

A photograph of an outdoor dining event. In the foreground, a group of people are seated at a long wooden table. A woman in a bright yellow patterned top is passing a plate of food to a woman in a blue patterned top. The table is set with white plates, glasses, and a centerpiece of flowers. In the background, other people are seated at tables under large white umbrellas. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a pergola structure. The text 'From Field to Fork' is overlaid at the top in a large, white, outlined font. Below it, the date 'Thursday, July 18, 2024' is written in a smaller, white, outlined font. At the bottom, a larger white, outlined font reads 'A celebration of food, farms and farm workers'.

From
Field to Fork

Thursday, July 18, 2024

**A celebration of food, farms
and farm workers**

WELCOME to the 13th “From Field to Fork” fundraiser for *House Farm Workers!*

Once again, we are excited to host you and so many of our friends at our annual summertime event. We hope you enjoy the bounty of local fields and orchards, prepared by outstanding chefs, along with wines and craft beer from local producers. And we hope you enjoy the beauty of this special place, The Walnut Grove at Tierra Rejada Ranch.



As you savor the flavors and admire the view, know that you are benefiting the people who make this food and landscape possible: the farm workers who plant, tend and harvest the many crops grown in Ventura County’s wonderful soils and climate.

Tonight’s event is special for another reason: This year, *House Farm Workers!* celebrates the 20th anniversary of its founding. To learn more about its history, see pages 5-6 of this program.

Bon appetit!



PROGRAM

John Krist, master of ceremonies

4:30 PM

Wagon tours of Underwood Family Farms
Wine, craft beer and appetizers

5:45 PM

Welcoming remarks

6:00 PM

Dinner
Showing of *HFW!* film, "Heroes Work Here"

7:00 PM

Scholarship awards

Congratulations to this year's recipients:

Karla Gonzalez, Jazmin Guevara, Naydaleen Ortiz, Elizabeth Ramirez

8:00 PM

Buenas Noches y Muchas Gracias a Todos!



MENU

Appetizer Course

Crispy polenta with herb schmear and slightly dehydrated Sungold tomatoes.

Prepared by Chef Neidy Venegas, *Poems N Pastry*.

Paradise Pantry charcuterie spread.

Wine: 2022 A Tribute to Grace Rosé of Grenache, Los Alamos.

Beer: Enegren Brewing Co. 13th Anniversary Czech Amber Lager
and American Reinheitsgebot Helles Lager.

Aperitif: atōst California Aperitif.

First Course

Baby kale salad with crispy chickpeas, shaved manchego,
heirloom tomato and lemon vinaigrette.

Prepared by Chef Maya Chrestensen, *M on Main Street*.

Café Ficelle bread, avocado butter and crudité, prepared by private Chef Tim Kilcoyne.

Wine: Boscoe Wine Co. 2019 Grenache Blanc, Ballard Canyon AVA.

Second Course

Sixteen-hour smoked brisket.

Prepared by Chef Jason Ruffinelli, *Ruffhouse BBQ*.

Sweet corn with coconut lime sauce, fried onions and cilantro;
quick-pickled Maui onions.

Prepared by private Chef Tim Kilcoyne.

Wine: Boscoe Wine Co. 2019 Syrah-Viognier blend, Ballard Canyon AVA.

Dessert Course

Chocolate rye cake with pickled boysenberry jam.

Prepared by private Chef Anastashia Chavez.

Beverage: Beacon Coffee.



OUR SPONSORS

House Farm Workers! wishes to thank the following, whose generosity made “From Field to Fork” possible.

VISIONARIES

Leavens Ranches LLC



A Family Farming Company



Tierra Rejada Ranch



CHAMPIONS



LIMONEIRA
SINCE 1893

Mission Produce Foundation

Pinkerton Ranch

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Brokaw Nursery LLC

Tom and Brianne McGrath Family

Bill and Elise Kearney

Alfred Friedrich

Ventura County Community Foundation

Housing Authority of San Buenaventura

STEWARDS

Broome Management LLC, Travis Agricultural Construction
People’s Self-Help Housing, Total Labor Force, Underwood Family Farms

BUILDERS

Deardorff Family Farms, John McGrath and Sons, John Shores Family Partnership

COLLABORATORS

The Dunbar Group, Karen McAuley, Pyramid Flowers,
Ventura Rental Party & Events, Jane and Edward Waters

THE FOUNDING OF *HOUSE FARM WORKERS!*

Although *House Farm Workers!* was officially incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2015, its roots date back to the late 1990s, when Ventura County faced a growing rift between its agricultural community and its urban and suburban residents.

