

# AGGIE ANNEX

MAY 2011

## SOUTH COAST REGION NEWS

BY AMY LEWANDOSKI

### Santa Barbara Section

*Righetti HS's* Ag Advisory Committee is moving full speed ahead with plans and blue prints for a new O.H. unit, including new greenhouses! As the weather is clearing up they are pruning and training their vineyard.

*Lompoc HS* just wrapped up their yearly Sadie Hawkins dance which is a great fundraiser for them. The chapter just finished a coat drive where they gathered more than 100 jackets and sweaters to give to the needy and homeless shelters. The school is in the middle of a WASC visit and everyone is doing their part to make a great impression.

*Pioneer Valley HS* is off to a great start in 2011! FFA week was a success with a school-wide FFA rally being the highlight of the week! On February 25 they finished the week with a Reverse Benefit Dinner held by their boosters which was hugely successful!

*Arroyo Grande HS* is starting on the new agriculture facility and has been working hard with all their judging teams.

*Santa Maria HS* - Check out their truly excellent FFA week activities! On February 15 - Andrea Calderon, their president, attended the City Council Meeting and accepted a Proclamation from the City of Santa Maria declaring the next week National FFA Week. They had a week full of activities starting with the Chapter President and Secretary visiting with Sunny Country 102.5, they talked about Santa Maria FFA and the agriculture program live on air. They hosted an ice cream social for new students in agriculture, they had an FFA Rally at lunch with "Salad Bowling", frozen T-shirt contest, and a cabbage toss. Then they hosted Santa Ynez, Righetti, Pioneer Valley and Cuyama High for the 2nd Annual Sectional Dodge Ball Tournament. Thursday was busy with a petting zoo, FFA scavenger hunt, and BBQ. Then they wrapped up the week with a tractor pull at lunch and a field trip to Santa Anita Park with their Sophomore Bridge classes (Ag Biology and World Lit collaboration class).

### Monterey Bay Section

*King City FFA* finished a successful FFA Week raising \$4,000 at their Chicken BBQ. They have added Ag Earth Science to their UC approved classes for next year.

*Greenfield* had an excellent FFA Week with tractor racing, tire pushing and dummy roping during lunch. They ended it with their principal kissing a pig and then a Swiss sausage BBQ.

*Soledad FFA* - It's happening in Soledad! They wrapped up celebrating National FFA Week with a full slate of activities including; an FFA dance, kiss a pig, staff appreciation breakfast, drive thru BBQ fundraiser, middle school recruitment visit, and chapter meeting with an ice cream social.

*North Salinas* had a successful FFA week with games, prizes, and a pizza feed. Rabbit projects are multiplying by the day, increasing by six projects with more on the way!

*Everett Alvarez* held the grand opening of their new Ag Center on February 18. All ten past Chapter presidents were in attendance, as well as the Mayor, County and District Superintendents, and more than 100 additional guests. During National FFA Week, State Superintendent Tom Torlakson stopped by to tour the Ag Center and visit with students showcasing their SAE and trade show projects.

*Soquel FFA* has had an exceptional few months! They hosted the Santa Cruz Orchid Show. Ag Biology students are working diligently on creative, state-of-the-art Earth Day projects. Veterinary Science students are looking forward to having their full facility back, as the wood and metal workshops move into their new facilities.

*Gonzales FFA* had a successful FFA week. They hosted activities such as Ag Fact Day, mud football, and kiss the pig fundraiser.

*Salinas High* is maintaining a basil crop in the greenhouse for the FFA pesto sale in

late spring. They have a new \$12,000 Ironworker in the shop, which will have its own ribbon cutting activity followed by an ag mechanics project sale in late May. Lastly, classes are going great with a full pathway of UC approved courses, including the addition of Floral Design for next year.

### San Luis Obispo Section

*Atascadero* is getting ready for judging season with livestock, horse, and welding teams.

*Coast Union's* Darcy Dobrec had a baby boy, Ryler, on November 9. He's huge and healthy. They are working on building sheep pens under the equine cover.

