

# California FFANEWS

SUMMER 2016

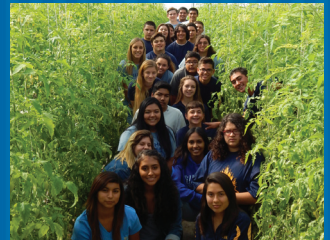
VOL. 4 • NO. 4

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## *We want to hear from you...*

We are always looking for great  
stories about members and  
alumni around our state. Know  
of a story that we should feature  
in CA FFA News? Please email  
news@californiaffa.org.

Submission deadlines:  
Fall..... June 1st  
Winter..... September 1st  
Spring ..... December 1st  
Summer..... March 1st

*Stay in touch...*  
"California FFA"



## TRAVELS, CONFERENCES, CHAPTER VISITS & MORE...

### UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>JULY • 6-9</b> ROLC – Tomales Bay	<b>8-12</b> State Fair Junior
Livestock Show – Sacramento	<b>17-21</b> State Fair Dairy Show
– Sacramento	<b>29-30</b> San Joaquin Region SOLC – Visalia
<b>AUGUST • 8-9</b> Southern Region SOLC	<b>11-12</b> Superior
Region SOLC	<b>2-14</b> San Joaquin Region Boot Camp – Camp
San Luis	<b>29</b> Central Region SOLC
<b>VARIES</b> Greenhand	
Leadership Conferences	

For a list of current FFA events please visit  
[www.CalAgEd.org](http://www.CalAgEd.org)



After MFE's concluded, we shifted from the leadership aspect of Agricultural Education towards industry and technical portions with Supervised Agricultural Experiences, or SAEs. Our team has traveled to each region and toured the STAR finalists for each category- Agribusiness, Ag Placement, Agriscience, and finally, STAR Farmer. At these tours, a regional

..... finalist in each area presents their SAE to us through a visual display and a

verbal dialogue about their project. It was such an honor to see such diverse projects in each category! After seeing these tours, our eyes were opened to the knowledge, labor, innovative, and dedication each finalist invested towards their projects. We left these tours feeling inspired at the impact Agricultural Education has on the agricultural industry. As members, we must always think of ways that we can grow upon our agricultural experiences and use the resources we can connect with because of our organization. How can you work towards being a STAR finalist in one of these areas?

State Degree Ceremonies, Spring Regional Meetings, and State Conference preparations now fill our agendas. With the 88th State FFA Leadership Conference just around the corner, we are getting anxious to see every FFA member we have met this year. At State Conference, we will have two keynote speakers, including the nationally recognized Brooks Gibbs, and the author and creator of Kid President, Brad Montague. We will also have two visiting National Officers, Taylor McNeel and Nick Baker. Lastly, we will listen, sing, and dance to the country music duo, Thompson Square, on Monday night! We hope that members will leave State Conference ready to #ElectrifyFFA- giving power and energy to all aspects of agricultural education within their chapters and communities. As we prepare to head to Fresno, the State Officers have been busily working on our theme skit, scripts, and our retiring addresses. If all of these things weren't already exciting enough, it is confirmed that the 88th State Conference will have the highest number of attendees at a State Conference, ever!

Our team is beyond grateful for the experiences we've had and the relationships we have built this year. It is safe to say that because of our members, we have grown immensely and hope that we have opened doors for members to do the same. Thank you, California FFA. We will see you at the 88th State FFA Leadership Conference in Fresno! •

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Meet the 2016  
STAR Award Finalists

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MFE & ALA Recaps

.....  
Lightening in the sky sparks within the blink of an eye. Similarly, it seems our year serving as state officers has occurred just as quick. Our year has been full of wonderful memories- ranging from industry tours and chapter visits to COLC's and Made For Excellence Conferences. In the last issue of California FFA News, we discussed the joy we experienced during our chapter visit season, highlighting a specific moment from each chapter. In the issue prior, we reviewed the knowledge of the agricultural industry that we gained as we ventured through industry tours, as well as the fun we had with each region during COLC's. Since then, we have facilitated Made For Excellence Conferences (MFE), toured extraordinary Supervised Agricultural Experience projects in each region, and spent our time planning for the remainder of our year. Although this year of service has gone by speedily, we look into the future, as we will "Electrify" the accomplishments of all California FFA members at the 88th State FFA Leadership Conference.

