

# **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 3/19/03**

## **Creation of New VIVA FOUNDATION On National Agriculture Day, March 21, 2003**

This is National Agriculture Week (March 16-22), and Friday, March 21, is National Agriculture Day. California's largest industry is agriculture but California's urban areas appear to have lost their connection to agriculture and the importance of keeping it in and around cities. World-wide, the best agricultural land is being destroyed by urban development. To keep control of the quality of our food, we must keep some of our good soil locally in agriculture.

On National Agriculture Day we are announcing the beginning of our new nonprofit foundation called THE VIVA FOUNDATION (Valley Initiative for Values in Agriculture). This organization will improve the Valley's community by:

- Slowing down the privatization of our public agricultural and horticultural land,
- Creating an educational and organizational center where agricultural and environmental issues are addressed,
- Helping to retain permanent agricultural land in and near our urban areas,
- Improving our schools and gardens with examples and education,
- Uplifting our governments to see the value of bringing back our "Valley of Heart's Delight,"
- Encouraging green and sustainable development ideas for all new construction,
- Creating communities with knowledgeable and active citizens who make positive contributions to these ends,
- Demonstrating ideas for growing food and for eating nutritiously,
- Developing school gardens which provide healthy food for children,
- Sharing culturally different foods and herbal medicines in community gardens.

Our first project will be the 17 acre 82-year-old UC Ag Research Center in Santa Clara (also known as BAREC). We will help the cities of Santa Clara and San Jose to keep as much of this land zoned agriculturally to ensure that whatever development that does take place will be green/sustainable development reflecting the land's agricultural history. On this land we will create an educational center for agriculture and horticulture, continue some agricultural research, retain the historical relationship of this land with the Veterans of the Civil War by creating a museum for them and the Valley's agricultural heritage, and provide a central facility for agricultural and environmental organizations. The Center is unique. There is nothing like it in the State and we want to retain the good it has given us. The marriage of high technology, biology, and health could begin at the Center and help reinvent Silicon Valley.

For further information or donations to VIVA you can call us at 408-292-9595 or check out our website at [www.secretgardens.com](http://www.secretgardens.com) regarding what we are doing at the Center. Or contact Yolanda Reynolds [yolandar@earthlink.net](mailto:yolandar@earthlink.net) tel. 408.286.6310