

## 2021 MCFARM ANNUAL MEETING

February 21, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom

Meeting called to order at 10:01 a.m.

Motion to approve agenda by Robert, second by Gloria all in favor.

Officers present: President and Inland member rep-Alex Nielson, Secretary-Sarah Nielson, Treasure-Gloria Harrison, General Manager-Julie Apostolu, Office Manager Angela Novak Harney . Officers absent: Vice President Sakina Bush, Coastal member rep Lama Nasser-Gammett. Market managers present: Fort Bragg/Mendocino/Willits(substitute)-Julie, Ukiah-Robert Ayers, Laytonville-Gloria Harrison, Redwood Valley-Amanda Fairall. Market manager absent: Boonville-Lama Nasser Gammett

Motion to approve 2020 Annual Meeting minutes by Gloria, second by Robert. All in favor.

### Market manager reports

Fort Bragg-Julie: The Fort Bragg CFM moved outdoors six weeks early at the beginning of Covid and are remaining outdoors through the Winter, rain or shine. We were initially shut down by the City Public Works department, but the County Health Officer stating that Farmers Markets are essential businesses got us re-opened without missing a week. The market totals are down about a third, but still strong and individual vendors for the most part reported very good sales numbers. Of course the tourist demographic was missing. I have been a stickler for Covid Safety rules- which some people like and others don't but over all, the public shows there appreciation week after week- verbally and just by attending.

Mendocino-Julie: Sakina stepped down as manager in Mid August and the vendors welcomed me as their manager. Since most of the vendors also vend at Fort Bragg, it is like a connection between the markets. Like Fort Bragg, and perhaps even more so, the Tourist demographic was not very present and attendance and sales were down. We have a space expansion to look forward to as the Rotary has improved the adjacent park and welcomes some of the market set up inside the park starting this summer season. I am excited to be doing both markets and sharing resources between them.

Willits-Julie: We were very excited to welcome Marlana as the new manager of Willits, she came in with business and event coordination experience and a long history of gardening and farming. However, in November she found out she is pregnant, and was required by her doctor to avoid all contact with other people- due to Covid. I stepped in for the winter, the market has remained outside, and has a small yet loyal customer base. I am not sure if Marlana is coming back or if we will be looking into finding a new manager, but for now, I am covering it.

Boonville-Lama (read by Julie): Greetings! I'm sorry I cannot be in your virtual presence today.... I am excited to report that Happy is interested in managing the Boonville Market this year. Yay! I know that the local community will be very excited to hear that the market will continue. Happy has my full recommendation and support. I will be available to help out whenever necessary as I will continue to vend there. Other than that, there are no new updates as we have been closed for the season. I'd like to remind everyone that as the coastal representative of MCFARM, I am available to answer questions, offer advice, help resolve conflicts or just listen. Please reach out if you need someone to talk to about anything market related. 707-489-5034 [aforestperson@gmail.com](mailto:aforestperson@gmail.com)

Ukiah-Robert: This is Robert's second year as manager, very optimistic about the coming season. He enjoys his relationships with vendors, he has been sending out a Weekly Newsletter. Grateful for help from Ukiah with covid-19 related matters.

Laytonville-Gloria: Market remains inside Harwood Hall as it is a larger space than the outdoor location, safer for. Market is going well and continuing to grow.

Redwood Valley-Amanda: another great year! More people are moving back home after the 2017 wildfire so there are more customers returning.

General manager report: This has been the year of covid challenge for us all. However as the year has progressed, it has become increasingly clear that the option of grocery shopping outdoors with the short supply chain handling of products has been recognized as a safer way to shop and eat.

It has been a year for Farmers Markets to shine. The CDFA guidelines, although not always popular, have had a positive effect and allowed MCFARM Farmers Markets to become the center of the week for many in our communities. This is evident with the higher numbers of gross sales in all inland markets. The coastal market totals are down, most likely due to the lack of tourists this past summer.

I have been contacted by a number of markets and associations, as well as individuals, about how we are doing with keeping our Mendocino Farmers markets open and safe. Most of these inquiries were by email and I answered them with an email of my own accompanied by photographs of some of the ways we encouraged safe spacing, hygiene etc.