Trevor, Breanna, Tim, Joelle, Sydnie and I loved meeting over 1,600 members during the months of January and February as we

facilitated eight leadership conferences geared towards sophomores in high school. These conferences, titled Made For Excellence, are geared towards second-year FFA members. At MFE, members will understand the potential within themselves that is necessary to be successful future leaders, while discovering their strengths and creating action plans to implement in their lives. These conferences were located at multiple locations across the state, with conferences in Sacramento, Redding, Monterey, Ontario, Modesto, and Visalia. We loved hanging out with all of you at the dance after each conference, and seeing the enthusiasm that each region had! As we ended this season, we were filled with gratitude as well as belief, as we know our communities are in good hands as long as all the bright ideas and promises made at MFE become more than just pen and paper. We are thankful for the relationships we built at each MFE.



## FEATURED CHAPTER

# Fillmore FFA

Fillmore is a small town nestled below the Los Padres National Forest in the fertile farming belt of the Santa Clara River Valley in Ventura County. The local agriculture economy consists of orange, lemon, avocado orchard farming and packing houses. The Fillmore FFA chapter has continued to grow, with 165 members currently enrolled in Ag Mechanics, Agriscience, Horticulture and Ag Business courses. A partnership with the middle school includes eighth graders attending chapter meetings and planning SAE programs. Currently, the seventh grade science curriculum is now focusing on career technical education with a focus on agriculture and entrepreneurship in preparation for becoming future agriculture students at the high school. Fillmore High School with just under 1,000 students is central to this small town and plays a pivotal role in the dynamics of the community activities.

Fillmore's FFA chapter roots began in the 1930's, but it wasn't until the 1970's under the direction of the agriculture teacher, Dick Mosbarger that the program would expand to include a school farm. With the help of community support the concept of a school farm was going to become a reality. The

community rallied together to pass a bond measure to purchase an 80 acre parcel of land along the Santa Clara River. Today, the farm

***Fillmore FFA is a family tradition  
with generations of children  
becoming FFA members.***

consists of 20 production acres of oranges, lemons and avocados that are overseen by the farm manager; with additional area for crop production, greenhouse crops and the livestock facilities. The school farm provides space for plenty of student SAE's ranging from small and large livestock production to crop production with over 50 students participating in the local county fair.

Fillmore FFA takes pride in its unique

relationships with the local agriculture industry that provides support to the program by opening their businesses to students for tours and providing internships. This year, the Ag Business class worked with local industry to create a 12 month calendar featuring the different agriculture industries of the Santa Clara River Valley. This small farming community has been integral in the success of the agriculture program and its growth. Additionally, Fillmore FFA alumni serve as booster and advisory committee members, own agricultural businesses in the community and also serve as local school board members.

It is this strong since of community support that has been essential to the growth of the program and the success of the students involved in FFA. Members have pride in the community which can be seen at the annual May Festival and 4th of July Pancake Breakfasts

*{ Continued on page 5 }*







where they greet, prepare and serve over 800 patrons. Fillmore FFA takes pride in giving back to the community. In December students help the local fire department with their chicken BBQ serving over 1,000 people and providing popcorn to all the children after they select their toy and visit Santa. Once a year, FFA members coordinate and manage the Red Cross Blood Drive on campus by promoting the positive attributes of blood donation to the students on campus.

A tradition for over 40 years has been the Fillmore FFA Tractor Contest which hails

students from the South Coast and San Joaquin Regions. Students have the opportunity to get hands-on experience operating a variety of tractors. At the farm each July, Fillmore FFA hosts a livestock showmanship day inviting 4-H, Grange and other FFA members from Ventura County to compete for prizes and belt buckles while honing their showmanship skills for the county fair.

