

SUYEO 'SOUP' MANABE: 1919 - 2006

Farmed 90-acre site expected to be annexed

Watsonville - Annexation

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Suyeo "Soup" Manabe grew up on land his parents farmed on the edge of Watsonville, and, in time, he and his older brother took over the ranch, cultivating lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli and other row crops.

WATSONVILLE

Manabe, the last surviving family member of his generation, died Monday at Watsonville Community Hospital after a brief illness. He was 86.

The era of the ranch is also coming to an end. In February, the city is expected to win approval of its bid to annex the

90-acre property near West Beach Street and Highway 1. The city's plan calls for the land to be turned into a business park.

His father probably had feelings about the impending conversion, "but he didn't show it for the most part," said son Eric Manabe. "That wasn't his nature."

Manabe retired 21 years ago, and younger family members worked the land for a while. The land is now leased to other farmers.

Eric Manabe said a problem of winter



**SUYEO
MANABE**

flooding on the ranch in recent years disturbed his father, but he was pleased to see that his son and nephews were able to keep it as a business.

Manabe's parents, Shozo and Haruo, started farming on the ranch in 1906. At one time the family land stretched across what is now Highway 1.

During World War II the family leased the land and left the area in advance of the internment of Japanese immigrants and their American-born children.

They settled in Colorado for the duration, and worked on farms there. After the war, the family returned home and reclaimed their ranch.

Though his father had a humble

demeanor, Eric Manabe said he took pride in his work.

"He was a type, very disciplined in the things he had to do ... very meticulous in how to go about things. That's how he was," his son said.

That disciplined nature carried over to his hobbies as well. He was an avid golfer and bowler, who endeavored to perform to the best of his ability.

He enjoyed sports in general, and, from the time television was invented to the end of his life, he watched games practically every day.

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