Although we miss the big crowds gathering, eating together and music- those things will return in the future. I have had a number of vendors express that they actually prefer the waiting on one person at a time, it has kept their products in better shape, reduced theft, and overall made vending a more efficient process. Although I had some complaints about the lines, I have pointed out that being in a line of 20 people is no different than being in a crush of 20 people. The waiting times are actually about the same. I have contact with various entities regarding WIC, EBT etc. We have

now been told that the Senior WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program has been discontinued. I would encourage your local outreach organizations that might be doing a POP club, to include seniors in the distribution-

Mendocino Coast Clinics has included Seniors for two years at the Fort Bragg market.

I have not visited every market- again due to Covid precautions. But of course, I have been personally involved in Mendocino, Fort Bragg, and Willits. When the county has moved to a lower tier, or when I have received the vaccination, I will attend the other markets more regularly. However, I

want you all to know that I am aware of each market on the day and time that it is happening, thinking about it, wondering how it is going. I talk to vendors regularly about the other markets. I see all monthly market reports and stall fee collection paperwork. I read them and pay attention to not just the totals, but who is vending, how your sales appear and so forth. I really care about MCFARM and all of our members.

I have worked with Elizabeth Garcia on a number of occasions when

there have been compliance issues at MCFARM Markets. We have not been able to do as much as we wanted to do, as she has been overwhelmed with other responsibilities. But, remember, she is our Ag Inspector, she is 110% on our side and the side of our Farmers. Please show her the respect that she deserves by being informed and compliant with the CDFCA/Ag department rules for vendors at CFMs. We both get that some rules seem goofy here in Mendocino, but we are part of a large agricultural state, and many of the rules come out of necessity in the larger metropolitan areas.

We launched our new website with the help of Lemon Fresh. Angela has become pretty good at doing updates and corrections, so if you see something, please let one of us know.

I want to remind all vendors that consistency is key to success at any and all markets. If you have a poor week, don't give up, it can take time for your customers to connect with you and look for you each week. Absences happen, but for the good of the individual markets, the other vendors, and the association- and of course our county as a whole- I encourage everyone to be as consistent as possible, and to give the smaller markets a try. When people drive by, if it looks worth it, people will stop and check it out. It takes a community to make MCFARM successful. I am here for all of you, any time. Thank You.

Office manager report: See Charts in "Meeting Packet" on [www.MCFARM.org](http://www.MCFARM.org) Home Page, regarding the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Motion to approve budget by Sarah, second by Robert, vote via email/snail mail ballot to be sent out in the next few days.

Liability insurance changes: Insurance company sent a letter informing us that if all vendors didn't have individual policies then they were going to drop us. Vendors can get pretty affordable policies through the FLIP program for around \$300/year.

five minute break 11:15 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.

Insurance discussion continued: There is the possibility of a \$12,000/year policy that wouldn't require each vendor to have their own insurance but many vendors might not want to pay for it through MCFARM plus pay for their own policy that they already have. The decision for this year was already made on an emergency basis for this year by the operating committee as there wasn't much choice.

Safety rules: review of canopy weights rules and COVID guidelines/precautions reviewed.

Market match report-Sarah Marshall: NCO has masks and sanitizers available, 2020 Market match each economic impact report presented. Market match program is continuing to grow. Funds are available to purchase new tokens/script for markets to use. Market Match is currently accepting P-EBT (pandemic EBT) and more P-EBT will be distributed soon.

Mendocino County Ag Department report-Elizabeth Garcia: regulation presentation given. Free PPE available contact Ag Department. Cannabis/CBD regulations remain the same (hemp derived CBD more regulated).

March 31st Coast CPC and scale day 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the veterans hall. Willits & Laytonville CPC and Scale day TBD.

Officer Elections: Vice President, Secretary, Inland Member rep up for election. Position descriptions read. Allegra Foley nominated by Julie for Inland Member rep. Nomination accepted. Amanda Fairall nominated by Sarah for Vice President. Nomination accepted. Sarah Nielson nominated by Julie for Secretary. Nomination accepted. Vote to be conducted via email/snail mail. One vote per agricultural membership.

Announcements: CAFF CA Small Farm (virtual) Conference February 22nd-28th.  
[www.caff.org/conference2021](http://www.caff.org/conference2021)

Mendocino Renegade 1st time application fee is currently discounted! Contact Alex or check the website for details.

Thank you to Julie, Angela, and the market managers for going over and beyond! Rising to the COVID challenges thrown our way.

Meeting adjourned at 12:44pm