

Van Alen Climate Council

An exploration of the
Sacramento and Central
Valley region

9-11
January 2019

Designing for a Future of Food
Part 2

Itinerary

**VAN
ALEN**

INSTITUTE

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<https://www.vanalen.org>

About the Climate Council

Van Alen Institute's Climate Council is a platform for exchange for leading architects, landscape architects, engineers, planners, researchers, philanthropic partners, and other professionals. The Climate Council's purpose is to investigate critical climate-related issues, inspire change-making design projects that can improve the environment and promote healthy communities, produce mindset changes regarding climate issues, and guide Van Alen's innovative public programming, research, and design competitions.

Van Alen believes that a resilient environment is key to human well-being and the protection of critical natural systems. Therefore, the Climate Council will look beyond cities to our continent's rapidly changing landscapes and ecosystems. Through carefully curated trips, participants will explore the effects of climate change and related environmental crises first-hand. With this exposure, they will be able to respond more effectively and proactively through their work and personal advocacy.

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Participants

Council Co-Chair

Mark Johnson
President, Civitas

Claire Weisz
Principal, WXY Studio

Council

Pamela Conrad
CMG Landscape Architects

Rupal Sanghvi
HealthxDesign

S. Bry Sarté
Sherwood Design Engineers

Steven Baumgartner
SmithGroupJJR

Todd Kohli
SmithGroupJJR

Gary Sorge
Stantec

Chris Reed
Stoss Landscape Urbanism

Amy Whitesides
Stoss Landscape Urbanism

Barbara Wilks
W Architecture + Landscape
Architecture

Erik Verboon
Walter P Moore

Mark Yoes
WXY Studio

Van Alen

Elissa Black
Van Alen Institute

Jared Della Valle
Board Chair, Van Alen Institute

Stacey Anderson
Van Alen Institute

Partners

Sahoko Yui
UC Davis

William Menking
Architects Newspaper

Lodging Info

**Kimpton Sawyer
Hotel**

500 J Street
Sacramento, CA
95814

Room Block

Van Alen
Institute

For questions
regarding your
room

Monica Ramos
(916) 399-4740
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sawyerhotel.com

Designing for a Future of Food: Introduction

We have entered an age of increasing uncertainty, as climate change compromises food production and access the world over, while the agricultural sectors themselves contribute substantially to the problem. Impacts can be felt with particular potency in “breadbaskets” like California, the location of the **Van Alen Institute Climate Council’s** inaugural trip. Addressing this urgent situation calls for a proactive, all hands on deck approach and has inspired the Council to pose the provocative question: “how can designers apply their expertise to creating a food system that can carry us into the future?”

On the occasion of the Council’s first trip to California this past July, the group launched into their exploration of food systems by surveying three major components of food production – water, labor, and land – and considering the impacts for design on each. Through visits to sites ranging from a distribution center to a tomato processing plant, the Council examined the capacity of food production and transportation systems to meet the demands of an ever-increasing global population. They learned about the advanced technologies and ambitious policies being applied to increase efficiency and production output, while responding to the realities of a changing climate.

