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**Third Annual Santa Barbara County Farm Day – *Meet The Hands That Feed You***

Santa Maria, Calif. (Date)--Get ready for the third annual [Santa Barbara County Farm Day](#) with free, in-person, open farm tours on Saturday, September 18. This year's theme is "Meet The Hands That Feed You." Visitors can use a new online [Farm Day Trail Map](#) to build a custom itinerary to travel between growers and curated tour routes throughout the Santa Maria Valley.

Farm Day is for all ages. The public will experience a day of agricultural activities, farm tours, tastings, and fruit and produce giveaways, plus hear from the local farmers, ranchers and growers who produce the food we eat. Visitors can learn about seed science, see the newest and most advanced farming technology including the [Ferrari transplanting machine](#) at Plantel Nursery, learn how compost is created and used on farms, and hear about the seed-to-table journey. Tour hours are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"Farm Day is the one day a year for the public to experience working farms," says Mary Maranville, founder and CEO of the nonprofit Students for Eco-Education and Agriculture ([SEEAG](#)), which puts on Farm Day each year. "So much goes into producing the foods we eat every day--the lettuce, celery, broccoli, strawberries, blueberries, onions and herbs--the variety of food that grows in the Santa Maria Valley is enormous. Growing a single strawberry literally requires more than 100 workers--from prepping the soil, planting, caring for, harvesting and packaging--to finally shipping the fruit to market."

Farm Day participating growers and agricultural partners include Allan Hancock College, Babé Farms, Bonipak Produce, Buttonwood Winery & Vineyards, Driscoll's, Engel & Gray/Harvest Blend Compost, Gold Coast Packing, Innovative Produce, Main Street Produce, Plantel

Nurseries, Primus Labs, Rancho Laguna Farms, Reiter Affiliated Companies and Riverbench Vineyard & Winery and Zaca Mesa Winery (offering a free flight tasting).

"Agriculture is an important part of the Santa Barbara County economy. It is a \$1.6 billion a year industry," says Maranville. "Many of the farms are run by third and fourth generation farmers. We are fortunate to have so many local growers excited to share their knowledge."

SEEAG's mission is to help children understand the farm origins of their food through classroom agricultural and nutrition education and free farm field trips. For information on participating farms and to access the Farm Day Trail Map, go to [www.SantaBarbaraCountyFarmDay.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraCountyFarmDay.com) or call 805-901-0213. Also, mark your calendars for the ninth annual [Ventura County Farm Day](#) taking place November 6.

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