice. We are delighted with our Friday program hosting school children at the CAP where they learn about apples, from the tree to the juice in the pint bottles they each take home.

With the help of our volunteers, we pressed 50,100 pounds of apples equaling 2,505 gallons of juice at the CAP on weekends.

Gravenstein Fair

The Applecore took the show on the road in August to the Gravenstein Fair where we welcomed everyone to participate in pressing the apples. We served over 6,000 cups of juice pressed from 2,455 pounds of apples we purchased for the event.

Wonderful volunteers

It's also a time to thank our volunteers, welcome them back, and extend an invitation for new volunteers. We are fortunate to have a vibrant community of volunteers, and, as a way of thanking them, we offer them the opportunity to bring their own apples to be pressed during their shifts. We also celebrate them at our end-of-the-year Appreciation Party.

Our successful School Program

The Slow Food Russian River school program, which brings school classes to the Community Apple Press at Luther Burbank's Experiment Farm, now includes more educational activities. Our team worked with docents from the Western Sonoma County Historical Society to include garden walks.

We added an apple tasting program where, using a Slow Food USA School Garden Manual's tasting chart, the students graded the qualities of a handful of apple varieties. This year the program served five school classes as it geared up after the death of Paula Downing, the founder of the program. Most of the apples were donated, by local growers, parents, schoolteachers, and through Farm to Pantry, our local gleaning organization. You can donate to this program through the [Paula Downing Memorial Fund](#), and contact the team at sfrrschoolvisits@gmail.com.

Pressure on apple farmers

The Applecore Slow Food Russian River Community understands that our apple industry is at an inflection point as the price paid for apples at the processors has remained relatively flat. At the same time, the cost of farming and maintaining orchards has gone up. In addition, our apple industry is finding it more and more difficult to hire seasonal help. We are meeting with people and groups to understand the breadth of this problem as more acres of apple orchards are lost every year. Of course, we are especially concerned with the loss of too many acres of our celebrated and rare Gravensteins.

Stress on apple trees

Apple trees and their fruit are undergoing increasing stress due to climate change. We are seeing new diseases and more fruit damage by Coddling Moths (worms). To better meet these challenges we plan to offer a series of webinars geared toward backyard orchard owners to help them address these problems. As they say, 'Your neighbor's coddling moths are also yours'.

Cideries and distillers

Lastly, a quick word of thanks to our local cideries and apple brandy distillers. Just as SFRR asks us all to "Save Our Gravensteins" we hope everyone will buy

local cider and apple brandy.

By Carole Flaherty



APPLE PRESS KIDS BY ZENO



Photo by Karen Preuss

Are you an educator with a knack for educational resources?

We are developing more teaching material about apples along the lines of the [Slow Food School Garden Curriculum](#) and our Strawberry Passport from the [2017 Children Strawberry Feasts Forever](#).

We can be reached at: sfrschoolvisits@gmail.com



EVENT REPORT BY SHARI



November, 2023

Report: Fall Gathering

Our first Community Event after the long Covid hiatus was a big success! The event was hosted at Golden State Cider where 78 participants were able to drink their wonderful ciders at happy hour prices all night.

Breanne Huess, head of marketing for GSC, spoke about all the apples from local orchards that go into their ciders. Duskie Estes from Farm to Pantry was

also there to talk about all the apples they glean from local orchards and food from around Sonoma County and how important it is for Farm to Pantry to get more volunteers to help glean.

This is the third year that GSC and Farm to Pantry are launching "Community Cider" which will be available in April. And last, but not least, Slow Food Russian River's founding leader, Paula Shatkin, spoke about all the good work these organizations are doing for the community's small orchards and the endangered Gravenstein Apple.

Come to our Release Party in April for the launch of the Community Cider!

By Shari Fig



EVENT REPORT BY ZENO



December, 2023

Report: Holiday/Terra Madre Party

Terra Madre Day commemorates the signing of the Slow Food Manifesto in 1989. On this day we celebrate local eating, agricultural biodiversity, and sustainable food production. All over the world, Slow Food chapters come together to reaffirm their commitment to these values of a good, clean, and fair food system.

December 10, Julia Supanich, my wife, and I were happy to host the celebration at our home in Sebastopol. About 40 Slow Food members and prospective members attended, exchanged cookies, and enjoyed drinks and homemade foods.

As an international family with recent roots in Europe, America, Asia, and Africa, Terra Madre Day is especially poignant to us. Let us bring the Slow Food values as embodied in this network into 2024. Happy New Year to everyone.

By Zeno Swijtink

TASTING WITH LYNDA





caption

Psychic Pie

Owners Nicholi Ludlow and Leith Leiser-Miller have a passion for pizza. Their Psychic Pie in Sebastopol will expand your definition of pizza to include savory and unexpected combinations of locally sourced seasonal ingredients: produce, herbs, cheeses, and meats. For example, the current winter menu may include carrot bagna cauda, charred cabbage shakshuka, roasted potatoes with Cowgirl Creamery Wagon Wheel Cheese, and squash with chevre. More traditional favorites are here, too: pepperoni, sausage, mushroom, and cheeses.