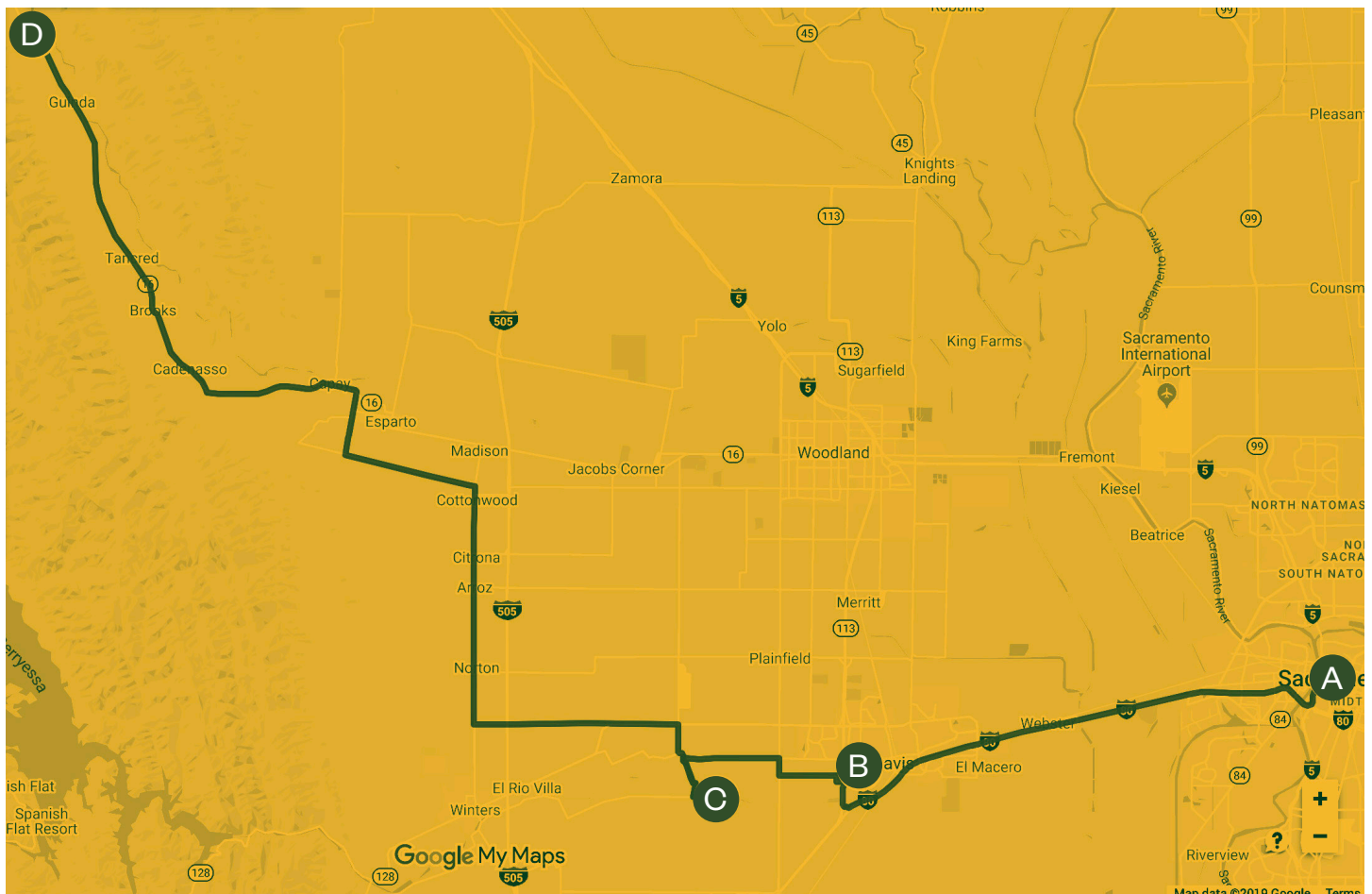
During this return visit, the Council will build upon their foundational knowledge of the technological solutions applied to optimizing food production, while delving deeper into the social dimensions of creating a sustainable food system. In what ways are the people who comprise the food system – the farmer, the farm worker, and the consumer – impacted by its inefficiencies and the effects of climate change? How can interdisciplinary design professionals enhance the security and resilience of communities that support or are conversely supported by the agricultural industry?

The Council’s investigation will take place principally in the San Joaquin Valley, which is among the world’s most productive agricultural regions and one acutely impacted by the effects climate change, like drought and increased temperatures. Over the course of three days, Council member will probe the knowledge of experts across policy, academia, and science, and venture into the region to engage directly with farmers, workers, and community members, priming them to identify areas for meaningful impact.

Wednesday, January 9th

Day 1

Day one is dedicated to revisiting findings from the Council's inaugural meeting, filling in knowledge gaps through conversation with local experts, and exploring smaller scale farms, distinct from the industrial operations highlighted during the July trip. The morning will kickoff at **UC Davis** with a two part workshop led by design thinking expert, Hans Haenlein. After the Council has coalesced around key takeaways from the first trip, a cross section of experts will join for breakout discussions. The Council will then venture into the Sacramento and Capay Valleys to visit two unique family-run organic farms, **Yolo Press** and **Full Belly Farm**. The day will culminate with a private dinner at Full Belly Farm.



