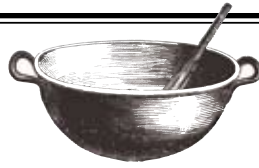


# EDITOR'S MIXING BOWL



Most food lovers I know are also travel fanatics, and I'm no exception. Thus in April, when writer Sally Bryson turned in a story on a wildcrafter of sea vegetables who sells at the Berkeley Farmers' Market, I simply could not resist the call of the wild and I ran off to the Mendocino coast for the alleged purpose of photographing Moon, the wildcrafter, at work.

To make the drive more worthwhile (or to prolong the experience, to be perfectly honest) I veered west through Marin County toward Point Reyes. The grasses were still tinged with green and decorated here and there with red clover, all of which appeared to be immensely popular with the grazing breeds for which western Marin County is known.

As I gazed out on the lushness of these fog-misted grasslands, I thought about how important the preservation of agriculture has become to retention of the green spaces that make various sections of our California landscape so agreeable. Perhaps the greatest success story of California "ag-land" preservation is in Marin County, where a full 40 percent of the land is still devoted to agriculture. Needless to say, agri-tourism in that region is thriving—all you need to do is drive or hike through the Point Reyes National Seashore, where you are likely to be traversing one of 19 cattle or dairy ranches that predate the national park and have remained operating there since the park was established in 1962.

In looking around the East Bay, we may not readily see as many enticements for touring the agricultural landscape, but in fact, they abound. In some cases, it's just a matter of strolling through one of our many urban community gardens (see page 23). But more importantly, we might get better acquainted with the eastern portions of our East Bay counties. Both Alameda and Contra Costa counties are turning into strong wine-growing regions, where the vines increasingly are mingled with olive and pistachio orchards. In some remote tracts, cattle ranching is still going strong. The Brentwood area of eastern Contra Costa County is a great place to go pick your own fruit and visit the roadside stands. (You can download a map for the u-picks at [www.harvest4you.com](http://www.harvest4you.com).)

I say all this with some embarrassment that we did not manage to include an east county agriculture feature in this issue, but there are plenty such topics on our Events list, with Livermore's "Taste of Terroir," and also information about the Junior Livestock Auction at the Alameda County Fair—both are opportunities to learn about and support east-county agriculture. While you're there on page 44, please pay special note to the Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust (BALT) Fundraising Dinner. That event is of particular importance this year, since the Brentwood City Council has just voted to cut off BALT's administrative funding even though, according to BALT, "the city has collected over \$10 million in agricultural mitigation funds to preserve agricultural land and provide administrative funding for an independent land trust." Go figure.

So as you make your way through this issue and through your summer travels, don't forget to

enjoy the best foods the season has to offer and to support those who produce our food locally,

Cheers,

Cheryl Koehler  
Editor/Publisher  
*Edible East Bay*



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## CALIFORNIA CUTLERY



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