

Fresno County Farm Bureau

Friends of the Family Farm Premium Member

Sorensen Harvesting *Continuing the legacy*

The Sorensen's have deep roots in California agriculture. The family has been farming in Fresno County for five generations.

Mark Sorensen, who currently serves as FCFB's president, always knew he wanted to be involved in agriculture. From a young age, he spent his summers working on the family farm, gaining hands-on experience. Later, he began to grow his own farming operation.

Throughout his career, he experienced the ups and downs of the industry. After going through a labor shortage in the mid-1990s, Sorensen began converting his vineyards to dried-on-the-vine (DOV).

Also in response to the labor shortage, a long-time manager of Sorensen's encouraged him to invest in DOV harvest equipment. Thus, Sorensen Harvesting was formed, specializing in DOV harvesting and later incorporating continuous tray harvesting.

"The opportunity came up for us to do a couple acres DOV, and I liked being in control of harvest," said Sorensen.

When Sorensen Harvesting began, continuous tray wasn't being used. It wasn't until 2006 that the company began incorporating this technique as well. This addition allowed the operation to keep a larger work force employed for a longer period of time. It works out that the continuous tray harvest season starts before the DOV harvest season.

Additionally, as Sorensen's son-in-laws joined the family, he saw the benefit and value of this business. He expanded the operation so they could be involved full-time. Today, the bulk of Sorensen Harvesting's business is in continuous tray harvesting.



Sorensen Harvesting employs up to 30 people during harvest. Nearly 90 percent of those employed have been with the company for many years. A full-time mechanic was also recently hired.

"By hiring the same work force year-after-year, we are able to continuously improve each season," said Sorensen. "Our employees are good people who care about what they're doing."

During harvest season, which runs from the last week of August to the middle of October, the company runs 24 hours a day. The territory is from Easton to Selma.

"For me, it's very important to treat everyone's field like my own. I take pride in my work and my name," said Sorensen. "Quality control is also very important to me. This is an area that I'm continuously improving in."

Sorensen Harvesting became a *Friends of the Family Farm* premium member because the company believes in what Farm Bureau does and that it's a good way to support the organization on top of annual membership dues.

To learn more about Sorensen Harvesting, visit www.sorensenharvesting.com, or call 559-905-1210.