

**Weekly Ag Report**  
**Bernice Hagata, Lassen CattleWomen**  
**April 18, 2018**

My name is Bernice Hagata. Earth Day is April 22, and I want to share with you some local Earth Day history.

In the early 1800s, a Mexican brought 200 head of cattle into California. I wonder how many of you know that in the early 1900s many of these hills in Lassen County were being grazed with sheep. Those hills were being used.

Our forefathers realized that for our country to grow and prosper, they needed people to go out and live on the land, develop it, and recover mineral resources. So, they started the "Homestead Act." This gave government an opportunity to make laws for the BLM, Forest Service, and Fish and Game. It subsidized the cost for using these mountains with restrictive conditions, permits, and management. It became an excellent tax revenue for the federal government.

Today more than 22,000 ranches graze sheep and cattle on federal land. They maintain fences and water sources. They provide habitat for 75% of wildlife, and grazing improves soil erosion and reduces wildfires.

Today California ranks fourth in total cattle numbers, behind Texas, Nebraska and Kansas. Beef and beef products are in the top 20 of California's exports. In Lassen County, government and agriculture are the number one industries.

Local history records reveal that the "Homestead Act" was a major beginning of farming and ranching in Lassen County. Here is an example – in 1904, John Hagata came to Susanville from France to work on a ranch in Johnstonville. He eventually entered the "Homestead Act" which was the beginning of the Hagata Ranch in Willow Creek Valley, a family operation which has been passed down directly from father to son for four generations – over 114 years! All thanks to great-great grandfather, John Hagata. So, you see, we are examples of these old time ranchers with a passion for the industry to keep it alive and strong. We are "Stewards of the Land."

In closing, I want to thank KSUE for this opportunity to share information with you listeners. I declare that to Lassen County Cattlemen, CattleWomen, Farm Bureau, FFA & 4-H every day is Earth Day!