

People & Places

# Helping farmers grow coffee

By JULIA HOLLISTER  
For the Capital Press

GOLETA, Calif. — Over 20 years ago, a University of California farm adviser had an idea: to find new, viable, value-added crops that would benefit farmers. His answer: coffee.

“Coffee was part of that experience,” said Jay Ruskey, founder of Good Land Organics, the flagship farm and home of FRINJ Coffee. “In 2002, I planted a trial crop of coffee and proved that coffee could be grown outside tropical regions.”

Currently, FRINJ provides coffee plants as well as breeding their own hybrids. The goal is to provide California farmers with vigorous plants that thrive in the California climate.

The result: High-quality, California-grown coffee.

Ruskey said his program serves the farmer who is trying to diversify in a growing market in which consumers are aware of the quality of their coffee and where it is grown, similar to the wine industry.

Here’s how the growing process works:

- If a farmer is interested in growing FRINJ Coffee, he or she can contact Ruskey to do a site evaluation. If the soil is appropriate, he will provide a comprehensive plan.

- The farmer pays for the plants and gets support from bean to cup.

Coffee plants take about four years to reach full production.

“We have established a whole systems solution to



Good Land Organics

**Jay Ruskey, founder of Good Land Organics, has proved that coffee can be grown outside tropical regions. He helps other farmers grow coffee.**

coffee production, which includes growing, harvesting and processing support,” Ruskey said. “We are pioneering the California Coffee Movement.

“We also reduce the investment the farmer has to make to take the coffee to market by providing processing and sales resources,” he said.

FRINJ consults with the farmer on proper irrigation, nutrition and pruning for successful crops.

The coffee tree begins its flowering cycle in the summer, with a 10-12 month period for fruit maturation. When the cherries are a dark red, they are harvested and taken to the Bonsall Mill in San Diego County, where the fruit and seeds are separated, dried and processed.

Coffees are then cured 2-4 months, shelled and sorted, and prepared for roasting and sales.

Good Land Organics

in Santa Barbara County receives northern farmers’ fruit and handles all storage, dry milling and roasting.

“Coffee is not easy to grow,” he said. “If you can grow good fruit, there is a high chance you will have a high-scoring coffee for maximum return. Today, we support over 70 farms in the coastal climates of Central and Southern California.”

In California, coffee plants are irrigated, whereas most of the

**Western Innovator**

**JAY RUSKEY**

**Hometown:** Goleta, Calif.

**Occupation:** Chief executive officer and co-founder of Good Land Organics and FRINJ Coffee.

**Education:** California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, Ag Business and Marketing

**Family:** Kristen (wife), a daughter and two sons

**Website:** www.goodlandorganics.com

**Quote:** “FRINJ is pioneering California-grown coffee for generations to come and provides a unique opportunity for farmers to benefit from a value-added crop in California to capture the craft consumer.”



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to set the record straight.

# Reclamation uses goat grazing to reduce wildfire threats in California

By SIERRA DAWN MCCLAIN  
Capital Press

AUBURN, Calif. — The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the federal agency that manages water in the West, will use targeted grazing with goats this summer through fall to reduce wildfire threats in Auburn, Calif., near Sacramento.

Reclamation has partnered with two California organizations — the California Department of Parks and Recreation and Auburn State Recreation Area — for the 474-acre project.

The purpose of the project is to use grazing goats to decrease vegetation loads in woodlands next to the City of Auburn and around the wildland-urban interface, where houses



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

**The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is using targeted grazing with goats this year to reduce wildfire threats in California.**

meet the forest.

“Goat grazing will help thin lower vegetation layers, reduce the potential for wildfire to move into the larger growths of shrubs

and trees and create space for firefighting equipment access,” the Bureau of Reclamation wrote in a statement July 12.

Reclamation’s planned

project reflects a broader trend. According to grazing experts at USDA and Oregon State University, interest in using cattle, sheep and goats for targeted grazing is growing among federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation. State and local organizations are also exploring the practice.

For this project, according to Reclamation, the goats are being deployed to control annual grasses and invasive plants, including scotch broom and ornamentals, and to maintain an existing fuel break dubbed the Auburn Shaded Fuel Break, which was previously treated by hand crews.

This summer’s grazing work is part of a five-year fuels management project. Reclamation previously had a goat grazing contract in the area last fall and has decided to renew the work in 2022.

With support from Placer County Resource Conservation District, the agencies have already established this shaded fuel break and have now contracted goat herds to graze along the 600-foot boundary this summer and fall.

Electric fencing is used to keep goats where they’re supposed to be.

Under the supervision of goat herders and herding dogs, two herds will be deployed to do the work, each covering a different area.