The conflict was driven by several factors, including increasing concern about agricultural pesticide use near schools and homes, and a fierce debate over local land-use policy, which culminated in a series of ballot initiatives — known collectively as Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) — intended to limit development of farmland. Bitterly opposed by the agricultural community, the initiatives proved overwhelmingly popular with urban voters, highlighting a profound disconnect between those two segments of the community.

In 1999, a group of farmers and ranchers gathered to discuss strategies for bridging this growing ag-urban divide. They subsequently invited representatives of other groups and organizations — including some that had historically been adversaries, including labor-rights advocates, agricultural employers, and anti-pesticide activists — to join them in an alliance, intended to provide a forum in which to resolve or avoid potential conflicts between agriculture and its urban neighbors.

In 2000, the group — known as the Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance (AFA) — adopted a constitution to guide its work and the conduct of its members, who despite their varied perspectives shared a vision of a future in which Ventura County agriculture remained economically vibrant, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable. *(Continued on next page.)*



Somis Ranch Apartments.

The AFA established subcommittees to explore specific issues affecting local agriculture's long-term viability. One of these, the Farm Worker Housing Committee (established in April 2001), focused on the issue of workforce housing affordability, and issued a white paper in 2002 titled "Farm Worker Housing: A Crisis Calling for Community Action." That year, the County of Ventura also released a report on results of its farm worker housing study, which found poor living conditions to be widespread and recommended a number of changes to the county zoning ordinance to accommodate more new farm worker housing.

In 2003, following a recommendation in the AFA white paper, the AFA Farm Worker Housing Committee collaborated with other organizations to plan a public summit addressing the issue, which was held in January 2004. It also commissioned a film highlighting the shortage of affordable housing for local farm workers, and the impact of that shortage on their families, as a way of explaining to summit attendees the need for a countywide effort to address the crisis.

More than 300 people attended the summit, including four of the five members of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, and scores volunteered to participate in future housing advocacy. The AFA responded by establishing a Ventura County Farm Worker Housing Task Force, comprising members from the AFA Farm Worker Housing Committee and non-AFA volunteers. The Task Force established several city committees as well, expanding on pre-existing efforts by housing supporters in Santa Paula and Ventura. The Task Force was subsequently renamed *House Farm Workers!* (*HFW!*) and became independent of AFA, which is no longer active in Ventura County.



Over the next 20 years, as *HFW!* built its capacity and expanded its influence, other advocacy groups and individuals also began focusing on the issue, and housing developers slowly began addressing the shortage of affordable, safe and stable housing for farm workers and their families. More than 2,000 such units have been built since our founding or are in the planning process, including Somis Ranch Apartments, a 360-unit project in the unincorporated area just outside Camarillo. Currently under construction and expected to be completed in 2025, it is the largest dedicated farm worker housing project in county history.

THE ELLEN BROKAW SCHOLARSHIP

The Ellen Brokaw Scholarship is awarded each year to college-bound or current college students whose parents are farm workers in Ventura County. The scholarship is named in honor of Ellen Brokaw, founding chair of *House Farm Workers!* A prominent member of Ventura County's agricultural community, she has long been an inspirational leader in the campaign to improve the lives of farm workers and their families.



Ellen Brokaw at "From Field to Fork," 2022

Our 2024 Recipients

Karla Gonzalez

Foothill Technology High School
UC San Diego

Jazmin Guevara

Santa Paula High School
University of San Diego

Naydalen Ortiz

Channel Islands High School
UCLA

Elizabeth Ramirez

Channel Islands High School
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Previous Recipients

Judith Bautista

CSU Long Beach (2023)

Magaly Dominguez

UC Riverside (2023)

Yeni Gonzalez

UCLA (2023)

Jesus Martinez

UC Berkeley (2023)

Vanessa Magaña

Cal Lutheran University (2022)

Martha Maldonado-Arias

CSU Channel Islands (2022)

Mireya Avila Mejia

CSU Channel Islands (2022)

Jesus Martinez

UC Berkeley (2021)

Litzy Hernandez

UC Berkeley (2021)

