

THE NEXT GENERATION— HERDSMAN PAUL ZIMMERMAN



Paige Green

OUR NEW LOOK: COLOR US GREEN

With this issue, we inaugurate our full-color newsletter. New printing techniques and the availability of high quality digital photographs now enable us to produce a color publication for the same price as the black-and-white newsletter we've had for the past 25 years. We continue to print on recycled paper using soy inks with graphic design by Gay Stack. Every issue is also posted on our website, www.malt.org, and back issues are archived there. Your feedback is appreciated. Please contact Elisabeth Ptak at 415-663-1158, ext. 302 or email eptak@malt.org.

“I always loved being around the animals,” Paul Zimmerman said of growing up on his family’s dairy just north of the town of Marshall. Paul represents the fifth generation of dairymen in his family. The ranch was protected with a MALT easement in 2003 by his parents Bill and Sharon, and though the Zimmerman Dairy is no longer in operation, Bill and Sharon still raise beef cattle and dairy heifers there. For the last six years Paul has been the herdsman on the Robert Giacomini Dairy, which produces Point Reyes Blue Cheese and also is protected by a MALT easement.

Paul is part of a growing trend of young people seeking careers in agriculture. But when he went off to college at California Polytechnic State University, he didn’t necessarily plan to come back and work in the dairy business, although he knew he wanted to be involved in some way. “I wanted to focus a little more on the business side while I was in school and thought I might come back to work for a vineyard or something like that.”

But it seems Paul was meant to work with the animals; he graduated with a major in Dairy Science and a minor in Agricultural Business and returned to the Marin/Sonoma area. He began as a field representative for Western United Dairymen (WUD), an organization dedicated to supporting the welfare of dairy producers. Paul’s position involved providing technical assistance on operations management. It was during his time at WUD that he met with Bob Giacomini, whose dairy is just a few miles down Highway One from the

Zimmerman Ranch. His herdsman was leaving, and Bob offered Paul the job.

DOWN ON THE FARM

At the Giacomini Dairy, Paul is responsible for managing 700 cows and all dairying activities as well as overseeing five employees. This includes purchasing and managing animal feed, designing the breeding program, meeting the cows’ nutritional needs, and performing minor vet work. He and the crew milk about 300 cows twice daily.

Although he enjoys coming to work each day, Paul admits that the amount of time the job requires is a drawback. “You get what you put in,” he says, “and you have to have the drive and want to make it work.” It seems Paul probably gets a lot out of his position, as he usually comes to work at 5:30 A.M. and leaves at 6 or 7 P.M. “I love working outside and being around the cows everyday,” Paul says of his favorite part of the job.

FUTURE OF FARMING

The USDA’s 2007 Census of Agriculture reports that the average age of U.S. farmers increased to 57.1 in 2007, and the number of farmers aged 75 years and older grew by 20 percent. A whole new generation of farmers will be needed to make up for those approaching retirement age.

Paul believes the next generation of agricultural producers, including himself and some of his friends, realizes that there’s more to life than just the work and that they have to find a balance between the ranch work and other aspects of life.

However, he’s concerned about the future of agriculture in Marin. “Fifty years ago you could save money

STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND —AN EASEMENT IS FOREVER

MARIN Agricultural Land Trust's commitment to preserving agricultural land extends well beyond the acquisition of an agricultural conservation easement. Our relationship to the land exists in perpetuity. This means building relationships across multiple generations of a single ranching family and, in other cases, forging new relationships with a succession of property owners.

As MALT's Stewardship Department staff, Allison Kiehl and I are responsible for visiting easement-protected properties annually. We observe and record changes in resources such as grasslands, stream corridors, and ranching infrastructure. As part of our annual visits, we take time to talk with property owners about the land and their operations. We also discuss any future plans they may have or assistance they may need such as advice on weed control, forage productivity, or stream restoration. We maintain detailed archival documentation of these annual site visits and all correspondence with easement landowners. With almost 41,000 acres of easement-protected land, it can take us up to six months to conduct and document annual site visits.

