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# California

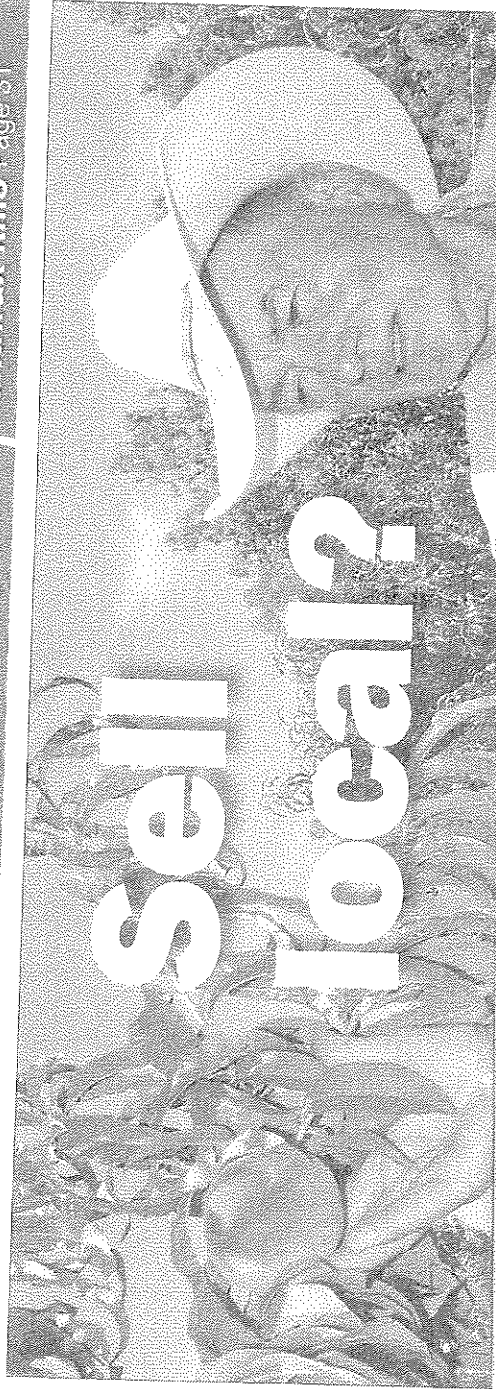
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## FARMER

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**PEACH AND CATTLE RANCHER:** Fred Manas is the owner of Manas Ranch in Esparto. In addition to growing peaches, he and his wife, Alice, are beef producers. They are opening a beef cut-and-wrap facility in January.



**By KATHY COATNEY**

**INCREASINGLY**, growers are looking for ways to remain local and expand their niche markets, but many times they face an uphill battle.

Morgan Doran, University of California Cooperative Extension livestock adviser for Solano County, helped put together the Yolo Regional Food Forum in Woodland earlier this year.

**Local strategies**

The forum established working groups that targeted strategies to assist farmers in keeping regionally produced food in the

**Key Points**

- A regional bounty looks for ways farmers can remain local and expand.
- A meat harvesting facility is high on the local list of needs.
- Also key on the list are aggregation centers for processing and distribution.

regional supply chain. These strategies could be replicated statewide, Doran says.

A meat harvesting facility was high on the list at the forum, Doran says, followed by creating an ombudsman position to assist farmers and processors in navigat-

ing the regulatory process. The group also listed aggregation centers for processing and distribution of commodities.

Holly King is a member of King and Gardner Farms, a large family-owned operation in Clovis. King attended the forum for the future possibility of selling a value-added product locally.

"With the L.A. Food Shed getting started — and we're sitting in Bakersfield — we're certainly in their food shed," she says.

King believes the existing infrastructure doesn't serve the regional food-system type of market in terms of growing and marketing products locally. "I think that infrastructure is a big hurdle or constraint," she says.

King is also working with a land trust that she consults with, and they are interested in farmland protection. "They're into land conservation. Agriculture is one of the areas in which they work," she says.

**Local needs**

The land trust applied for, and received, a small grant from Western Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education.

"We're working with five or six farmers on this project of identifying what the constraints are in the local food system; market, how to address them, and what's our implementation plan," King says.

*Coatney is a Corning writer.*

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