Fillmore FFA is a family tradition with generations of children becoming FFA members. It is this tradition that keeps Fillmore FFA strong. Members not only participate

in community activities, they also attend state and national leadership conferences, regional and sectional speaking competitions, have sectional and regional officers, the local county fair and CDE events. Financial support for all of the events is made possible by the funds earned

from the 4th of July fireworks booth operated by the FFA boosters. FFA members also find time to participate in athletic events, school clubs and rigorous courses. Next time you drive along Highway 126 past the community of Fillmore, take a turn down Central Avenue and take second look at a town that demonstrates pride in its community and the Fillmore FFA. •

#### Photo captions

*Opposite page, clockwise starting at top:*

- Ventura County Fair Livestock exhibitors with their prizes
- Advanced Round Robin Winners Ventura County Fair 1st, 2nd and 3rd place
- MFE/ALA participants in Monterey

*This page, clockwise starting at top left:*

- Members at State Conference in Fresno
- Quinn-Caterpillar local sponsor for Fillmore FFA Chapter
- Beylik Farms industry tour in the hydroponic tomato greenhouse
- Fillmore FFA Tractor Driving Contest trailer backing competition.
- FFA members serving at the pancake breakfast







**pleasantgroveffa**  
Hilton Sacramento ...

FOLLOW

49 likes
10w

pleasantgroveffa Pleasant Grove FFA students on a wild adventure to make it a better world through agriculture at the MFE/ALA Leadership Conferences! #pgffa #ffamfe #ffaala  
centralregionffa Hope everyone had fun! cityofleaves 🍌🍌🍌

Add a comment...



# MFE

## Reflections

**gustineffa** 20  
proud Gustine FFA members attended the Made for Excellence and Advanced Leadership Academy conferences this past weekend in Modesto. There, they learned different strategies and methods used in order to ensure they make the best out of their FFA experience. Congrats everyone!  
**#ffaMFE #ffaALA #GustineFFA**

MADE FOR EXCELLENCE

*"Let us in, Let us in, Let us in" is an all too familiar chant we yelled at the top of our lungs as we waited for the doors to open. During the months of January and February Sophomore FFA members were given the opportunity to attend the Made for Excellence Conference (MFE). I had the privilege of being selected by my agriculture teacher to travel to Visalia, California with 20 of my chapter peers to practice and learn leadership skills. We navigated through seven sessions, put on by our six State Officers, to better our self-discovery of our talents, build our strengths and weaknesses, and explore tools for personal growth. Adventure, Courage, Wisdom, and Power are words that filled the conference room as I entered to take my seat, anticipation of what was to come was tingling at my fingertips. For two days we were constantly reminded of the phrase, "Leadership is Influence". We were taught the importance of our roles as members of our region and the impact we have on others. The State Officers demonstrated action plan activities by having us "travel" through a different role of our self-character; strengths, integrity, choices, interest, and opportunities to teach our chapter members how to identify their purpose in our home community. I will never forget the phrase, "Talent plus Knowledge equals strengths". I learned that we all have hidden talents, and if we gain a little knowledge by participating, we can use that hidden talent to strengthen ourselves. The Made for Excellence Conference allows members, such as myself to develop a personal action plan for our future FFA career.*



**hollister\_ffa**  
DoubleTree by Hilton

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43 likes
5w

hollister\_ffa LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE, and CRAZY CAR RIDES-OH MY! These 8 students expanded their leadership skills and opportunities within the FFA. The past 24 hours have taught these students how to exert positive influences in the Hollister FFA. #ffamfe #ffaala

Sage Clay | Bakersfield-Frontier FFA Chapter

**ally\_highfill** had so much fun this weekend. It was an amazing experience getting to meet amazing people and building up my leadership qualities. Thank you State Officers for making this weekend one that I will never forget!! **#ffaMFE #squadgoals #ffalife #myffafamily**



# ALA

## Reflections



While attending Advanced Leadership Academy I was able to dive into amazing experiences including meeting incredible people and learning new leadership skills. ALA was full of diverse members, all of which had their own ideas. I made numerous friends who live relatively close to me and some that live near the Arizona state line. Throughout the two days, I was able to create relationships with these new friends and gain ideas and opinions that I can add to my life. While attending ALA, I learned not just from the people around me, but from the conference itself. From the conference, I obtained skills necessary to better increase my leadership assets and become more of a helpful aid. These skills allow me to help my local FFA chapter in creating relationships with students who are not active members and knowing how to use their strengths and weaknesses to better their purpose. I hope to use my guidance skills to obtain a career and help others across the spectrum to achieve success. Overall ALA was an experience I will never forget and I encourage others to take this opportunity in hope that they acquire similar ideas to the ones I received.