Wednesday, January 9th

Day 1

8:00am

Meet in Hotel Lobby for Welcome and Introductions **A**

8:15am

Board Bus to **UC Davis, ARC Conference Center**
232 ARC One Shields Avenue Davis, CA 95616 **B**

9:00am

Breakfast + Internal Kickoff Meeting

10:30am

Exchange with Experts + Catered Networking Lunch

2:30pm

Visit **Yolo Press**

6446 Putah Creek Lane, Winters, CA 95694 **C**

Yolo Press is a 20-acre organic farm outside of Davis run by Mike Madison and his wife. A trianed ecologist (Ph.D., Harvard, F.L.S., London) turned farmer, Madison has authored two books on the ecology of agriculture in the region, most recently *Fruitful Labor: The Ecology, Economy and Practice of a Family Farm*.

Yolo Press



Wednesday, January 9th

Day 1

3:30pm

Bus to Capay Valley

4:30pm

Visit **Full Belly Farm**

16090 County Road 43, Guinda, CA 95637 **D**

Scaling up to a 400-acre certified organic farm, Full Belly has been applying organic practices since 1985 and supports a system of over 80 different crops. The farm is a leader in long-term environmental stewardship and practices social sustainability through employment and training programs.

6:30pm

Dinner at Full Belly Farm

8:00pm

Board Bus to Hotel

9:00pm

Optional Nightcap at **The Revival**
3rd Floor, Kimpton Sawyer Hotel

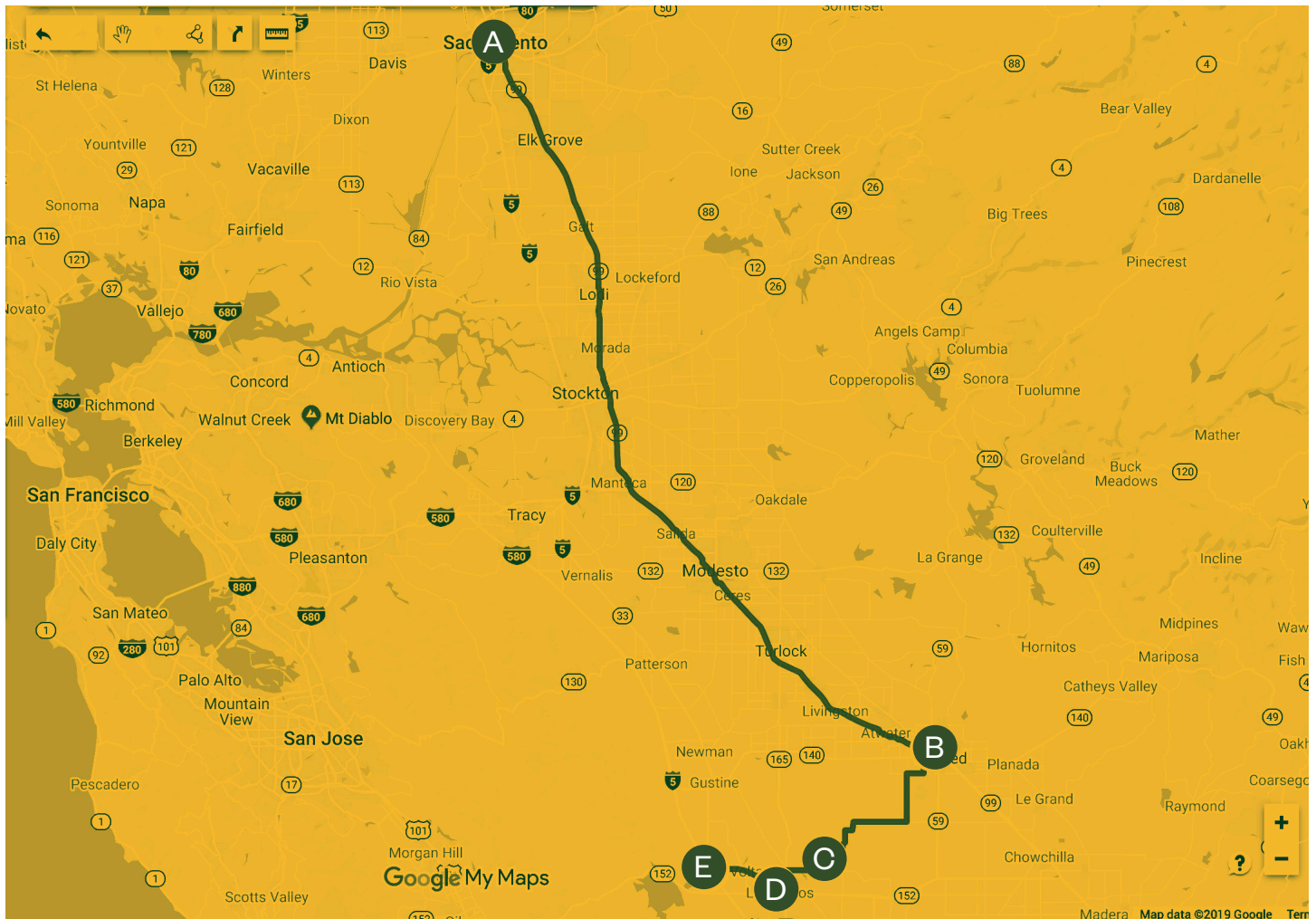


Full Belly Farm

Thursday, January 10th

Day 2

Day two, the Council will bus back down to the San Joaquin Valley to draw upon its knowledge in engaging with a new set of stakeholders. The day is anchored by a return visit to Merced County's **Bowles Farming Company**. In stark contrast to the abundance of Bowles, the drive down South will feature a visits to the **Merced County Food Bank** – ground zero for food insecurity. Rounding out the day, the Council will hear first-hand the experiences of farm workers at the Madera outpost of Farm Workers United, the nation's first and largest farm workers union.



Thursday, January 10th

Day 2

7:15am

Check out of Kimpton Sawyer Hotel

7:30am

Breakfast at **Echo & Rig**

1st Floor, Kimpton Sawyer Hotel **A**

8:00am

Board Bus to San Joaquin Valley

8:30am

Screen “Beyond the Brink” (2018)

“Beyond the Brink” is a film that explores the food-water nexus in the context of the San Joaquin Valley, a region that represents the ever-increasing difficulties encountered by farmers, farm labor, and consumers in the age of drought and water scarcity.

10:00am

Visit **Merced County Food Bank**

2000 W Olive Ave, Merced, CA 95348 **B**

