

KNOW YOUR FARMER, KNOW YOUR FOOD

Two Dog Farm Santa Cruz, CA

Just 20 miles north of Santa Cruz, nestled between the beach and Big Basin Redwoods State Park, you will find Nibby and Mark Bartle, owners, managers, farmers, and stewards of the 14 acres of land known as Two Dog Farm.

As Nibby puts it, both she and Mark kind of fell into the lifestyle of farming. Having a background in environmental studies from the University of Santa Cruz, Nibby had been teaching outdoor science for kids and realized how much she enjoyed the gardening aspect of her work. She went on to study agroecology and horticulture, and met Mark while farming at Molino Creek Farm Collective, where they worked for fifteen years before starting Two Dog Farm in 2001.



Two Dog Farm comprises two acres of irrigated land where they grow lettuces, sunflowers, zucchini, kale, chard, beets, broccoli, cabbage, and basil. In the other six-acre parcels, they use “dry farming” techniques to grow tomatoes and winter squash--and when they say “dry farming” they mean it! No watering. Never. As Nibby says, “lots of people claim they dry farm tomatoes, but they inevitably have to do some watering because they live where it’s very hot. We don’t have the option of watering,” but being so close to the coast, it’s cool enough and the soil is rich enough that the crops are able to find moisture in the soil left over from winter rains.

Two Dog Farm is a true family farming operation. Mark and Nibby’s children, Miles and Lily, help out on the farm in the summer, along with a few seasonal workers and two dogs.



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