**poway\_ffa** And we are back in Poway!!! This has been such an amazing trip! Getting to know new people from different chapters and learning our own strengths and goals that we hope to bring back to our own chapter. Thank **#ffaMFE** its been fun!



**rc.ag.ed** DoubleTree by Hilton [FOLLOW](#)

26 likes 7w

**rc.ag.ed** The Ripon Christian **#ffaALA** members presented on their plans for a successful 2016 Ag Day... They tied for second place as a chapter idea presentation! **#premierleadership** **#RCFFA** **#improvements** **#goals** **#chapterdevelopment**

Addissun Rice | Wildomar-Elsinore FFA Chapter



**edwinlmadrid** [FOLLOW](#)

24 likes 7w

**edwinlmadrid** I had an amazing time this weekend at MFE/ALA Leadership Conference where I participated in workshops, team building exercises, and had fun with people from other chapters. **#ffaMFE** **#ffa**

**tulareffa** To kick off FFA Week, Tulare attended **#ffaMFE** and **#ffaALA**, where they gained skills to improve themselves as leaders and our chapter as a whole. **#tulareffaweek**

**deafbabe1234** I had such a blast at **#ffaMFE** I'll definitely share my knowledge back at Vtec but I learned many good skills and things I didn't realized I was capable of, overall I had a great time at **#ffaMFE**



# Chapter Scoops



## **TOMALES FFA** **Friends of Ag**

*Submitted by Jeanette Furlong*

Tomales FFA is very lucky to have many local businesses support our chapter, so we can achieve all of our goals, and attend the conferences that we do! To show our appreciation each year, Tomales FFA hosts a Friends of Ag

Dinner, where we provide dinner, a live auction, silent auction, and many other fun activities for our supporters to enjoy! Our officer team worked on some of the finer aspects of the event. Each officer was assigned different places to hang informational posters about the event, and a separate list to gather donations for our silent and live auctions! As the day of the event quickly approached, our officer team took two whole days to prepare the hall that we would be using. The night of the event as our advisor walked around the room, he heard nothing but fabulous comments about this year's dinner. We hope that next year, we can expand the amount of people that come, and raise additional funds for our up and coming school farm.



## **CERES-CENTRAL VALLEY FFA** **FFA Week Fun**

*Submitted by Alondra Gonzalez*

February 22-26, Central Valley FFA students celebrated National FFA Week. Students started off their celebration on Monday, February 22 with a sports day dress-up and were given the

opportunity to showcase their strength at the lunchtime strongman competition. The next day students showed their staff appreciation by helping out at the staff breakfast in their professional dress attire. Later that day students attended the grass ski race at lunch and learned some cool, new dance moves. February 24 students dressed up in superhero attire and prepared to face off in several minute-to-win-it games during lunchtime. The next day students dressed in western wear and were invited to a special FFA member lunch where they socialized while feasting on hot dogs. Central Valley FFA students finished off the week in either their FFA or school spirit attire while watching the grand finale - a tractor pull at lunch. National FFA week for Central Valley FFA students was an overall success!



Your Chapter **FFA**

## **Let Us Know Your Chapter's Scoop!** **Here's how...**

**1) Submit a 100-150 word article about your chapter's recent activity.**

- a. Please do not include members or advisors names within the article.
- b. The article should be about an interesting/unique type of FFA activity. This is an opportunity to showcase new and innovative chapter activities.