PARTNERS WITH LANDOWNERS

Easements preserve the land upon which a rich agricultural heritage has been built and flourishes still. We work with landowners and partnering organizations to help steward that heritage into the 21st century, with all its attendant challenges and opportunities. "For almost 30 years now, MALT has successfully supported innovations in sustainable farming and ranching, including market diversification and conservation planning," says Bob Berner, MALT's Executive Director.

Our next challenge, however, is at the door. MALT staff, along with UC Berkeley and UC Davis scientists, and representatives from the Marin Resource Conservation District (MRCD), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Marin Organic, sit on a steering committee for the Marin Carbon Project, a new research and agricultural extension initiative designed to quantify the potential for carbon sequestration in rangeland and agricultural soils. (Learn more about this project and whether farmland can help mitigate climate change on December 3 at our next "Food & Farming on the Urban Edge" talk. Details on page 6.)

WATER QUALITY

In the coming years, stewardship staff will be working actively with ranchers to meet new water quality standards under the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board's Conditional Grazing Waiver Program for Tomales Bay Watershed. This new regulatory program requires all grazing operations in the watershed to complete and implement conservation ranch plans.

The Board estimates it could cost \$70 million to put all of the practices identified in these plans into effect. Given the current economic crisis and declining commodity prices, agricultural producers will need continued community support and encouragement to remain in business.

MALT is dedicated to working with agricultural landowners and partnering agencies to make soil and water quality improvements on easement properties. This includes restoring stream corridors, off-channel water development, and sediment reduction projects. Marin ranchers like Sally and Mike Gale, who have a MALT easement on their 586-acre ranch in Chileno Valley, have worked hard to enhance and protect the agricultural and natural resource values on their property. "I am really thankful for all the excellent technical assistance we've received from MALT, the Marin RCD, and NRCS over the years," says Sally Gale.

As we continue our efforts to preserve Marin County farmland through the acquisition of conservation easements, stewardship staff will continue to work with partner agencies to try to help ensure that easement landowners have the technical support and funding assistance necessary to remain both economically viable and environmentally sustainable.

—PATRICIA HICKEY



Mia Pelletier

BOB BERNER HONORED FOR CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP



Elisabeth Ptak

TWO Marin County organizations recognized MALT Executive Director Bob Berner's long-term conservation leadership at their respective annual meetings held earlier this year.

At its 75th anniversary gala in April, the Marin Conservation League (MCL) bestowed its 2009 Marin Green Award for Environmental Leadership on Bob. While acknowledging that many other people have been involved in MALT's success, beginning with co-founders Ellen Straus and Phyllis Faber, MCL Board President Nona Dennis said, "Bob has kept a community of very independent people moving in one direction. That takes diligence, persistence, and staying power. Bob has a credibility that made us want to honor him."

In June, the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin honored Bob with the Peter Behr Award. "Bob has been such an important part of the land conservation movement in West Marin over the last few decades. Without his efforts, West Marin would look very different from the way it does today—to the detriment of local agriculture, wildlife, and scenic character," said Frederick Smith, Executive Director of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin. "EAC is honored to give him our highest award."

Bob has led MALT since 1984. During that time, farmland protected by MALT agricultural conservation easements has increased to 41,000 acres on 63 family farms and ranches.

FARM FIELD STUDIES

Fifty percent of Marin's land-use base is tied to agriculture, yet many Bay Area children never have set foot on a working farm. Marin Agricultural Land Trust's Farm Field Studies program for schools arranges visits to Marin farms and ranches, and offers a rich opportunity for hands-on learning about our food supply and the natural world. To find out more, or to apply online for a visit during the 2009-10 school year, visit www.malt.org/programs/education.

Pictured: Cathy Nicolini's kindergarten class from Bolinas-Stinson School visiting Gospel Flats Farm in Bolinas

MALT's Annual Black Mountain Hike—see page 6



Paige Green

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LAND TRUST ALLIANCE ACCREDITATION



THE land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands. The program is designed to provide the public with an independent assurance of the quality and permanence of land conservation.