*Morro Bay* is excited about new FFA week activities including the Dirty Truck Contest and "You Think My Tractor's Sexy" Contest.

*Paso Robles* is getting ready to make the move to their new facility this summer! The new buildings will include two agriculture biology laboratories, a horticulture facility, and a new welding shop. This year they are excited that nine students received their State FFA Degree, setting a new Paso Robles FFA record!

*San Luis Obispo* - Administration shut down their lunch time BBQs and as a new fund raiser, Mr. Smith and students took items to the swap meet and made more than \$700 for the program.

*Shandon FFA* recently completed really great FFA week activities! They have two State FFA Degree recipients and students are preparing for upcoming fairs and spring activities.

*Templeton* had a busy winter! Their first ever Grape Vine Pruning team placed 7th at State Finals. Currently, they are getting ready to install a walk-in floral cooler obtained with Specialized Agriculture Incentive Grant monies.

### Santa Clara Section

*Gilroy FFA* has more than 20 baby lambs and 15 baby goats on the ground. Their farm is busy and full of excitement!

*Hollister FFA* is excited about their new

## SOUTH COAST REGION (CON'T)

million dollar ag barn. It has taken five years and tons of work to overcome obstacles, but it was finally completed in April!

*Morgan Hill* is busy with recruitment at the middle schools. They have nine baby lambs on the ground and have many work days and spring agriculture projects underway.

*Sobrato's* sow, "Big Mama", just had a litter of nine healthy piglets that have their entire school excited. Their greenhouse is being completed and they received a donated tractor! Their shade house is on the way!

*Campbell FFA* is gearing up for their annual crab feed. The money they earn will be used for program support, scholarships, and student bonuses for projects. They have about 2,000 vegetable starts in their greenhouse. They use these as projects as well as

their spring fundraiser.

### Ventura Section

*Santa Paula FFA* has been reaching out to their community and building bridges with their local Rotary Club. In December they conducted a canned food drive and collected more than 5,000 items. They sorted all the donated material and delivered food baskets on Christmas Eve.

*Camarillo FFA* has a brand new greenhouse in progress, and they are completing the irrigation. Their new swine unit is almost complete, just in time for the Ventura County Fair.

*Fillmore FFA* hosted their Annual Tractor Driving Contest in March. Their new greenhouse is finished, now they are working on funds for a new meats lab, and they planted ten acres of oats.

*Ventura FFA* now has three greenhouses, having completed the third in February. The Horticulture Judging Team is working on redesigning and planting Pepper Tree Park for the City of Ventura. They will be using only native plants. Their ROP Floral Program is busy designing and building arrangements for a variety of parties and events in the county and they are developing their Horticulture Therapy course.

*Carpinteria FFA's* Ag Mechanic students are taking three restored tractors to the California Antique Farm Equipment Show. They are helping others by hosting a CPR and first aid certification program, as well as a chain saw certification. Completers of this safety certification program will be cleaning trails for the US Forest Service in the back country of the Sierras.

## CENTRAL REGION NEWS

BY JESSALEE GOEHRING

The Central Region is well into the second half of the year and has been quite busy with spring field days and the upcoming anticipation of the CATA Summer Conference. We hope you enjoy reading about our busy year, exciting news and additions to our growing agriculture family! See you at Summer Conference!

### Delta-Cal Section

Spring is in full-swing at *Sierra-Manteca FFA*. The greenhouse is in full production, completely full of herbs, veggies, and flowers and the spring plant sales are currently going on. They are also at full capacity with livestock projects, including: market pigs, turkeys, rabbits, sheep, goats, chickens, and pheasants and their students are very excited for the fair this year! *Sierra-Manteca* will also be hosting a Spring Drive Thru BBQ dinner in May and are anticipating more than 600 dinners this year! They will also be holding their Pre-Show in May, which all of their students are a part of. The day is filled with students showing their animals, a petting zoo, demonstrations, and it is topped-off with a tri-tip lunch, serving more than 500 lunches! Finally, *Sierra-Manteca FFA* just hosted the IBGA (International Boer Goat Association) sanctioned show on April 2-3 at the MUSD. Exhibitors from all over

the United States attended this two-day event! Amanda Gardner oversees all swine, turkey, rabbit, pheasant, and chicken projects, while Pat Ariaz oversees all sheep and goat projects. Students will be exhibiting ag mechanics and vegetables at the upcoming county fair this summer!

