



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Sobrato High School Students Plant Hedgerows around the School Farm

Coyote Valley, California -- On Friday, April 17, 2015, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sobrato High School Horticulture program students will be planting a pollinator/ harvestable hedgerow of fruit trees, herb shrubs and native plants along the western edge of the school's 2-acre farm. Later in the spring, the students will be planting a windbreak hedgerow of native shrubs and trees along the northern edge of school farm. These two hedgerows – over 10,000 square feet combined - will have habitat and windbreak functions and will also be an important teaching tool. The hedgerow design and planting is being overseen by Sam Earnshaw of Hedgerows Unlimited, who has established over 400 miles of hedgerows in California.

“We’re delighted that the students have this opportunity to learn about planting and about the many ways that hedgerows can benefit farms,” says Vera Gomes, Assistant Principal and long-time agriculture program teacher. The high school has a long term goal to develop a 10-acre organic row crop and orchard demonstration farm next to the current 2-acre farm, which mainly focuses on animal husbandry. Recent soil bore tests have shown that the location has excellent soil, but fulfilling the school’s dream of developing a diversified demo farm will require planning and resources. The project already has a key asset – dedicated community engagement.

The hedgerow planting is a partnership between the high school’s acclaimed agriculture program, in which about a third of the school’s 1,500 students are involved, and Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE), a nonprofit dedicated to supporting agriculture near cities. SAGE is working with the high school on the hedgerow and the demonstration farm planning, as part of the project, Revitalizing Specialty Crop Agriculture in the Coyote Valley, funded by a California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Specialty Crop Block grant. This project is guided by the Coyote Valley Agricultural Enterprise and Conservation program (COVAEC) Advisory Committee.

The website [Discover Coyote Valley](http://www.discovercoyotevalley.org) provides more information about Coyote Valley agriculture, local farmers, educational activities and the project in general. Other upcoming activities include a [Hummingbird Habitat Workshop](#) on April 22, 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., being held at the High School, and a [Water Efficient Drip Irrigation in Greenhouses Workshop](#) on April 23, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. being held in a Coyote Valley greenhouse. Both workshops are free and open to the public.

For more information about the hedgerow planting, the workshops and the Coyote Valley Specialty Crop project, please contact Sibella Kraus by email at sibella@discovercoyotevalley.org.

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