Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to pay tribute to Mr. Elio Rodoni, who has been named Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau's 2001 Farmer of the Year.

Mr. Rodoni, is the son of Andreina and the late Dante Rodoni, and the younger brother of Mario Rodoni. Mr. Rodoni's sister Janee passed away two years ago. Mr. Elio Rodoni celebrates this great honor with his many friends, colleagues, and family. Mr. Rodoni and his wife, Joy have three children, Catherine, Stephen, and Robert. Both of Mr. Rodoni's sons farm in the Watsonville and Moss Landing areas.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to honor Mr. Rodoni, who has been a member of the Farm Bureau for over 35 years. Mr. Rodoni grew up on a Brussel sprout farm on the coast just north of Santa Cruz, in the 15th Congressional District. He always helped on the farm, and knew early on that he wanted to be a farmer. The skills that Mr. Rodoni developed as a child, combined with the knowledge he gained from his involvement with Future Farmers of America while he was a student at Santa Cruz High School, led the way to Mr. Rodoni's successful career as a farmer. Mr. Rodoni, who began working fulltime as a farmer immediately after graduating from high school, purchased an interest in a Brussel sprout farm in 1960. He later ran this farm with the help of his partners, brother Mario and his late sister's husband, Mac Morelli.

Mr. Rodoni has served as a dedicated and innovative member of the Santa Cruz County Community, and the entire farming community. As a member of the Future Farmers of America, he helped with displays at county fairs, served as a delegate to the California State Convention, and was chapter president during his senior year at Santa Cruz High School. For most of his life, Mr. Rodoni has dedicated his time and energy to his farms. He was one of the first farmers to utilize mechanical harvesting, and has always understood the importance of diversity in his crops. He is a hardworking farmer, and knowledgeable businessman.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to pay tribute to the Mr. Elio Rodoni for his contributions to the farming community and the 15th Congressional District. I commend and congratulate him on this important occasion.