Like variety?

You're in luck. You can taste many of them because you order "*al taglio*" (to the cut) from a variety of 8 pies -- 4 rotating and 4 permanent. You choose how much from each pie and they cut to order, weigh each slice, and then bake them. Eat in the restaurant or order online for "take and bake." We ordered slices from 4 pies.

Naturally leavened sourdough crust

Psychic Pie is famous for their naturally leavened sourdough crust. Chewy and aromatic, it has the same long-fermented flavor as artisan sourdough bread.

You'll also find salads, cookies, dips, and breads to round out your meal.

News flash: Psychic Pie recently earned the Slow Foods Snail of Approval Award.

[Psychic Pie](#) website

980 Gravenstein Highway South, Sebastopol, CA

More info:

- [A Slice With Soul at Psychic Pie in Sebastopol](#) Sonoma Magazine
- [High Hydration Sourdough Al Taglio Pizzeria with Psychic Pie](#) YouTube video interview with the owners (44 minutes)

By Lynda Banks



MEMBER ART



"Pomegranate" by Karen Preuss, 2023, photograph

Are you a visual artist?

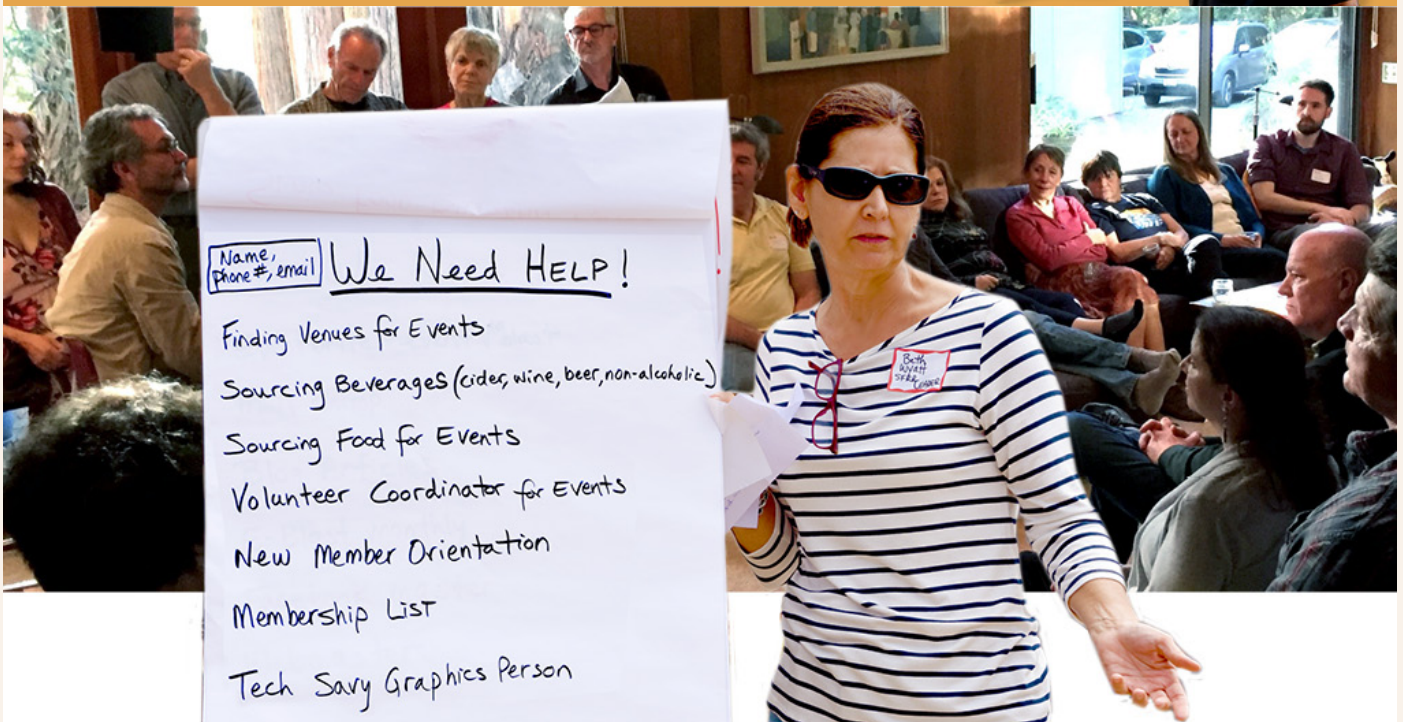
We would like to feature a seasonal, food-related piece of art by a member in each issue of our newsletter. It should reflect the principles of Slow Food: good, clean, and fair food.

