

# Farm Focus

A publication of Monterey County Farm Bureau



## Salute to Agriculture:

**Joe Pezzini honored**

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emphasis will be on high technology and food safety practices of Salinas Valley growers and shippers. Participants saw a lettuce harvest and cooler operations at Ocean Mist Farms, visited with local vintner, Richard Smith of Paraiso Springs Vineyard, and saw a state of the art spinach field operation and discussed new food safety practices with growers. The final stop was at Monterey Pacific winery in King City for a tour of one of the nation's most high tech crushing and wine making facilities.

Taste of the Valley was back in the newly reinvented format, that refined the event into the nation's premiere produce and wine show, with new recipes, new grower and winery participants and an amazing array of flavors and new recipe twists to tickle the taste buds. This event paired local growers and shippers with the top local restaurants and chefs preparing featured vegetable products in new

exciting recipes. Some local treats this year will be radicchio pizza, Grilled Polenta Crostini with Chimichurri Aioli made with Parsley & Cilantro, and spinach sushi roll with Japanese spinach salad, to name only a few of the new recipes for 2007. Local vintners were also pouring their best vintages of wines and describing the wine scene in Monterey County to all attendees.

New special events this year at Taste of the Valley included a display of panoramic agricultural scenes by local photographer, Kirk Kennedy adding to the evening's ambiance. A spectacular 'event cake' designed especially for Salute to Agriculture was prepared by three time gold medal winner of the Food Network's Cake Challenge, Marina Sousa of Just Cake in Capitola.

The amazing Salute to Agriculture 'event' cake that depicted everything agricultural from the Salinas Valley from fields, to strawberry

crates and wine grapes all made of edible depictions, also included the iconic Cerney cutout art that decorates the byways of the Salinas Valley. Marina Sousa and her cake decorating partner Dawn Nemecek outdid themselves with a cake crowning globe with lettuce spilling out illustrating the 'Salad Bowl of the World', like never before. Proceeds of the cake auction by former Supervisor and vintner Butch Lindley were split between local charities, Ag. Against Hunger and Monterey County Ag. Education. Thanks to Sherry Caprara for being the high bidder at the auction.


The second annual Earth to Eats chef/wine demonstration event was again a wonderful addition to Taste of the Valley. Two demonstrations by a food and wine expert allowed attendees the chance to learn how top chefs prepare new recipes and how wine  
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## Celebrating Agriculture With Taste

*On this month's cover, Bob Balentine and mom Barbara Balentine of Lineshack Vineyard serve up new vintages at Taste of the Valley 2007. Lineshack is one of several labels that are part of Monterey County's newest wine appellation, San Antonio Valley.*



***Chef Todd Fisher**, above, serves up Mills Family Farms Cowboy cups of lettuce at Taste of the Valley 2007. Former Supervisor **Butch Lindley**, below, auctions off the Salute to Agriculture Event Cake.  
(Photos by Ken Cook Photography.)*





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