



Santa Clara County

## Open Space Authority

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### PRESS RELEASE

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### **What is Agriculture? The Open Space Authority is Asking You**

San Jose, CA March 5, 2009 – The Open Space Authority (OSA) is hosting a community discussion on the subject of agriculture in Santa Clara County. The meeting will bring together agriculture producers, marketers and consumers to share their ideas of what county agriculture is today and could be in the future.

The meeting time and location:

**Agriculture Today and Tomorrow**  
Saturday, March 14, 2009  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Morgan Hill Community and Cultural Center  
17000 Monterey Street, Morgan Hill

One of the purposes for the creation of the Open Space Authority in 1993 was to preserve land in Santa Clara County that could encourage agricultural activity. Implementing a program for agricultural land preservation will build on that mandate and the views of the public.

The focus of the day's discussion will be on two important questions: What does the idea of local agriculture mean to you? What is your vision of local agriculture in the future? In addition to taking public comment, written response forms will be provided at the meeting. They are also available online at

[www.openspaceauthority.org](http://www.openspaceauthority.org).

Many types of agricultural products are grown and raised in Santa Clara County: flowers, ornamental plants, beef, grain, and the one that affects everyone: food. Decisions on what, how and where food is grown, processed and delivered to market have a close connection to people's daily lives.

Whether the issue is eating locally, going organic, preserving family farms, or raising foods that have cultural meaning, agriculture is a personal as well as an economic activity. And underlying everything are the soils, open land, and water resources that make agriculture possible.

This is where the Open Space Authority comes into the picture. The preservation of lands with agricultural potential requires a clear definition of what agriculture is. Saturday's meeting is an opportunity for the public to help establish that definition by sharing their views on food, farms, ranching, markets, and other aspects of this complex topic.

The OSA Board of Directors will use information developed during the forum to help define the role of the Open Space Authority in agricultural land preservation within its boundaries.

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The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA) is an independent special district created in 1993 to help preserve, protect and manage urban and non-urban open space in the areas of Campbell, Milpitas, Santa Clara, San Jose, Morgan Hill, and southern Santa Clara County. OSA has protected over 11,000 acres of land through purchase or easement and contributed to conservation easements covering an additional 2,500 acres.

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