

Farmer Profile
Shakefork Community Farm

Located in Humboldt County, [Shakefork Community Farm](#) is no stranger to farming and providing for their local community. The farmers/owners, Melaine and Kevin Cunningham, aim to provide their community with the same nutrient-dense, seasonally-based diet that they provide for themselves, as well as practice sustainable farming that continues to improve the soil and pasture for future seasons.

Melaine and Kevin both journeyed to Humboldt County to learn about the art of organic farming. Eventually, their teachings led them to produce and sell 70 shares in the county's first grain CSA in 2007. Their efforts provided 85 families in the community with a mix of stone-ground, whole-grain landrace wheat, rye, barley and buckwheat flours. Soon after, in 2009, they purchased their current property, 85 acres of open, flat ground on the Van Duzen River floodplain. While the rocky geography of their land has caused them to scale back on grain production, it has given them the space to grow 8 acres of mixed veggies, berries, flowers and herbs. The farm also produces pasture-raised, organic chicken and eggs, Thanksgiving turkeys, and grass-finished lamb on 35 acres managed through planned grazing of sheep, cattle, hens and Freedom Ranger broilers.

Their efforts towards sustainable farming begin and end everyday with their two oxen Tex and Joseph. Trained from birth, these oxen play an essential role on the farm by tilling and cultivating the land, shaping beds, weeding and planting and harvesting potatoes. The farm also has its own composting to ensure that soil richness and fertility is kept on-site.

Today, Melanie and Kevin provide their community with local farm fresh goods through their own [CSA program](#) as well as educational opportunities, in and out the classroom, for several elementary schools in the area.

Shakefork Community Farm has been a member of CAFF for several years. By partnering with CAFF they have been able to stay current with issues impacting growers and been able to gain guidance and assistance with their CSA program expansion, including obtaining an EBT machine so their customers can use Cal Fresh benefits. In addition, they have worked with CAFF's Farm to School program to offer spring and fall farm field trips to 2nd and 3rd graders for three elementary schools in the region.