**2) Attach a GREAT quality digital photo.**

- a. Photos should be in color and help further explain the submitted article.
- b. Photos must include members with appropriate clothing & behavior.
- c. Photos must be sent as individual jpeg files.

**3) Email the above information to news@californiaffa.org.**

The subject of the email must include your chapter's name. In the email, please include the author of the chapter scoop and title of the article.

**4) Please reference page two for CA FFA News Submission Deadlines**

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# the FFA LEGACY

*San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter honored with donated jacket of 1962 National Vice President, Jerry Diefenderfer.*



Founded on tradition, service and leadership, the National FFA Organization has been a voice for the agriculture industry for nearly a century. Although the San Luis Obispo FFA chapter is made up of only 300 members, out of the total 620,000 members nationwide, we have pride in our chapter's traditions and the members before us—those who paved a pathway for growth and leadership. We felt honored when Mr. Jerry Diefenderfer contacted us and wanted to donate his jacket. The jacket serves as a symbol of pride, honor and memories embedded within the blue and gold corduroy.

Mr. Diefenderfer served a State Sentinel in 1960, and State President the following year. He continued his agricultural pursuit in 1962, when he served a National Vice

President representing the Western Region. He is a true example of what it means to be FFA Proud, shown through his countless years of service. We recognized him as an influential member that inspired thousands of members as he traveled across the nation, and as he stood before our chapter officer team, administrators, and students, with the same enthusiasm while he spoke of his experience and the pride he has in his jacket. He spoke of the opportunities that FFA provided for his adult life and career, encouraging our members as they look to the future, choosing pathways and majors in the agriculture industry.

The walls of the agriculture classrooms are filled with plaques, pictures and banners, documenting the memories of our foundation that we do not want to forget. Throughout our years we have had many jackets donated for students to use as they begin their agriculture journey, and few we have put in shadow boxes, such as Past State Officers, Carey Galliani and Kenna Lewis. Along with the other jackets that have honored our chapter, Mr. Diefenderfer's jacket is a symbol that will be remembered for longer than those blue ribbons and silver bowls. It is truly an honor that Mr. Diefenderfer's jacket will be amongst the jackets that will forever stay on the wall as a legacy of his pursuits, dedication and pride of the National FFA Organization and the agriculture industry. •

**Mr. Diefenderfer is a true example of what it means to be FFA Proud, shown through his countless years of service.**

**He spoke of the opportunities that FFA provided for his adult life and career, encouraging our members as they look to the future, choosing pathways and majors in the agriculture industry.**



# Meet the 'STARS' of California FFA

**STAR IN AGRI-BUSINESS** • Recognizes a member with the best non-production entrepreneurial agribusiness SAE and proven leadership skills. The highest achievement for a person pursuing a career in agribusiness.

**STAR IN AGRISCIENCE** • An SAE program in which the student is actively engaged in agriscience research and experimentation. This includes students who are actively engaged in doing their own research individually, as well as those who may be cooperating on research projects with others. The students must be actively involved in the development of the experimental design, collection of data, interpretation of the data and publicizing the results to be considered.

**STAR FARMER** • Considered the highest recognition for an aspiring young farmer, the award recognizes achievement in both career and leadership development.

**STAR IN AGRICULTURAL PLACEMENT** • Recognizing the best placement SAE program including paid labor hours or directed laboratory unpaid labor hours and proven leadership skills.

## STAR AGRI-BUSINESS AWARD REGIONAL FINALISTS:

### *Mitchell Gander* • NICOLAUS - EAST NICOLAUS

In 2009, I started out growing pumpkins on a 50' x 50' plot of land, which I grew for my family. In the following years, I expanded to eventually grow ½ acre. In 2014, I grew a ½ acre patch at my home and ½ acre patch at my school as my senior project. It helped me to understand that when growing any agricultural commodity, one cannot just plant a seed and watch it grow. A healthy crop needs proper care, watering, and nurturing. The pumpkins that I grew at home, I sold door-to-door. I also secured a contract with Whole Foods Market in Roseville, CA and Davis, CA. From the ½ acre pumpkin patch at my high school, I invited the preschool and kindergarten classes from the local schools to visit and choose a free pumpkin while educating them about sustainable farming practices. The remainder of the pumpkins at the high school plot were sold to public, the community, as well as donated. The sales from my high school plot were donated to the local public pool to ensure that it would be open for the community next summer. Through producing pumpkins, I learned how to manage my project's income and expenses.