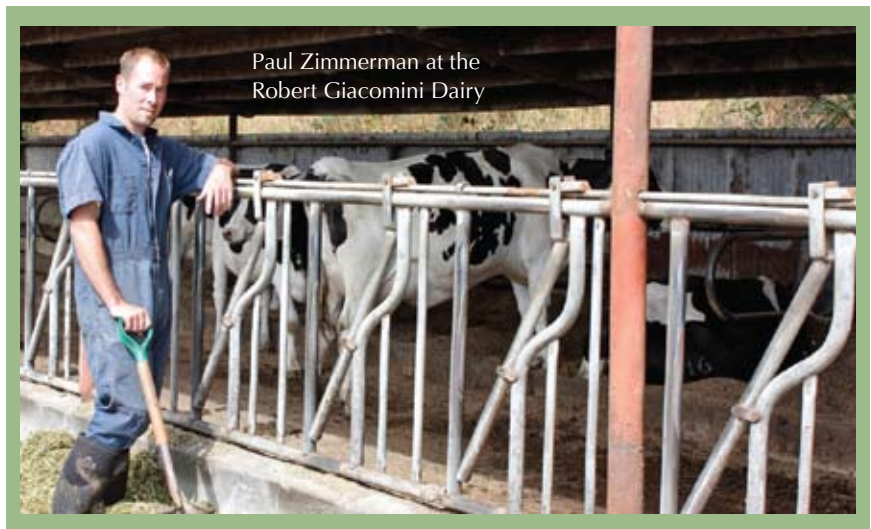
We are pleased to announce that we have filed an application for accreditation. Later this year, we will solicit your feedback and public comments on that application.

Hope Ratner, Office Manager, and Allison Kiehl, Stewardship

Associate, have been working on the application process for the last year. With Executive Director Robert Berner they have been evaluating MALT's readiness for the lengthy but rewarding process. Although MALT has been at the forefront of establishing land trust standards and practices, the process has enabled us to review and update policies and procedures in all areas of the organization. Watch our website, www.malt.org, and monthly e-newsletter for more details.



Elisabeth Ptak



Paul Zimmerman at the Robert Giacomini Dairy

Allison Kiehl

NEXT GENERATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

and buy land," he says. These days, land prices are out of reach for many people. He's also concerned that more and more land is being purchased by non-agricultural buyers, but he's hopeful this may offer an opportunity for younger people to lease the land for agricultural use. "Hopefully these new landowners are open to using the land for agriculture," Paul says. Overall, he remains optimistic. "It just means that young people are going to have to be creative and innovative if they want to survive economically in farming." It seems that Paul has been successful at this so far, as he carries on his family tradition as a dairyman—just down the road from where he grew up.

—ALLISON KIEHL

This is the second in a series of articles on the next generation of West Marin family farmers.

HIKES TOURS

FALL 2009

MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST TALKS

PRESERVING MARIN COUNTY FARMLAND



Paige Green

Locavore, Locavolt & Localand Sunday, September 13

Come learn about the movement to transition communities from dependence on fossil fuels to a local food, local energy, and local farm future. In his new book *Introduction to Energy in California*, speaker Peter Asmus highlights West Marin as a potential model for taking charge of its own energy production. Bernie Stephen of Transition West Marin will describe how communities can create resilience and reduce carbon emissions in response to peak oil and climate change. Local farmland is key to sustainability, so learn from MALT's Stewardship Director Patricia Hickey about its potential as a solution to global warming through carbon sequestration, local food, and energy production. We'll visit the McEvoy Ranch and others looking for solutions for a world without fossil fuels. Local delicacies by KT's Kitchen. **Pre-registration required.** Co-sponsored by Point Reyes Books and Transition West Marin.

TIME: 1 - 5 P.M.

COST: \$35 / \$ 45 non-members

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:

WHERE TO MEET: Dance Palace, 503 B St., Point Reyes Station; carpool to farms

WHAT TO BRING: Walking shoes, water, snacks

NOW: Register for HIKES & TOURS online at www.malt.org!

MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST HIKES & TOURS Registration Form

Due to ongoing concerns about Foot-and-Mouth Disease, we ask that individuals who have visited farms outside the U.S.A. up to 10 days prior to events not participate in farm tours. Weather can change quickly in West Marin. Bring a jacket for warmth, a hat for protection from the sun, and a daypack for food & drinks. **Most tours are not appropriate for young children.** Please check with MALT. For more detailed directions to a Hikes & Tours meeting place, phone 415-663-1158, Monday - Friday, 9 A.M.-5 P.M. or visit www.malt.org

- Easy:** Flat or very little slope in a distance of less than one mile
- Moderate:** Varied, mild terrain for one-five miles
- Difficult:** Steep terrain and/or over five miles
- Family Tour:** Activities appropriate for a family

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

I would like to sign up for the following MALT Hikes & Tours:

Hikes & Tours title	# people	date	cost
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
Total			\$ _____

Register by mail or at www.malt.org. Space is limited, and tours fill up at different rates. We do not have waiting lists. Pay total due by check or charge to VISA, Mastercard, or American Express. Full payment is required with registration. Confirmations will be sent. Refunds made only if MALT cancels a tour, or if tour is already full. Please be prompt. Events are timed around the work day schedules of the farm or ranch. Hikes & Tours are on private property; you have permission to enter for the MALT event only. You may not re-enter at another time. **Absolutely no pets allowed.**

Please complete other side of form.

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The Equinox Garden Saturday, September 12

Conservation Corps North Bay and UC Cooperative Extension have partnered with Indian Valley College to create a new organic teaching farm. The autumnal equinox is the perfect time to harvest, prepare the ground, and plant a winter garden. Join Wendy Johnson, co-founder of the Zen Center's Green Gulch Farm and Author of *Gardening at the Dragon's Gate*, for an introduction to winter organic gardening in Marin. Learn about cover crops, dividing herbaceous perennials, planting bulbs, composting, preparing to plant fruit trees, and growing nutritious and hardy greens. Come get your hands dirty sowing cover crops. Then we'll pick greens for a salad to share. **Pre-registration required.**

TIME: 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: Use Parking Lot #8 at Indian Valley College, 1800 Ignacio Blvd, Novato; Miwok Building, Rm. 114

WHAT TO BRING: Water, lunch, gardening clothes and shoes.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: 

COST: \$30/ \$40 non-members

Hog Island Oyster Co. & Straus Organic Dairy Thursday, September 24

Join local oyster growers for a tour of their watery farm. Taste oysters from Tomales Bay, and enjoy great views while eating your own picnic lunch. After lunch we'll carpool to the Straus Dairy to learn about treating cows with homeopathy, keeping organic feed free of genetically modified corn, and generating energy from a methane digester. Then we'll watch the cows being milked. The dairy was converted to organic in 1993 and today milks 270 cows. **Pre-registration required.**

TIME: 11 A.M. - 3 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: Hog Island Oyster Co., 20215 Highway One, Marshall (10 miles north of Point Reyes Station); carpool to dairy

WHAT TO BRING: Water, picnic lunch, shoes that can get dirty

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: 

COST: \$35/ \$45 non-members

McEvoy Olive Ranch Friday, October 2

Visit Nan McEvoy's 550-acre organic olive ranch in a spectacular valley near the Marin-Sonoma Border. See the orchards ripe with fruit, and learn how olives are grown. This organic ranch links the

farmscape with the landscape to increase wildlife habitat. Then tour the olive-pressing facility. Finally, taste the oil and, if you like, purchase a variety of products made with this wonderful farm product. **Pre-registration required.**

TIME: 9:45 A.M. - noon (Please arrive on time.)

