

Essential fall fun includes pumpkins and a corn maze

Contributed by Harold LaBonte
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LAKEPORT ‐ Few things symbolize October as much as a bright orange pumpkin, and there aren't many better ways to spend a warm fall afternoon than working your way through a spooky corn maze.

If you want to find both together, then it's time for a visit to Sutton Family Farm's pumpkin patch and corn maze, which are in full swing again this season.

This is the fourth year that owners Michael and Stephanie Sutton and their daughter, Samantha, have had a maze at their Scotts Valley farm.

The Suttons moved to Scotts Valley seven years ago from Marin County. Originally, they planned to grow pears, Samantha Sutton explained, but they knew nothing about pears and soon changed to the crops they harvest today.

Sutton estimated about 350 people a day are visiting the farm on the weekends this month.

The Suttons' maze is shaped from a field of silage corn ‐ used for feeding livestock ‐ because it features taller stalks, which makes for a more challenging trip through the maze, Sutton explained.

She said the maze also has grown every year ‐ both in size and difficulty ‐ and now measures four and a half acres. The challenges offered in the maze are designed for people of all ages.

Some visitors to the maze Saturday said that younger children can be expected to take an hour or more to get through the maze, with adults taking 45 minutes or less.

The cost for the maze is \$6 per person, with children 4 and under entering for free.

Then there are the hundreds of bright orange homegrown pumpkins, as well as gourds, that visitors can take home with them for Halloween.

There also are Dutch Draft carriage rides, offered on weekends only, which take visitors for a 20-minute tour of the farm.

The Suttons will host Rocktoberfest, featuring several local bands playing at the farm, on Saturday, Oct. 25.

Sutton Family Farms is located at 2405 Scotts Valley Road, telephone 263-6277. E-mail Harold LaBonte at hlabonte@lakeconew.com.

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