

# 2011 Northern San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Conservation Easements

## Brandstad Farm

**Landowners:** Jon and Christine Brandstad.

**Location:** Five miles east of Stockton and three miles west of the unincorporated town of Linden in San Joaquin County. The property is within a quarter mile west of Jack Tone Road, which is major north-south corridor for several Central Valley counties.

**Acreage:** 174 acres, all prime soils, in walnut and cherry orchards.

**Notes:** This property has been in the Brandstad family for 80 years. Rural residential development is the most immediate threat to the farm, with several large homes being built on 40+ acre lots in the vicinity. Construction of low density subdivisions has occurred in the vicinity of Eight Mile Road, a route connecting Jack Tone Road, Highway 88 and Highway 99. This is the first project involving California Farmland Conservancy Program funding in San Joaquin County.

## Brazil & Van Ryn Dairy

**Landowners:** Bill Van Ryn, Ada Van Ryn, Anthony Brazil.

**Location:** Near Stockton in San Joaquin County. The farm borders Mariposa Road, a major transportation route, for more than a mile.

**Acreage:** 216 acres, 90 percent of soils meet prime or statewide quality criteria.

**Notes:** The easement covers farmland that produces oats and corn which feed the dairy's cows. The dairy facilities, operated by Mr. Brazil, are excluded from the conservation easement area. An underground tail-water return system was recently installed, which prevents irrigation drainage from entering Temple Creek and increases the efficiency of the irrigation system. The landowners intend to convert the dairy and croplands to organic production in the next two years.

## Ulm Farm

**Landowners:** Bill and Marilyn Ulm.

**Location:** Three miles west of the sphere of influence of Modesto in Stanislaus County. The farm borders Highway 132, a transportation/commuter route between Modesto and the San Francisco Bay Area, for half a mile.

**Acreage:** 151 acres, all prime soils, including 112 acres of almonds and 35 acres of French Columbard grapes.

**Notes:** Development is encroaching from two different directions. Together with the previously protected Menghetti property, this easement will begin the formation of a significant buffer east of Modesto. William Ulm was a Stanislaus County supervisor in the 1970s with a strong interest in policies that strengthened the county's agricultural base. The Ulms sell their almonds to Blue Diamond and their grapes to Gallo Winery.

## Alvernaz Farm

**Landowners:** Joe Alvernaz.

**Location:** One mile southwest of Livingston in Merced County.

**Acreage:** 212 acres, 98 percent of soils meet prime or statewide quality criteria, growing primarily sweet potatoes.

**Notes:** Because the property is near the City of Livingston's sphere of influence, there is a significant threat of conversion to residential subdivisions, rural residential, or commercial use. Along with the recently protected Beach farm to the south, this easement will begin to create a buffer to development for a vast area of outstanding soils between the cities of Livingston and Atwater. The Alvernaz family has grown primarily sweet potatoes on this property for the last 50 years. Sweet potato production on the farm has averaged 23 tons per acre; the county average is 17 tons per acre.

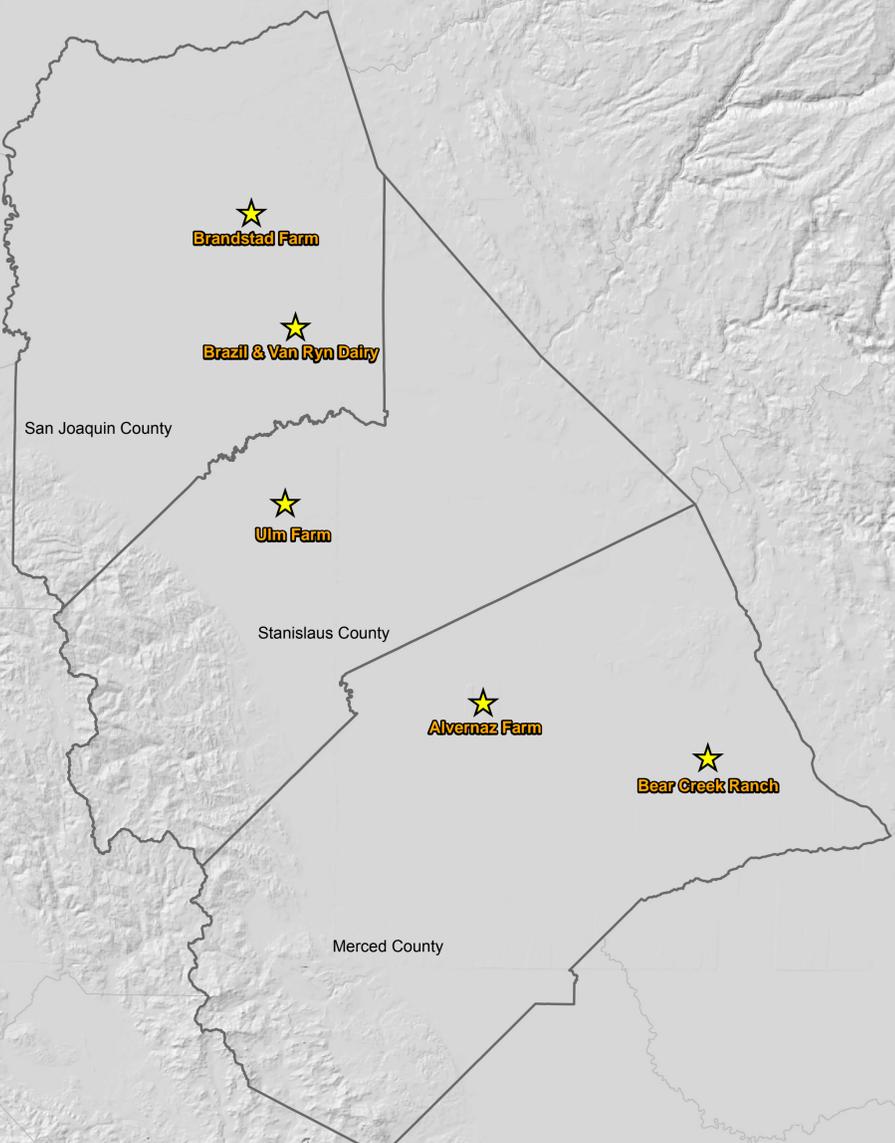
## Bear Creek Ranch

**Landowners:** A partnership made up of Sun Dial Farms, S&R Farms, and Montpelier Farming Corporation. John Colbert, part owner of Sun Dial Farms, manages the day-to-day activities on the ranch.

**Location:** A mile and a half east of Merced's sphere of influence and three miles west of Planada in Merced County. The property has a mile of frontage along State Highway 140.

**Acreage:** 244 acres of prime soils planted in almonds in 2008.

**Notes:** The property is 4.5 miles from the expanding UC Merced campus and 2 miles from a planned Wal-Mart distribution center, which provides a significant threat of converting these lands to residential use. Placing a conservation easement on this property will begin to create a buffer to development at the eastern edge of Merced on prime soils.



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION  
CALIFORNIA FARMLAND CONSERVANCY PROGRAM



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
EDMUND G. BROWN, JR., Governor  
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY  
JOHN LAIRD, Secretary  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
Derek Chernow, Acting Director