Painting, drawing, fiber, ceramics, photography, sculpture... If you work in any of these media, please submit a photo to us. Although the newsletter does not have a large format to show your work at its best, we would enjoy viewing it here.

Please email info@slowfoodrr.org and put ART in the subject line.



VOLUNTEER



This list is from 2018. Our newly-revitalized Chapter has many of the same needs.

Volunteer opportunities!

The SFRR Board can use some help with our

- Communications and Social Media (newsletter, emails, etc.)
- Event Planning (visits to farms? tours of wineries? cheese education? learning about soils?).

If you would like to support either of these activities, we would love to hear from



FROM SF INTERNATIONAL



You're part of a global Movement

The newly designed and easy-to-navigate Slow Food International website is full of info and news about Slow Food's worldwide involvement to ensure good, clean, and fair food for all. You'll love visiting and exploring this extensive website. You will learn a lot and appreciate the education, activism, news with a global focus, and "convivia" (local chapters).

There are a few newsletters you may subscribe to: International, Education, and Advocacy.

[Explore the SF International website](#)



FROM SLOW FOOD USA

slow seed summit

march 1+2

Slow Seed Summit Virtual Event

Join us for a two-day retreat into the world of seeds! Our virtual gathering on **March 1-2, 2024**, will feature discussions, presentations, and opportunities to connect with others about soil, human and planetary health.

The theme of the 2024 Slow Seed Summit is **Ground yourself: Seeds and systems change for soil, human and planetary health**. Keynote presenter Rupa Marya, author of *Inflamed: Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice*, will set the stage and illuminate the connection of our food system to our inflamed soils, bodies, and planet. Slow Food USA's 2024 Plant Seed crops of roots and grains will help us examine seeds and systems in five interactive sessions.

\$60 Standard -- \$30 Student/Farmer -- \$100 Seed Supporter

[Schedule and Tickets](#)

SUGGESTIONS





What do you suggest for SFRR?

- What are your ideas about future SFRR events?
- About topics for this newsletter?
- Farms we should look into for possible tours?
- New food-related businesses we might support?
- Ecological challenges we should research and report on?
- People making a difference in Sonoma County agriculture and food?

Your ideas matter, so please let us know!

Our contact information is Info@SlowFoodRR.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

COMMENTS?



We appreciate your comments and feedback on the Newsletter.

This issue includes events, reports on past events, tastings, updates, and info from both Slow Food International and Slow Food USA.

What are *your* thoughts?

Email to: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

OUR BOARD



Shari Figi

Shari focuses her time on the endangered Gravenstein apple, protecting our pollinators and promoting local farms that incorporate organic practices.

Carole Flaherty

A retired horticulturalist now farming a certified organic orchard of over 200 apple, pear and stone fruit trees, Carol has volunteered, along with her husband Pat, at the Free Community Apple Press for 5 years. She is also Assistant Bio-Manager for the Rare Fruit Growers Redwood Empire Chapter.



Peggy Myers Knopp

Peggy is a retired CPA. She and her husband, Ray, have volunteered at the Community Apple Press. Peggy was so impressed by the purpose, the people and the energy that she has offered her accounting skills as our new treasurer.



Rick Mead

Rick has been committed to SFRR for a decade and is a wonderful, welcoming volunteer at the Community Apple Press. He increased his participation last year by organizing our booth at the Farm Trails Gravenstein Apple Fair, where a team of volunteers distributed over 5,000 samples of fresh-pressed Gravenstein apple juice. He's already working on our booth for this year which will be bigger.



Jim Reichardt

Jim has been part of a local farming community for decades. He is a past leader of SFRR and helped build our chapter. He is passionate about the Slow Food movement, both domestic and international and is committed to supporting small family farms and preserving

heritage breeds. “Know your farmers and where your food comes from!”



Paul Sequeira

Thank you for allowing me to rejoin the board of Slow Food Russian River. I feel fortunate to dwell in this beautiful and bountiful place with such a passionate and engaged community. I live in Sebastopol with my family and work as a vineyard manager. I am hoping to find a way to bridge the gap between the wine industry and the environmental movement just as Slow Food has done in Italy. I believe that food is a fundamental part of community and culture.



Paula Shatkin

Paula was a founder and has been a leader of SFRR for over 20 years. She is currently the coordinator of the Gravenstein Apple project with a special interest in helping our burgeoning hard cider makers procure and use local apples. She is returning

to this team to help revitalize our connections with people who grow and make food in our community and contribute to the biodiversity of our lands.



Catherine Thode

Catherine is our Turkey Family leader. She has been part of SFRR since 2006, the first year we co-sponsored the Heritage Turkey Project. She brings her wonderful blend of interest in preserving heritage breeds, working with kids, and educating the public about genetic diversity. We will be selling Heritage turkeys again this year!



Slow Food Russian River | P.O. Box 2746, 4157176600,
Sebastopol, CA 95473

[Unsubscribe lynda@lyndabanks.com](mailto:lynda@lyndabanks.com)

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