## CALENDAR

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY  
AUG. 6-7**

**Great Oregon Steam-Up:**  
7 a.m.-6 p.m., Powerland Heritage Park, 3995 Brooklake Road NE, Brooks, Ore. Enjoy a steam-powered day with train and trolley rides, a parade, steam sawmilling, traditional tractor pulling, machinery demos, threshing, flour milling, fire apparatus demos, museum tours, kids pedal tractor pulling and a youth passport program. Website: www.antiquepowerland.com/steam-up Phone: 503-393-2424

**MONDAY AUG. 8  
Transitioning Your Ag Business to the Next Chapter:**

12:30-4 p.m. Paisley Community Center, 705 Chewaucan St., Paisley, Ore. Farm and Ranch succession counselor and accountant Diana Tourney will prepare you for the human and financial elements of succession planning. Easement specialist Marc Hudson will answer your questions about working lands conservation easements — what they are, what they aren’t, and how they may be helpful in executing your agricultural business plans. These in-person events are part of a free 6-workshop series in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. All are welcome, and the events are free. RSVP for these or any of OAT’s other events and refer any questions about the event to diane@oregonagtrust.org 503-858-2683

**TUESDAY AUG. 9  
Transitioning Your Ag Business to the Next Chapter:**

12:30-4 p.m. Lake County Library, 26 South G St., Lakeview, Ore. Farm

and Ranch succession counselor and accountant Diana Tourney will prepare you for the human and financial elements of succession planning. Easement specialist Marc Hudson will answer your questions about working lands conservation easements — what they are, what they aren’t, and how they may be helpful in executing your agricultural business plans. These in-person events are part of a free 6-workshop series in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. All are welcome, and the events are free. RSVP for these or any of OAT’s other events and refer any questions about the event to diane@oregonagtrust.org 503-858-2683

**MONDAY-TUESDAY  
AUG. 8-9**

**American Lamb Summit:**  
Michigan State University and East Lansing Marriott East Lansing, Mich. The summit will focus on competitiveness, production and quality of American lamb. Website: https://www.lambresourcecenter.com

**THURSDAY-FRIDAY  
AUG. 11-12**

**Idaho Milk Processors Association Annual Conference:** Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, Idaho. The conference will focus on industry issues. Website: https://www.impa.us

**SATURDAY AUG. 13  
Family Forest Field Day**

— Southwest Washington: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. L & H Family Tree Farm, 1309 King Road, Winlock, Wash. Whether you own a “home in the woods” or many acres of land, this “out in the woods” educa-

tional event is packed with practical “how-to” information that you need to know. Learn more at https://forestry.wsu.edu/sw/field2022/.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY  
AUG. 13-14**

**Dufur Threshing Bee 2022:**  
6 a.m.-3 p.m. Main Street, Dufur, Ore. Relive the good old days at the Dufur Threshing Bee. Included will be blacksmiths, a one-room school house, the Dufur Historical Society, petting zoo, food booths and artists’ booths, tractor pull, vintage car show, hometown dinner and a steam engine display. Contact: Nancy Gibson, 541-993-3429.

**WEDNESDAY AUG. 17  
Miller Research Potato Pest Management Field Day:**

10 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Miller Research, 422 E. 200 N. Rupert, Idaho. Plant pathologist Jeff Miller to host. Event to focus on chemical management of diseases, highlight research by Pacific Northwest Potato Research Consortium. Pesticide and pest-management credits have been requested. Lunch to follow. Website: https://bit.ly/3IC8pon

**AUG. 19-28  
Western Idaho Fair:**

11 a.m. Western Idaho Fairgrounds, 5610 Greenwood St., Boise. Western Idaho gets together annually for this celebration of country living. Website: https://idahofair.com

**AUG. 26-SEPT. 5  
Oregon State Fair:**

10 a.m. Oregon State Fair & Exposition Center, 2330 17th St. NE, Salem. The Oregon State Fair continues through

Sept. 5. Website: https://oregon-statefair.org/

**SEPT. 2-10  
Eastern Idaho State Fair:**

Eastern Idaho Fairgrounds, 97 Park St., Blackfoot, Idaho. It’s fair time in Idaho. Website: https://funatthefair.com/general-info/

**SEPT. 2-25  
Washington State Fair:**

10:30 a.m. Puyallup Fairgrounds, 110 9th Ave. SW, Puyallup, Wash. The Washington State Fair is the largest single attraction held annually in the state of Washington. Closed Tuesdays and Sept. 7. Website: https://www.thefair.com/

**THURSDAY SEPT. 8  
Farm & Ranch Succession Planning and Working Lands Easements:**

12:30-4 p.m. OSU Malheur County Extension, 710 Southwest 5th Ave., Ontario, Ore. Attorney June Flores will present on the topics of succession and estate planning, and how to prepare your operation to be resilient for future generations. Easement specialist Marc Hudson will answer your questions about working lands conservation easements — what they are, what they aren’t, and how they may be helpful in executing your agricultural business plans. These in-person events are part of a free 6-workshop series in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. All are welcome, and the events are free. RSVP for these or any of OAT’s other events and refer any questions about the event to diane@oregonagtrust.org 503-858-2683