WHERE TO MEET: McEvoy Ranch, 5 miles south of Petaluma at 5935 Red Hill Rd. (aka D Street or Point Reyes-Petaluma Rd)

WHAT TO BRING: Water, walking shoes

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: 

COST: \$30 / \$40 non-members

Nicasio Valley Farms Pumpkin Patch Open daily, October 3-31

Bring the kids for pumpkin picking, hay rides and mazes, farm animals, a farm stand, and the bouncy house and slide. Frank's Bar-B-Que will be on hand every weekend. PLUS: new educational exhibits and activities sponsored by MALT, Earl's Organics, Bank of Marin, and Clover-Stornetta Farms. Special weekend events include:

October 4, 10, 18, 25: Children's musician Tim Cain (11A.M.)

October 11, 4-H Day: Marin 4-H-ers will share displays and show the animals they've raised

October 18, MALT Day: Kids' games and contests along with wood-fired pizza by Fornax est, Mexican food by Delicias de Marin, Iron Springs Brewery beer, and educational booths by Marin Organic and Marin County Farmers Markets. 10% of pumpkin sales this day support MALT! **No pre-registration required**

TIME: 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: Nicasio Valley Farms, 1/4 mile north of Nicasio Square

COST: Admission is free. Phone 415-662-9100 for school group rates.

13th Annual Black Mountain Hike Saturday, October 10

Join MALT board, staff, volunteers, ranchers, historians, and naturalists for a strenuous hike to the top of this West Marin landmark. Learn about stewardship efforts from our staff and rancher Mike Giammona as you picnic on the summit. Black Mountain is located on the Nobmann Ranch, one of the largest properties protected by a MALT easement. The mountain provides spectacular views and supports an active beef cattle operation. **No pre-registration required.**

TIME: 10 A.M. - 2 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: West Marin School 11550 Hwy. 1, 1/4 mile north of Point Reyes Station. All must carpool from the school.

WHAT TO BRING: Water, picnic lunch, hiking shoes

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:   

COST: Free



The Nimans' Ranch Saturday, October 31

MALT members can join Bill and Nicolette Niman for a special, first-time tour of their spectacular Bolinas Ranch located in the GGNRA overlooking the Pacific Ocean. There they raise heritage turkeys, goats, grass-fed beef, and their newly born baby boy. Bill founded the Niman Ranch label which brought techniques of sustainably and humanely raised beef, pork, and sheep into the mainstream. The company was sold in 2009, and Bill returned to small-scale ranching. Nicolette's fascinating new book, *Righteous Porkchop*, is a defense of traditional farming and an exposé of industrial agriculture. This unique opportunity is for MALT members only.* **Pre-registration required.**

TIME: 10 A.M. - 2 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: 275 Mesa Rd, Bolinas

WHAT TO BRING: Picnic, water, hiking shoes

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:  

COST: \$50/MALT members only

*Not a member? Join now at www.malt.org or phone 415-663-1158.

Food & Farming on the Urban Edge Can Farmland Mitigate Climate Change? Thursday, December 3

Can farm and rangeland soils sequester greenhouse gasses and help stop global warming? The Marin Carbon Project is investigating whether certain management practices can make a difference. Soil cultivation and tillage techniques that reduce or eliminate soil disturbance and specialized grazing strategies are being studied. Lead scientist, Dr. Whendee Silver of UC Berkeley, will report on results to date. MALT Executive Director Bob Berner will explain the value to local farmers. We'll also hear from Project Director John Wick and rangeland expert Jeff Creque. *Presented in collaboration with the Institute at the Golden Gate.* **Pre-registration required.**

TIME: 6:30 P.M.

WHERE TO MEET: Cavallo Point, the Lodge at the Golden Gate, 601 Murray Circle, Fort Baker, Sausalito

COST: \$10 / \$15 non-members

MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST HIKES & TOURS Registration Form

name _____

street _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____

telephone _____ email _____

I'd also like to become a MALT member.

\$500 Patron \$250 Sponsor \$100 Associate \$75 Supporter \$40 Individual

Check enclosed Charge my credit card **Total Enclosed \$** _____

Absolutely no pets allowed.

card# _____ expiration date _____

signature _____

Mail completed registration form with checks made payable to MALT. Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Post Office Box 809, Point Reyes Station, California 94956 . 415-663-1158

Please complete other side of form.



