

2016

DELTA FARMS & WINERIES

WINE AND PRODUCE TRAIL MAP

By Robie Williams Photos by Robie Williams and Jan Vick

This Way to Wine, Fresh Produce & Fun!

It's summertime and the smell of fresh fruit and vegetables is in the air. Farmers have been planting in the fertile Sacramento Delta soil since spring and the summer harvests have begun. The timing is perfect for a road trip along the Delta Farm and Winery Trail. This article covers a few of the 25 fun-to-visit wine and produce locations identified on the map. Pick it up at any of the participating farms and wineries or find it at www.sacriverdeltagrown.org.

Before leaving home, grab the cooler and throw in some ice to cool the mouthwatering fruits and vegetables that you pick up. As you are driving out of town make sure to fill up with gas since the only gas stations along the way are in Rio Vista and Walnut Grove. Don't forget to grab some cash as many farms and fruit stands don't accept credit cards.



Steamboat Acres

Photo: Jan Vick

Are you ready to go?

Begin your journey heading North on State Route 160 along winding levee roads that curve along the Sacramento River and the sloughs. The sun beams down and reflects off the river dotted with fishing and pleasure boats of all sizes. Along the banks you may spot herons, ducks, geese and cranes. Be watchful of the road though as you may encounter slow moving farm equipment.

Steamboat Acres

The featured farm of the tour and the first of the founding members of the Sacramento Delta Grown Farms is Steamboat Acres located at 15989 Sutter Island Road in Courtland. Steamboat Acres was established in 1848. The farm is run by Tim Neuharth and his family who are

fifth and sixth generation farmers. Tim and his family are happy to share information about the farm and their

philosophy. Steamboat Acres is a Certified Organic farm that produces Bartlett, Stark Crimson and Bosc Pears and cherries and has a Chardonnay wine

grape vineyard. Some of the trees in the orchards are over 100 years old! They also grow pumpkins and sweet corn. Tim is passionate about farming and loves talking about the importance of eating locally grown foods and supporting farmers. There is also a beautiful, natural sand bar beach right on Steamboat Slough where you can swim, picnic and fish.

Check out their website at www.steamboatacres.com.



R Kelley Farms

Photo: Robie Williams

Double M Farms

The next founding member is Double M Farms and McDowell Hunting Preserve. Charlie McDowell, Sr. established the farm in 1947. The third generation of the McDowell Family now operates the farm located at 13161 Grand Island Road in Walnut Grove. Current crops include pears, alfalfa, wheat and specialty fruits from Michael McDowell's private collection orchard. Double M opens their farm to the public, selling picked and pick your own pears.



Double M Farms

Photo: Robie Williams

Their farm stand features peaches, plums, nectarplums, apricots and free range eggs. An upland game bird aviary at the entrance to the farm gives visitors a chance to see game birds up close. You can find more information about the farm and the hunting preserve at www.mcdowellestate.com.

Wallace Chan Farms

Wallace Chan Farms, Inc. is located at 11691 Highway 160/River Road in Courtland. They are another founding member of the Sacramento Delta Grown Farms and have been farming for several generations. A point of interest on their farm is the large collection of vintage farm equipment that is on display. Their main crop is Certified Organic pears.

Delta Islands Organic Farm

Find Delta Islands Organic Farm at 14591 Walnut Grove –Thornton Road in Walnut Grove. J. B. and Jeanne Morais own and operate this Certified Organic farm that specializes in heirloom produce. They offer healthy, sustainable grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and over 40 varieties of heirloom tomatoes. Early in the season find strawberries, cherries, apricots and onions at their friendly fruit stand. Mid-summer the fruit stand is stocked with tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, cucumbers, beans, garlic, summer squash and zucchini. As fall arrives so does the winter squash and the pumpkin patch. Be sure to look at this founding member's website at www.deltaislandsorganic.com for current crops and event information.

R Kelley Farms

Another founding member of the Sacramento Delta Grown Farms is R Kelley Farms at 1120 Scribner Road, Sacramento. A true farm to fork business owned by Ron and Ella Kelley, they have been providing seasonal fresh vegetables for 15 years. Their specialties include black-eye, purple hull and crowder peas as well as green beans, garbanzo, speckled butter and cranberry beans. The farm has a variety of other crops including tomatoes, okra, sweet corn, peppers, squash and sweet melons. Their services include pick your own, "we-pick" and pea shelling. "We-picked" items are available inside their store shed. More information is available at www.rkelleyfarms.com.