### *Caine Valdez* • SOLEDAD

My SAE project in the area of turf management was the heavy influence by my grandparents. With the foreclosures and the California drought, many homes where in need of yard make over. Seeing there was a need for basic low cost lawn care I started Caine's Lawn Mowing Service. My motto is "If it ain't green, it's dead". My grandparents loaned me the equipment for my lawn service; a weedwacker and a lawn mower.

With no means of transportation, I stayed within a four-block radius of my house for possible clients. I went up to homes whose yards were in dire straights asking if the homeowner could use my services. Many doors closed in my face, but four opened and invited me to make their yards green again. My lawn service consists of mowing, edging, and cleanup of the grass trimmings. I improved my skills in customer service, budgeting, time management, marketing promotion, and knowledge of drought lawn care. This year I have purchased a new leaf blower and I am working with my grandpa on learning proper maintenance and servicing of my lawn equipment. Today Caine Lawn Service covers a mile radius.

### *Isabella Evans* • FALLBROOK

A year ago I started working for a local specialty vegetable/nursery called Diane's Botanical Herbs and Vegetable Shanty. The owner has taught me how to work with herbs and make all-natural supplements, this experience helped me realized I enjoyed working with all natural products, and I decided to create my own business. After starting off with a few products; white sage bundles, rosemary topiaries, lavender sachets, and fire sticks, I decided to expand and create wreaths and potpourri. Originally, I sold the wreaths online and thought that I would only sell the 25 wreaths I made, however within two months I sold about 150 wreaths. I have designed the price point to be customer friendly and sell at an appropriate price to cover my cost per unit. Aside from face to face selling of products at farmer's markets and craft fairs, I have sold a significant inventory to local businesses. Currently, I have established relationships with nine businesses in the area that are either selling products or providing me with raw products to incorporate into my finished products. Building relationships has been the key to my business's success.

### *Nitin Gupta* • TULARE

I own and operate my own business, Simple Sand. Simple Sand was an idea that was designed my freshman year of high school in an effort to remove a large sand pile from my family's walnut orchard. I took ownership of the 25,000 yards of sand as I entered into high school, and began marketing it to dairy farmers for use as bedding, mixing for concrete bases, flooring media base at a local therapy horse ranch, and for sand driveways. I am responsible for the day-to-day operation and care of my project and have invested hours in making customer contacts and marketing. At the beginning of my project I determined the quality and type of sand available. With this knowledge, I did research and talked to various people about the uses of the sand that I had. I then research companies who use sand and give them a call to see if they need my product. If the company needs sand I get an estimated quantity of the sand needed and schedule an in-person meeting with a representative from that company. I have also seen a need for trucking sand for clients, and have contacted a third party trucking service to truck sand for me.

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# THE 2016 REGIONAL 'STAR' FINALISTS IN AGRI-BUSINESS, AGRISCIENCE, FARMER AND PLACEMENT SHARE THEIR SAE EXPERIENCES

## STAR AGRISCIENCE AWARD REGIONAL FINALISTS:

### *Halley Jane Rauchland* • LODI

I started my SAE research to find an efficient treatment method control a disease prevalent in winegrapes, Eutypa Dieback (Dead Arm). Eutypa is a fungal spore that is carried through the air and enters the vine through pruning wounds, decreasing production and killing the vine. Infections are chronic and spread throughout the vineyard, resulting in the entire vineyard eventually needing to be replanted. Growers incur high costs of replanting vineyards, and then allow for the time necessary for replanted vines to come into production. It is important that vines are producing to their fullest and not further spreading Eutypa. Finding a solution is essential to successful and sustainable farming. My agriscience research was to test cane-pruning, an aggressive pruning technique that would result in a more viable method of disease removal. I selected twelve 18-year-old Cabernet Franc vines with a history of Eutypa and conducted a two-year comparative study using that plot. Each winter, dead-arm symptoms were removed using the cane-pruning method on six of the vines, while the other six vines showed evidence of the disease's progression after being traditionally spur-pruned. In September the grapes were harvested, and bunches counted and weighed to determine which pruning method was most efficient in removing Eutypa Dieback.