Bryan Rodriguez

Ventura College (2021)

Bryan Navarette

CSU Long Beach (2020)

Paola Gonzalez

CSU Channel Islands (2020)

Rosita Lopez

CSU Monterey Bay (2020)

Marlén Garcia Cano

Ventura College (2019)

Emilia Contreras

CSU Channel Islands (2019)

Erik Magaña

UC Santa Barbara (2019)

Monica Cisneros

UC Santa Barbara (2018)

Felix Cruz

UC San Diego (2018)

Lorenzo "Anthony" Palomera

UC Santa Barbara (2018)

Oswaldo Ambriz

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (2017)

Litzy Hernandez

UC Berkeley (2017)

Alma Monjaraz Tapia

CSU Fresno (2017)

Viviana Avelar

UC Santa Barbara (2016)

Daniel Garcia

UC Riverside (2016)

Juan Magaña

UC Irvine (2016)

Ayari Palencia

CSU Channel Islands (2015)



IN THEIR WORDS

Ellen Brokaw *House Farm Workers!* Scholarship candidates are required to submit a personal statement as part of the application process. The following passages are excerpted from the essays written by this year's scholarship recipients.

Up until I was one year of age, my parents and I lived in a garage until we were blessed with a home in Cabrillo Village Cooperative. Being able to live there my whole life and grow up in this environment gave me so much as a daughter of an immigrant. With the people that make up the community here, I never felt "out of place" and this fostered a very unifying and safe community. I never experienced racism in my community or other experiences that come with being the daughter of an immigrant in the US. For this reason I am so grateful for the positive impact living in this affordable housing development has given me.

— Karla Gonzalez

My aspiration to become a lawyer was solidified by my family's experiences, particularly my father's injury and the financial hardship it caused. Witnessing firsthand the injustices faced by low-income families like my own, I am driven to advocate for their rights and empower them with the knowledge they need to navigate complex legal systems ... As the first person in my family to pursue a college degree, I am committed to paving the way for my siblings and demonstrating that with perseverance and determination, anything is possible. This scholarship represents more than just financial support; it is a catalyst for transformative change and a beacon of hope for a brighter future.

— Jazmin Guevara

I currently live in a studio apartment with my 3 siblings and my mom . . . Living in a small apartment with 4 people gets difficult when it's time to study, cook, and sleep ... My mom and dad began residing in Oxnard when they were 18 and 20 with my sister and I. In 2015, my dad was no longer in the picture; my mom has been taking care of my siblings and I since then. As a result, my mom was not able to afford a one-bedroom apartment. We moved frequently during this time, moving to a more affordable apartment, a garage, and finally the studio apartment we're living in now.

— Naydaleen Ortiz

Both of my parents didn't get an education beyond middle school. I remember education being emphasized from an early age in my family. I was told that education was the only way to escape the cycle that my grandparents and parents were in. They did not want to see me working in the fields as they did. Working in the fields takes a great toll on your body. My mom's back already hurts from picking all day long. My father can't even bend some of his fingers. They are my motivation for getting an education because it is not just for a better future for me but also for them. I don't want to see my parents working when they get older. My goal is to retire them from working.

— Elizabeth Ramirez

WHAT WE DO

Ventura County has some of the best agricultural land in the United States and also is one of the most expensive places to live. Ten cities and nearly 100,000 acres of irrigated agriculture exist side by side in relative harmony, but low-income workers — including those on the farm — are hard-pressed to find affordable homes. As a result, multiple farm-worker families often share a house designed for one family. Sometimes a garage or shed is called “home.”

House Farm Workers! was established in 2004. Volunteers work countywide and in seven cities to educate the public about the need for affordable farm worker housing, and to urge public officials to permit and support more such projects.

In the past 20 years, more than 2,000 family rentals or single-family homes dedicated to farm worker families have been built or planned in five cities and on unincorporated land. Nevertheless, the need for safe, decent and affordable homes for the county’s estimated 36,000 resident farm workers remains acute.

If you want to learn more about this effort, which is critical to the county’s agricultural economy, you or your organization may request a presentation by a representative of *House Farm Workers!*

We invite you to become involved by joining a city committee, arranging a film presentation in your community, or just sharing what you learn tonight with neighbors and friends.