*Argonaut & Sutter Creek FFA* held their Second Annual FFA Dinner Dance March 26. It was a huge success. The support they received through donations and sponsorships from businesses in their county and neighboring counties is amazing. The generosity also shown by those who attended will enable the two chapters to support students in a number of activities this spring and fall. There are plans in the works for a rib or chili cook-off in the fall.

### Tri-Rivers Section

*Newman FFA* was happy to host a Cal Poly student teacher, Amie Mertz, for the spring semester. Amie was a very active 4H member, attended Cal Poly, has a strong livestock background, and has been doing an excellent job in their program. They look forward to her joining our profession and wish her the best of luck in finding a full-time teaching job next year!

Krista Vannest, of *Pitman FFA*, and her family moved into a new home on their

family ranch in Modesto this past Thanksgiving. It's the same property that her brother, Brian Mortensen, *Central Valley FFA*, lives on so they have great neighbors. Their new place is a triple wide manufactured home, 3 bedroom, 2 bath and 3,050 square feet with a porch, mud room, and a wood burning fireplace. The fireplace comes in handy since the property is 50 acres of walnuts and cattle pasture. They replaced the older mobile home that was already on the ranch when they purchased the property.

### Yolo Section

*Esparto FFA* Chapter officers selected the theme of "Bringin' Farmin' Back" this year and it has truly motivated not only the members but also the teachers. The department is currently working on taking ownership of an almond orchard and working to incorporate this into student SAE projects. Students are also growing native plants to be used in the school native garden and at local gardens up the valley. The department has also seen a boost in non-traditional SAE projects such as jams, pie-fillings, and jellies. Students sold their products at the Almond Festival in March.

### Stanislaus Section

Kristy White of *Beyer FFA* and her husband Michael had a son born on July 27,

2010. Congratulations!

Congratulations are in order to Lindsay Walsh of *Johanson FFA*, as she became engaged over Valentine's Day in Murphys.

#### **Sacramento Section**

*Rio Linda HS* has re-chartered their FFA program. Currently, they have three CDE teams and had 14 students attend the

State FFA Conference. They are really excited to be back after 20+ years of nonexistence! Congratulations!

## Superior Region News

BY LUKE BROWNING

*Nevada Union HS* - Ag communications class spent an hour in questions and answers with congressman McClintock February 3. The discussion centered on key agriculture issues and ways to solve the growing national debt. Earlier this year the class traveled to the annual state Farm Bureau Convention to listen to Temple Grandin, the renown author and expert on autism and humane animal handling systems. They also watched rounds of the collegiate and open discussion meet. Forestry classes continue to be the lead class at Nevada Union recycling tons of paper waste each week for the campus. The NU FFA officers helped pack food for the needy during Donation Day in December. The Advanced Parli-pro Team

traveled down to the State Capitol March 23 for National Ag Days to help California Wool Growers hand out information to the thousands of people who walk through the displays on the front lawn of the capitol. The Horticulture class will be raising organic vegetable starts this spring in response to the community need for organic vegetables. The seed and potting soil is purchased locally at Peaceful Valley Farm Supply.

*Hamilton City FFA* has been busy this first quarter planting an olive orchard on the school farm. Students helped to put in the trellis and plant the olives. When the olives start producing, FFA members will be able to have a chapter olive oil label and to sell it throughout the community. A special

thanks goes out to John Henning, Juan Carrillo, Durham Pump, AgTrell, and California Olive Ranch for helping us make this project a reality.

*Foothill HS* has been working hard this year to establish their farm on campus. The farm pad is complete and the greenhouse will be finished within the next month. This year their chapter placed first in the Extemporaneous Public Speaking contest at the regional level and for the first time ever their Parli-pro Team made it out of regions. They owe a big thanks to all of the local community members who have helped out this year and they are excited to see what the future will bring for their program.