Maggi's Farm

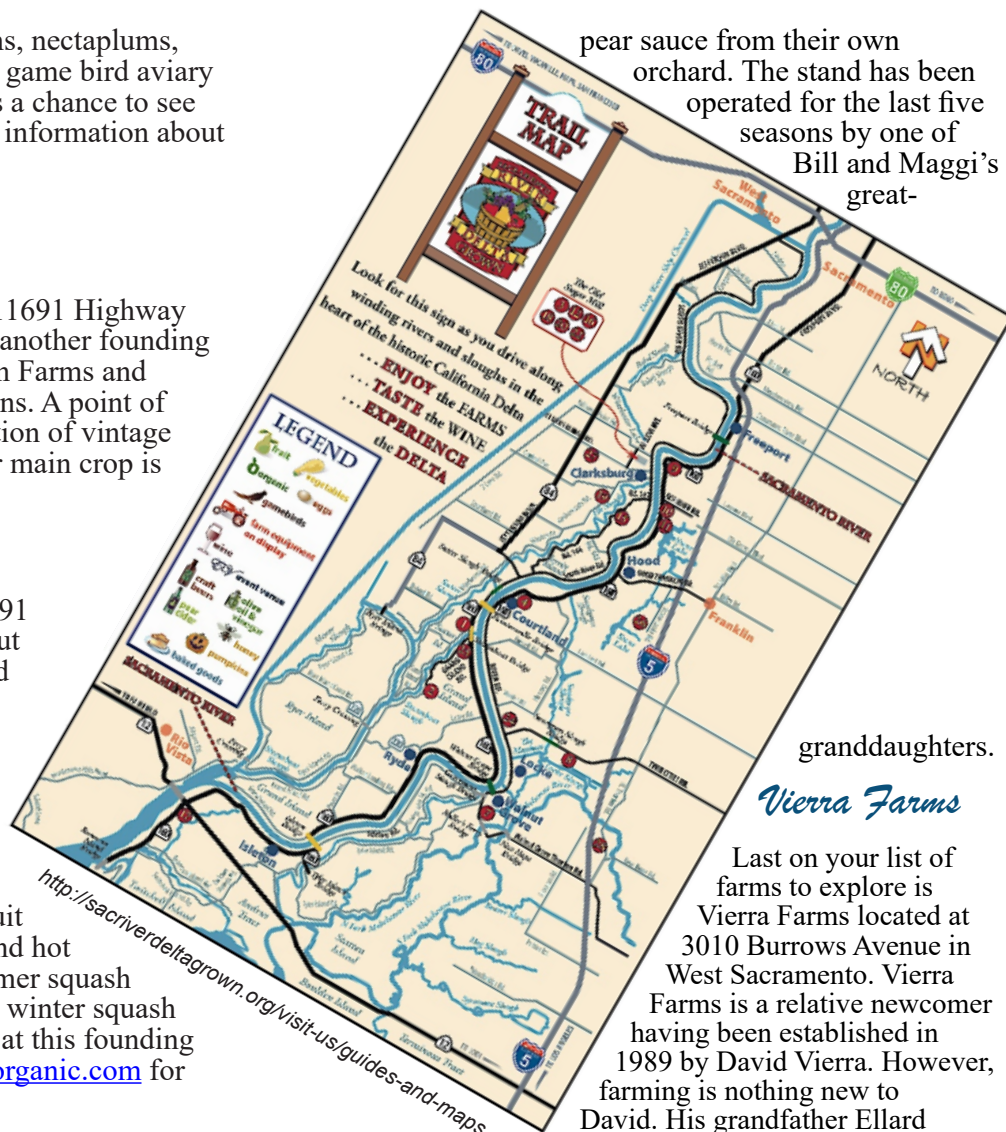
Maggi's Farm features Certified Organic Bartlett Pears in the pear stand of their front yard at 9821 River Road, Sacramento. William "Bill" and Margaret "Maggi" Cave purchased the farm in 1943 and it has been owned and operated by the Cave family ever since. The pear stand sells pears ripened without commercial processing and

pear sauce from their own orchard. The stand has been operated for the last five seasons by one of Bill and Maggi's great-

granddaughters.

Vierra Farms

Last on your list of farms to explore is Vierra Farms located at 3010 Burrows Avenue in West Sacramento. Vierra Farms is a relative newcomer having been established in 1989 by David Vierra. However, farming is nothing new to David. His grandfather Ellard Vierra was instrumental in settling the Sacramento Delta in the 1920's and farmed into the 1960's. David began with a pumpkin patch at the age of thirteen and later founded the farm and then his own produce company. Depending on the time of year the farm produces black and yellow seedless watermelons, vine ripened heirloom tomatoes, corn, zucchini, broccoli, eggplant, bell peppers, potatoes, squash, peaches, nectarines, and of course, pumpkins. In October the farm turns into Dave's Pumpkin Patch with events and attractions for the whole family, including picking your own pumpkin straight from the pumpkin patch! After Thanksgiving the pumpkin patch gives way to Dave's Christmas Trees. Find a complete schedule of events, activities and information at www.vierrafarms.com.



You've visited some of the farms along the Delta Farm and Winery Trail and it's time to take your fresh produce home. Enjoy the ride back along the rich fertile fields of the Sacramento River and plan your next journey to the farms for the freshest, sweetest fruits and vegetables to be found! Next time, check out the wineries on the trail too!