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## Santa Rosa Notes

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A federal grant will help farmers in Santa Rosa County grow specialty crops, garbage collection rules could change in south Santa Rosa, and an as-yet-undisclosed tech company is being courted by Santa Rosa.

### **TEAM Santa Rosa gets federal ag grant**

The TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council has been approved for a \$175,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant that will create a revolving loan fund.

That money will be offered to local farmers desiring a transition to specialty crop production.

"Local farmers that want to produce specialty crops like peppers, squash and watermelons instead of traditional row crops like peanuts and cotton, will be eligible for these loans," said Ildi Hosman, spokeswoman for TEAM. "Specialty crops are more profitable than traditional row crops because they are in demand by the local consumer, have a short transportation requirement and do not require a government subsidy."

The loans will be awarded by TEAM's new Revolving Loan Fund Committee.

"The program will be active after the (department) releases the funds to us. This could be several months out," Hosman said. "In the meantime, the Revolving Loan Fund Committee will be called to draw up policies and procedures along with forms that will be used for distributing the loans."

### **Santa Rosa seeks garbage proposals for south end**

The Santa Rosa County Commission is seeking proposals from solid waste removal service providers

to serve a potential franchise area the south end of the county.

"Already, I've had four companies contact me saying they are interested in this," Commission Chairman Gordon Goodin said in April. "Hopefully, we'll be able to provide better service for less money."

Right now, all residents in unincorporated areas of Santa Rosa County may contract with a garbage provider of their choice, or dispose of their garbage themselves.

The franchise would cover all of unincorporated Santa Rosa County south of the East River, including Navarre, Navarre Beach, Midway, Tiger Point and Gulf Breeze addresses east of Naval Live Oaks.

## County courts 500-job tech company

The Santa Rosa County Commission endorsed giving state tax breaks to a new information technology company that could bring 500 jobs to East Milton in March.

The commission approved a resolution qualifying a business referred to only as "Project Snake Eyes" as a "qualified target industry" to receive special state tax incentives. Information companies — along with manufacturers, financial, wholesale firms and others — are highly sought by the state and are offered special incentives to locate or expand within Florida.

The TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council has been working with Project Snake Eyes for about a year. TEAM doesn't disclose the names of companies considering coming to Santa Rosa before an agreement has been reached.

The company is seeking a waiver from the qualified target industry requirements that companies pay more than the average local wage, which is currently \$14.62 per hour.

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