## Southern Region News

BY DESIREE TRAPP

Spring is in the air and agriculture programs are at their highest peaks. The Southern Region has a lot going on from now until the end of the school year. Various chapters are preparing for fairs, section contests, regional competitions, career development field days and of course for the many FFA members to attend the annual State FFA Conference in Fresno.

The chapters in the **San Diego Section** are busy purchasing livestock for the upcoming fairs. The San Diego County Fair in June is where almost every chapter in the section exhibits during the breed and market weeks. There was good participation by chapter members at the Section Speaking contest held in February hosted by *Escondido FFA*. *El Capitan HS* is busy preparing for the upcoming fair BBQ fundraiser. They hope to serve 800 meals and raise \$25,000 for the local fair. The hay crop is in the ground and getting lots of water this year thanks to Mother Nature. They are also in the final stages of

planning for the renovation of their department facilities starting this summer. They are dreading having to go through the construction process, but excited to see the results of the millions of dollars spent at the agriculture department. The *Mountain Empire* agriculture program may be small but definitely mighty. There is a record number of students that will be exhibiting at the Eastern San Diego County Jr. Fair in May. SAE's include large and small livestock, gardening and shop projects. Their school counselor traveled on their annual college tour with them for the three day trip. He spent quality time with their seniors and learned about the college campuses and their agriculture degrees offered. It was fun having him along and he helped drive as well!

*Holtville FFA* has had a busy but GREAT start to the spring semester. They had a very successful Elementary Ag Day and Community Ag Awareness Day. They did extremely well at the Mid-

Winter Fair this year. They ended up with the Supreme Grand Champion Market Steer and Market Goat, FFA Grand Champion Market Lamb, FFA Reserve Grand Champion Market Swine, and eight students qualifying for Round Robin. Again for the third year in a row, one of their students, Lesly Larios will be donating all of the money earned from her market goat to Cancer Awareness.

Around this time of year we have to look at the State's budget and what may or may not happen to our agriculture programs. We have heard that some are losing teachers or even programs altogether. However, we also have some that are getting new teachers in their stead. In the end we know that the best things will come to play and that all will turn out for the better. In these tough times, all we can do is keep the smile on our faces and make sure that we are here for the students. Enjoy the remainder of your year and the Southern Region shall see you in San Luis Obispo this summer!

## NORTH COAST REGION NEWS

BY BECKY DENIZ

### Sonoma Section

*Sebastopol* - Replanting farm area and planting native plants and trees around campus.

*Sonoma Valley* - Rebuilding shop program and classes, planted 250 Chardonnay grapes, school farm is fully functioning with greenhouse and fair animals, recruitment went well and they will be increasing the number of ag classes offered next year.

*St. Helena* - Current enrollment is 52% of their student body. This fall a school bond passed, which will match 1-D grant monies for new ag facilities totaling \$13 million. Facilities include an ag science, ag mechanics, env. hort./floral, and livestock all opening by fall 2013. Their annual Rib Feed and Ag Mechanics Auction Fundraiser was a great success.

*Elsie Allen* - Starts construction on their Prop ID project June 1. Facilities will include re-modernization of the ag mechanics shop, ag biology lab, and computer lab. They have 700 geraniums, 1,700 tomato, and pepper plants in their greenhouse. Received \$900 from the Wes Jamison Grant to send students to the State FFA Conference.

*Forestville* - Current agriculture classes have the highest number of students per subject in the high school due to high demand and great recruitment. Greenhouse is going strong with edible plants and herbs in conjunction with their culinary program. They received the Superior Chapter Award this year.

*Petaluma* - New staff members, Mike Touchstone is teaching ag mechanics and Sierra Frey is a long-term sub in the wildlife program. The ag science classroom is completed and up and running. Greenhouse is full with 4,000 plants as part of students' SAE's, students getting animals prepped for this summer's fairs.

*Santa Rosa* is hiring a third teacher. Livestock numbers at all time high for fair projects. CTE outstanding program finalists, high school is a distinguished school finalist as well.