Through the acquisition, storage, and distribution of nutritious food, the MCFB aims to improve the health and well-being of residents affected by hunger in Merced County, which is among the most food-insecure counties in the nation. The Council will tour the facility and hear from Executive Director, Bill Gibbs, and his staff.

Beyond the Brink



Merced County Food Bank

Thursday, January 10th

Day 2

11:15am

Board bus to Los Banos

Bowles Farming Company

12:00pm

Sit down Lunch

1:00pm

Visit **Bowles Farming Company**

11609 Hereford Rd, Los Banos, CA 93635 **C**

Bowles is a 6th generation farming operation that oversees 11,000 acres and is a major player in the state's agricultural industry. They are renowned for their innovative and progressive practices surrounding water usage, labor, staffing, logistics, weather, technology adoption, and data management.

4:45pm

Board Bus to Madera

5:30pm

Presentation and Conversations at United Farm Workers

The UFW champions legislative and regulatory reforms for farm workers, covering issues such as worker protections, pesticides and immigration reform. Successes include the first standards in the U.S. to prevent deaths and illnesses from extreme heat and, in 2016, the first law in the country providing farm workers in California with overtime pay after eight hours a day.

7:30pm

Dinner at **Wool Growers Restaurant** with Bowles leadership

A 100 year old restaurant that carries the tradition of French, Basque Food in the heart of Los Banos.

609 H St, Los Banos, CA 93635 **D**

9:00pm

Drive to **Hotel Mission De Oro** in Santa Nella

13070 CA-33, Santa Nella, CA 95322 **E**

Wool Growers Restaurant



Friday, January 11th

Day 3

Day three the Council will generate design interventions in response to all they have learned. With Bowles as the principal “client”, the Council will have toured the farm and its surrounding facilities, interviewed key staff including the farm’s trained technicians and the manager of the rotating harvest crew, as well as, sat down with the Local County Supervisor of the neighboring town, Los Banos, with which the farm has deep historical ties. After the charrette concludes, the Council will return to Bowles to present and discuss their ideas with staff. Lunch will be served and the members will travel by coach to the Bay Area of Back to Sacramento, arriving early evening.

Bowles Farming Company

7:45am

Meet in Hotel Conference Room for breakfast

8:30am

Design Charrette at Hotel Mission De Oro

11:30 AM

Board Bus to Bowles Farming

12:00pm

Council Presentations to Bowles Farming Staff + Discussion

1:30pm

Catered Lunch is served

2:30pm

Board Bus to Sacramento or to Bay Area

5:30pm

Approximate Arrival in Respective City



