



Connections

Online Bicycle Trip Planner

Just in time for May is Bike Month, SACOG has released a region-wide online bicycle trip planner. Using data collected from local agencies, and input from local advocates, bicyclists, and the public, the trip planner is geared for users of all abilities. Users can select either the most bike-friendly or most-direct route when mapping their trip.

Whether for commute or recreational uses, the trip planner includes urban and rural routes for the entire six-county region.

The trip planner also features a community forum where novice and experienced bicyclists can ask and answer questions about routes, recommend routes, and alert other riders of bicycling hazards. You can also tell SACOG about routes not included currently in the Bicycle Trip Planner, or problems with routes currently recommended.



Try out the Trip Planner at: www.sacregion511.org

Visit www.Mayisbikemonth.com to learn more about May is Bike Month

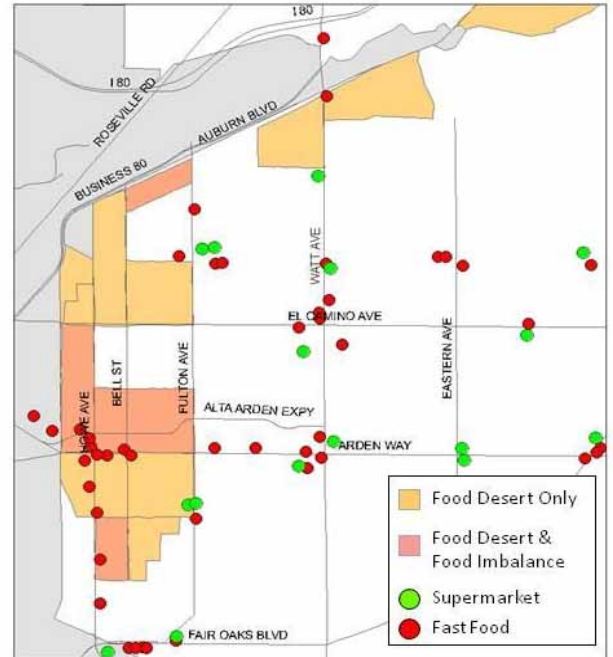
May 2010

Sacramento County Food Deserts Mapped

The Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department recently completed its Food Desert Study. The lack of access to fresh, affordable food puts residents who live in food deserts or food imbalance areas at a health disadvantage. This study identified the location of these areas in the county.

“Healthy communities is a strategy in our Housing Element and one of the implementation programs for this strategy is identifying areas that are underserved by supermarkets and other providers of healthy foods,” according to Tim Koyaha, a planner with Sacramento County.

Citizens and community groups who focus on providing local and healthy foods can use the maps to see which neighborhoods have food desert and food imbalance situations. The county also hopes to use this better data to be a part of the solution.



What are food deserts?

Food Deserts

Lower-income neighborhoods that are not within walking distance of supermarkets

Food Imbalance Areas

Lower-income neighborhoods where fast food restaurants are closer—and more convenient—than supermarkets

“Ultimately, we would like to develop an incentive program (another implementation program in our Housing Element) which will incentivize healthy food providers to locate in or near food desert and food imbalance areas,” says Koyaha, who is looking for funding for this phase. One example of what the county could do is to amend its zoning code to make it easier to locate facilities such as farmers’ markets and produce stands in an urban setting.

The study combined 2000 Census information with data about supermarkets and fast food restaurants.

For more information contact Tim Kohaya at (916) 874-5982 or kohayat@sacounty.net.



New Broderick Farm Stand Opens

**Saturdays
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Elkhorn Park
West Sacramento**

This weekly farm stand is the latest effort from the Alchemist Community Development Corporation's Urban Farm Stand Project. In keeping with the mission of providing fresh local and organic produce to low-income populations, EBT/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits are accepted at the Urban Farm Stand.

For more information, visit: www.alchemistcdc.org.

Project Information

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Stay current on rural-urban issues
at www.sacog.org/rucs

Agricultural Commemorative License Plates

Supporting California agriculture is the theme of a new commemorative license plate offered by the California Department of Motor Vehicles. The Cal Ag Special License plates are available to anyone with a registered car, truck or boat. Showing your ag support will run you an extra \$50 for a regular sequential license number, or \$98 for a personalized plate. Fees will go towards agricultural education and promotion, so part of the expense may be deducted as a charitable donation. And yes, you may order them as gifts. For more information: www.calagplate.com.



2012 Farm Bill Discussion Begins

Last month, the House Agriculture Committee held the first 2012 Farm Bill hearing. U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsak discussed many of the challenges facing farmers and rural America.

Secretary Vilsak proposed five focus areas under of his Regional Innovation Initiative: Broadband, Renewable Energy and Bio-Fuels, Regional Food Systems and Supply Chains, Forest Restoration and Private Land Conservation, and Ecosystem Market Incentives.

On May 3, the Agriculture Committee held a field hearing in Fresno to hear from California producers about the challenges they face. Among those testifying was a rice producer from Live Oak.

For more information on the Farm Bill hearings, visit agriculture.house.gov. *Connections* will provide updates in future issues as this important policy discussion continues.

Day on the Farm and 2010 Veggie Chase Soil Born Farms Sunday, May 23

Highlights include:

- Running events for all ages, and prizes for the kids! Register online for the Veggie Chase at: www.veggiechase.com
- Farm Stand selling organic vegetables and fruits
- Farm tours, cooking demonstrations, workshops, kids garden activities, face painting and photo booth, art, music, food and more
- Plant sale—start your own garden
- Health and fitness exhibits

A \$5 donation is requested. For more information visit: www.soilborn.org.



Connections Gets Statewide Award

In April, the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO) honored *Connections* with the Award of Distinction for Community/Special Audience Newsletters.