*Healdsburg* - Had three students receive their State Degree. Gearing up for their fair the end of May with 35 students exhibiting. Enrollment in classes is holding steady and they are planning a golf tournament for July 10 at Tayman Park Golf Course.

### Alameda/Solano Section

*Vacaville* - Just built a new sheep barn and are getting ready for Dixon May Fair, 65 animals will go to the fair.

*Brentwood* - Finishing drastic improvements to school farm after filling two scrap metal bins and ten loads of garbage. Also constructed new sheep shelters and cleaned up after a small fire, which was started by a heat lamp.

*Rio Vista* - Building new classroom and barn due to be finished in May. They are happy to welcome the new addition to their department, Jessica Forster.

*Dixon FFA Chapter* was presented the National Gold Emblem Award at the State FFA Conference. Their new fundraiser, "Drive-thru BBQ" at Tractor Supply Co. raised nearly \$4,000.

*Vintage HS* - They are keeping their heads above water both figuratively and literally. Currently running an "Adopt-a-Bed" program to help fund the 40 raised beds in their organic garden. They will be expanding their pumpkin field this year to include heirlooms. They had a 170% lambing percentage this year!

*Livermore HS* - Steer barn almost done power and water available.

### Mendocino/Lake Section

*Anderson Valley* - Successfully completed WASC last week. Have 22 Boer goat kids on the ground. Poultry project is also selling eggs locally.

*Covelo* - Preparing for the annual Covelo FFA Field Day on Mother's Day Weekend. The chapter is also starting house plants, to be sold at Farmer's Market this spring.

*Ukiah* - Constructing a new aquaponics project and will soon be painted. Hope to have water pumping by July. Eighth grade section is starting.

*Upperville FFA* welcomes their newest future farmer, Matilda Pearl Boomer "Tillie", born on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

*Potter Valley* - Everything is still super duper. Life is great.

*Kelseyville* - New heater in shop and a student teacher.

*Middletown* - Finished a successful National FFA week. Had dress up days, hay bucking, log sawing, and arm wrestling competitions. Student teacher Miss Kelley took students to elementary school and

provided welding, planting, and animal education presentations. Had school-wide rally including 660 lb pig in gym for staff kiss a pig. See Mr. Jones for Mattress Racers schematic plans - you would be surprised how fast four kids push beds around a parking lot.

*Willits FFA* is continuing with the development of the school farm. Their school is in the midst of a bond reconstruction that ranges from fabulous to tragic depending on the week. Looking for suggestions from anyone with ideas on funding and construction of shop ventilation systems. A big thank you to PG&E for the solar grant.

### Humboldt Section

*Arcata* - Doing good. 400 BBQ tickets sold for their Drive-thru BBQ.

*McKinleyville* - Just had Drive-thru BBQ and served 300 meals, started pouring five minutes after they were done breaking down. Planted more than 180 heads of lettuce, 20 strawberry plants, and numerous other items to supply the school salad bar.

*Fortuna* - Teams are in the grove and participating in field days. This year they have a Ag Mech, Dairy Products, Dairy Cattle and BIG team. Two students, Cameron Dale and Emily Janowski were appointed to serve on Nominating committee.

*Del Norte* - Robyn doing well. Added a section.

*Ferndale* - Theresa Noga had her baby on Saturday March 19, Justin Joseph Noga 7 lbs. and 3 oz. Can't wait to travel with her. Ginger Sarvinski is long term sub and is doing a great job staying "a float".

*Eureka* - Met with ROP Principal, possible to turn welding/metals program into ag welding/metals. Then be able to either hire that position or ag position. Classes are good. Ag Boosters finished pig barn with electricity and sliding doors. First Dinner Auction by Ag Boosters was April 4 at Chenar Heights Casino.

### CURRICULAR CODE CONTEST REVIEW MOVED TO TUESDAY MORNING - JUNE 21

CONTEST CHAIR MEETING AT 7:45

ROTATION #1 - 8:00 TO 8:45

ROTATION #2 - 9:00 TO 9:45