### *Sammie Poldervaart* •

HAMILTON - HAMILTON CITY

In the area of genetics, I have spent many hours with my dad and a representative from Zoetis. I help with the sampling of the ear from the calves at the dairy to be sent to a lab for genetic testing. After about a month the results back and show many different areas which help us decide what is best for each heifer in terms of breeding, net merit, milk production, body type, and the probability of illness. With these results, my dad and I choose the bottom 20 from the herd and send them to the auction. After we take out the bottom 20, we look at the current results and decide on how to improve these heifer's offspring through breeding. We compare their genetic results with the genetic results of an AI bull and pick which is our best option to better the offspring.

### *Cody James Ruiz* • KING CITY

My SAE program included growing iceberg lettuce and infecting it with Sclerotinia, a fungal disease that causes root rot and leaf drop. This disease has created problems for the lettuce farmers in the Salinas Valley and the pesticides that effectively worked to treat the disease became illegal. It was my intention to try to find an environmentally safe option beginning with regular household items. I learned the fungus lives in the soil, which makes it difficult to control once a field has been infected.

To infect health plants I took infected leaves and planted them with the seeds. Plants grew healthy for the first couple weeks, then quickly began to show signs of infection, at this time that I began applying different household items to try to treat the fungus. I treated half of the plants with vinegar and was encouraged to see those plants stay healthy for a longer period of time before succumbing to the disease; I later realized that the life cycle for the disease had not yet started. I moved to detergent and then baking soda and found the same results. I was disappointed to determine that none of those items could treat the fungi.

### *Tyler Mellott* • LAKESIDE - EL CAPITAN

My SAE in agriscience was a two-year study of the effectiveness of regular soap, antibacterial soap, and hand sanitizer in reducing bacterial counts. The first experiment had forty subjects who made three plates each with an unwashed hand, a hand washed with regular soap, and a hand washed with hand sanitizer after handling raw chicken. The plates were incubated and bacteria colonies were analyzed over a five-day period. The goal was to find out if the use of hand sanitizer decreased the risk of foodborne illness by decreasing the number of bacteria on workers' hands compared to regular soap and water. The experiment showed hand sanitizer was more effective than regular soap. The second experiment had 35 subjects who made six plates each with an unwashed hand, a washed finger with L-lactic acid antibacterial soap, another finger with Benzenecarbonyl chloride antibacterial soap, another finger with regular soap, and another finger with hand sanitizer. The plates were incubated and analyzed for five days. This experiment showed that antibacterial soap with the active ingredient L-lactic acid eliminated the most amounts of bacteria. From these experiments I have learned how to produce a successful experiment, gained knowledge about microbiology and the uses of different cleansing agents.

### *Wade Sousa* • TULARE

My agriscience SAE experiments have been Maternal Colostrum vs Colostrum Re-Placer and Morbidity and Mortality Rates Based on Stress Levels in Dairy Calves. The information from these experiments were designed to help dairy farmers determine if maternal colostrum is more efficient and economical for calves and determine if increased stress levels could affect morbidity and mortality rates in calves. I conducted both research projects at Casa Blanca Cattle Company in Tipton, CA, our family's dairy heifer calf raising facility where we raise on average around 2,000 calves at a time. I decided to conduct these experiments in order to provide legitimate science-based information to our dairy farming operation and other local dairymen. Morbidity and Mortality rates can be a big problem in dairy herds. There are thousands of pathogens in a dairy cow's environment that a newborn calf is unable to handle, costing dairymen money on treatment and labor. Calf raising is the most critical component on the dairy farm, disease prevention should start with observing stress levels and comparing that to the calf's environment. This could help dairymen determine what factors may decrease immune response as a result of stress.