John Finger of Hog Island Oyster Co.

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LOOKING FOR A POSITIVE FINANCIAL IDEA?

Partners for Preservation, MALT's planned giving program, provides an opportunity for individuals to make a charitable gift with their estate assets. These Partners help secure MALT's financial future, and ensure our success in preserving agriculture and open space in Marin County for generations to come.

Planned giving is a term that covers different types of charitable gifts including bequests, trusts, and gifts of retirement benefits. These gifts allow you to leave a real legacy with lasting, positive impact that continues far beyond your lifetime.

We hope you will consider a legacy gift to MALT to help preserve the character and rural landscape of Marin County for future generations. If you'd like more information, or would like to receive our free Estate Planning Kit, please contact Kristine Ball, kball@malt.org.

SPECIAL TOUR TO BENEFIT MALT!

ORGANIC FARMS &
GARDENS OF BRITAIN

June 15–25, 2010

Britain has long been in the forefront of the organic farming movement, thanks in part to Prince Charles' passionate involvement. Visit some of its most celebrated organic farms and beautiful gardens on a 10-day tour with Coopersmith's One-of-a-Kind Tours. The Prince's Duchy Home Farm in the Cotswolds is also on the itinerary (if nothing unexpected occurs with Charles' schedule). Also savor unique gardens rarely open to the public, premier seats at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, a scenic cruise on Lake Windermere, and stays at two of England's finest hotels. Tour limited to 20. Price includes a \$250/person tax-deductible donation to MALT, to be matched by Coopersmith's! Full pricing and details at 415-669-1914 or paul@coopersmiths.com or www.malt.org.



Elisabeth Ptak

GETTING EDUCATED ABOUT MALT

How did you first hear about Marin Agricultural Land Trust? Where did you get your MALT "education"? These are the questions I've been asking some of our members lately.

One woman said it took hearing about MALT three or four times before she really understood what we do. She had a vague idea of farmland being protected, but it wasn't until she started going to farmers' markets and thinking about where that food came from that she made the connection between MALT's preservation of the land and her access to that local food.

Another long-time member told me of his weekly bicycle rides out to West Marin from Mill Valley. Several years ago his fellow cyclists started his MALT "education" by telling him that the open landscape he enjoyed every week was only possible because of the hard work

that farmers, ranchers, the County of Marin, and MALT did to keep it in active agriculture.

For years I have gardened organically and shopped at farmer's markets. My family are avid mushroom hunters, we keep chickens, and we've all read Michael Pollan's seminal book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. But I first heard about MALT from an artist I knew who encouraged me to attend the organization's spectacular *Ranches & Rolling Hills* landscape art show. Then, naturally, we became members.

Now that I work for MALT, I love hearing your stories of why you've joined this dynamic group of people in preserving Marin County farmland. Please also join us in educating your friends about MALT. Your enthusiasm is our best advertisement. The more people we can bring into this community, the more farmland will be protected—*forever*.

—KRISTINE BALL

Hold the date!

MALT
Holiday Open House
Friday, December 11 5–7 PM
Dance Palace Community Center
Point Reyes Station

MALIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

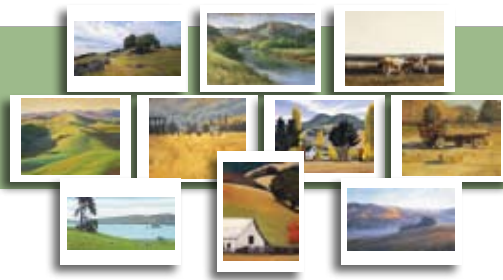
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Women's sizes	S, M, L	\$20	_____
Men's sizes	M, L, XL	\$20	_____

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 other items at
malt.org

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MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST is a private, member-supported, nonprofit organization created in 1980 by a coalition of ranchers and environmentalists to permanently preserve Marin County farmlands for agricultural use. MALT eliminates the development potential on farmland through the acquisition of conservation easements in voluntary transactions with landowners. MALT also encourages public policies which support and enhance agriculture.