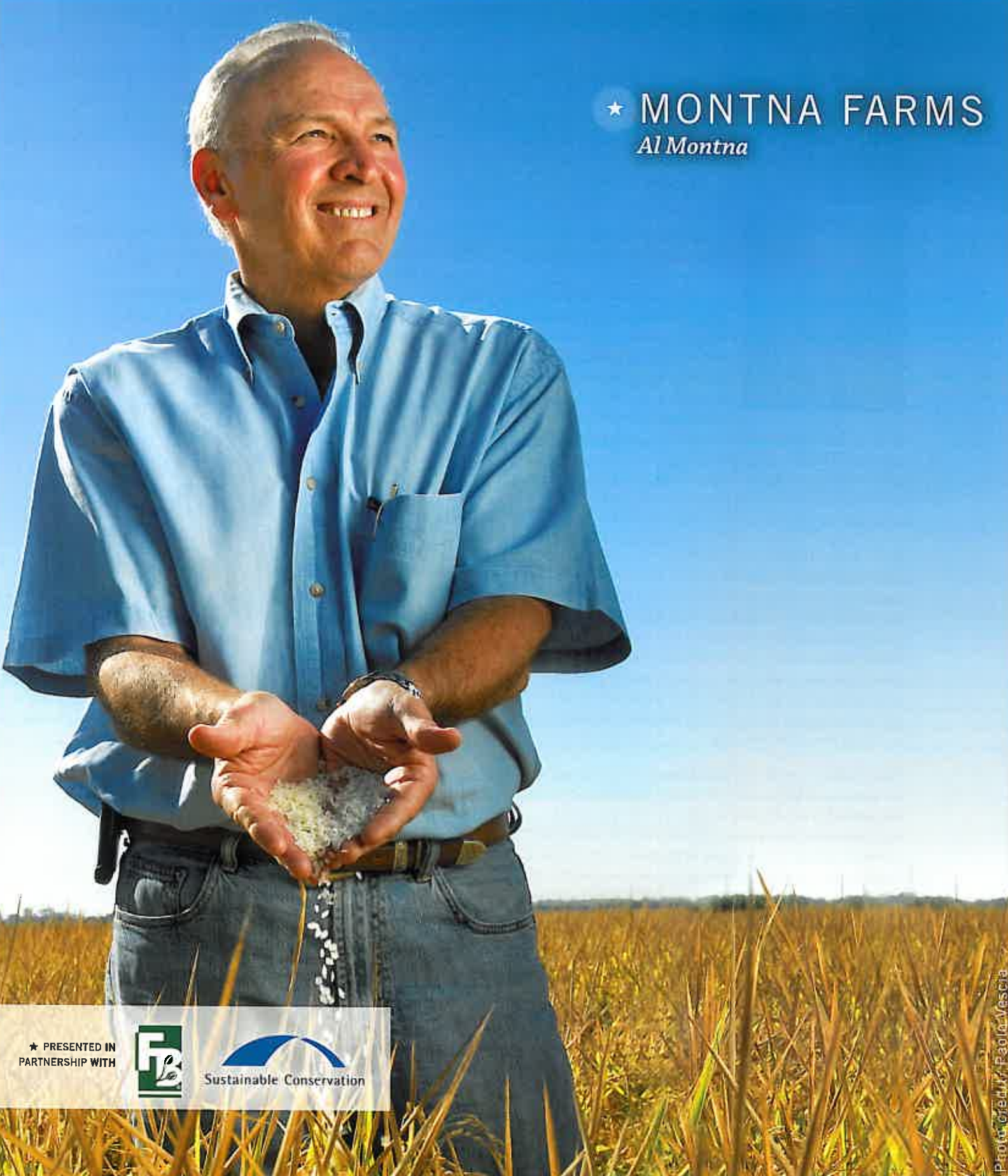


★ MONTNA FARMS  
*Al Montna*



★ PRESENTED IN  
PARTNERSHIP WITH



Photo credit: Paolo Vascia



MONTNA  
FARMS  
Yuba City,  
California

LEOPOLD  
CONSERVATION  
AWARD



*"Agriculture has been very good to us over time. We felt it was important to preserve it, protect it, and put something back that the public could enjoy."* — AL MONTNA

*Al Montna*, whose family has been farming in California since the late 1800s, has grown various crops through the years, such as peaches, prunes, wheat, and walnuts. Today, his Montna Farms consists of more than 2,500 acres of specialty short grain rice.

Mr. Montna's commitment to sustainable agriculture and conservation has led him to take several steps to improve the quality of land, water, and, especially wildlife, that are in his care. For the past 35 years, Mr. Montna has flooded his rice fields, which has increasingly provided valuable habitat for waterfowl. He also monitors the quantity and quality of water on his farm and utilizes laser leveling of his fields, which results in lower herbicide costs due to better water management. In 2008, Mr. Montna built a solar power facility to offset energy usage at Montna Farms Rice Dryer. He helped pioneer the practice of knocking rice stubble down into flooded fields, rather than burning it, which creates winter habitat for many wildlife species. This process also allowed

Montna Farms to bank and sell Emission Reduction Credits for added revenue. His desire to see his land remain in agriculture for future generations led him to establish the first wildlife-friendly agriculture easement in California. Montna Farms has approximately 2,000 acres under an easement, which provides habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds for migration, wintering, or breeding.

"The move will help ensure that the land is never taken out of farming and will always be managed to benefit wildlife," Montna said.

Mr. Montna, who is widely regarded as a leader in California's agricultural community, has held numerous positions in industry organizations and public policy boards, such as the Northern California Water Association and the California Bay-Delta Authority. He also served as President of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture under Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.