For more information, contact *House Farm Workers!* at (805) 209-9819 or info@housefarmworkers.org. Visit us online at www.housefarmworkers.org.



Vista Hermosa Apartments, Santa Paula

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to the event volunteers, *House Farm Workers!* wishes to thank the following individuals and organizations for their hard work and contributions to this evening's dinner:

The chefs

Anastashia Chavez, *private chef*
Maya Chrestensen, *M on Main Street*
Tim Kilcoyne, *private chef*
Jason Ruffinelli, *Ruffhouse BBQ*
Neidy Venegas, *Poems N Pastry*

The farmers

Mike Roberts, *Farmivore*
Chris Sayer, *Petty Ranch*
Jason Tamai, *Tamai Family Farms*
Craig Underwood, *Underwood Family Farms*
Tehachapi Grain Project
Two Peas

The beverage makers

A Tribute To Grace Wine Co.
atōst
Beacon Coffee
Boscoe Wine Co.
Enegren Brewing Co.

The coordinators

The Planning Committee extends special thanks to Chefs Anastashia Chavez and Tim Kilcoyne for coordinating the efforts of all the chefs and farmers responsible for this evening's menu.

Event Planning Committee

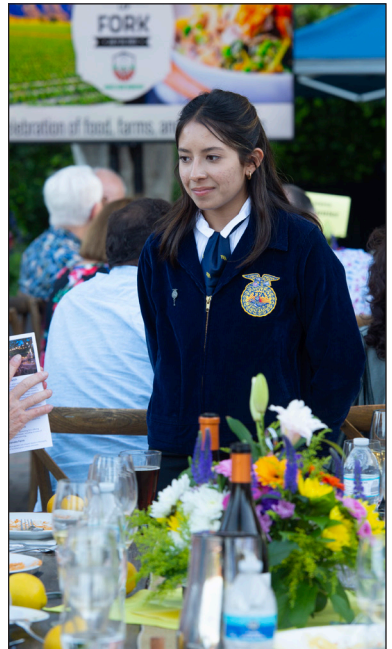
John Krist (chair), Anastashia Chavez, Alex Flores, Tim Kilcoyne, Leslie Leavens, Bernardo M. Perez, Kirsten Schultz, Chris Stephens, Gabrielle Vignone, Jane Donlon Waters.

Scholarship Committee

Linda Braunschweiger (chair), Chris Stephens, Kirsten Schultz, Gabrielle Vignone, Jane Donlon Waters.

Other contributors

Bank of the Sierra
Café Ficelle
Command Performance Catering
One Step A La Vez
Pyramid Flowers
Santa Paula FFA
Saticoy Lemon Association
Tina Thayer
Ventura County Community Foundation





Tierra Rejada Ranch

Tierra Rejada Ranch was established in 1935, when brothers and third-generation Ventura County farmers Monroe and Eldon Everett purchased 360 acres and planted tomatoes, lima beans and sugar beets. In the 1950s they planted English walnuts. In 1970, Monroe's daughter Linnea and her husband, Rick Brecunier, moved to the ranch. In 1972, they began replacing walnuts with pumpkins, pick-your-own blackberries and vegetables for a roadside stand. Rick and Linnea later sold a portion of the ranch to Craig Underwood. The Brecuniers have donated use of The Walnut Grove for tonight's event.

Brokaw Ranch Co.

Brokaw Ranch Company farms avocado, citrus, and other subtropical fruit crops in Ventura and Monterey counties in California.

Coastal Pipco

Based in Oxnard, **Coastal Pipco** is a wholesale distributor of pipes, valves, fittings and other materials for agricultural irrigation, construction and industrial water systems.

Leavens Ranches LLC

Leavens Ranches LLC is a multi-generational family farming company growing lemons and avocados in Ventura County, and lemons, avocados and wine grapes in Monterey County.

Mitchell & Associates

Based in Camarillo, **Mitchell & Associates** is an accounting firm offering traditional tax services and consulting for businesses, including all areas of accounting, bookkeeping, and financial-based planning.

The Weingart Foundation

Based in Los Angeles, **The Weingart Foundation** helps build the capacity of communities to advance racial, social and economic justice by transforming systems and strengthening services. It provides grant support to nonprofit organizations, collaboratives, and coalitions that engage in power building and organizing for systemic change and/or provide critical services in communities most impacted by racial and socioeconomic inequities.