{ Continued on page 14 }



## LIVE OAK FFA Donkey Basketball Tradition Returns

Submitted by Shelby Foster



On March 8 our FFA chapter brought back Donkey Basketball, an event we haven't hosted in over twenty years. This is an event that not only brought our chapter, but our entire community together. For this event we invited our middle, elementary, and high school staff members to join us in some friendly competition. This event was hosted in our high school gym with a little more than 250 friends and family members in attendance. In this game students and staff tried playing basketball while riding a donkey. This super fun event brought laughter and good times that we will cherish, with our own high school staff placing first! FFA students are confident they will gain victory next year and are looking forward bring back our beloved tradition.



## MERCED FFA A GLC Experience Unlike Any Other

Submitted by Kathy Moua

My experience at the FFA Greenhand Leadership Conference was an experience like none other. Before I got involved with FFA, I had no clue whatsoever about the organization. My plan was just to experience new things and get involved. When our chapter got there, we were instructed to go inside of a building. Inside the building, there were many other students from different chapters. The idea of meeting new people really excited me. The casting directors were amazing. They were all bursting with energy which I thought was good because you can feel the passion in them. We were assigned to each of the casting

directors, depending on the color of our wristband. Our team leader did an amazing job at specifying further details about FFA. Throughout the day, we did various activities with each of the casting directors. Everyone of them talked a little about Ag Education including FFA leadership skills, SAE projects, traveling, etc. At the end of the day, I believe we all learned something and left with a different perspective of FFA. The Greenhand Leadership Conference was incredible. Our chapter, Merced FFA, has really helped me grow and gain more confidence in myself. I would like to thank them and spread my experience with others as well. They open their arms out to anyone. I will continue to stick with FFA, until I've reached my goal and that is receiving the American degree.

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# Cal Ag Plate

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## **MORRO BAY FFA** **Greenhand** **Initiation** **Morro Bay** **FFA Style**

*Submitted by Autumn Boyd*

differently initiating our Greenhands each year. We have the classic Greenhand Degree Ceremony and serve dinner to all of our new members and their families, but after dinner is when the fun and chaos begins! Our Chapter Officers lead our unsuspecting Greenhands out to our school farm located behind the campus where we recreate a military style obstacle course. This year's course consisted of sliding into a giant pit full of cooking oil and pine shavings, then an army crawl through dirt and "snowing" flour, followed by a sticky pass over a tarp raining down pancake syrup! This exciting event is filled with laughter and muck and introduces our new chapter members into the often light hearted and high spirited world of the Morro Bay FFA by creating one of their first fun-filled memories with us. Even though life can become "messy" or "sticky" we always find a way to have fun and stay connected as a chapter!



## **OROVILLE-** **LAS PLUMAS FFA** **FFA Pride**

*Submitted by Jenna Maturino*

The FFA has been and will continue to be a huge part of many members' lives within our chapter as well as nationwide. It has helped each member grow substantially and find a place they call home on the Las Plumas High campus. In honor to show the love and support for FFA, the Las Plumas FFA Chapter participated in FFA Week, a week dedicated to show the pride that members have for their organization nationwide. Las Plumas participated in this week by having dress up days, lunch time activities, and then a barn dance Friday night. What was extra special about our week is that we included chapters from Redding, Lincoln, Gridley, Wheatland, and Live Oak in our barn dance and were able to connect with FFA members to show our support for the National FFA week celebration.



## **BAKERSFIELD-NORTH FFA** **Zumba Meeting**

*Submitted by Daniel Moreno*

Promoting healthy lifestyles was a goal set by the North-Bakersfield FFA chapter officer team at the start of the year. To show members that being healthy can also be fun, we hosted our first Zumba Workout meeting! We had a certified Zumba instructor lead us in learning some great

dances moves to stay fit. Over 80 members attended and dressed in their best 90's workout attire! At the end of the night everyone was tired, but felt so much better about themselves and even more energized than when they first entered the room.



## **SOLEDAD FFA** **Record Membership**

*Submitted by Angelita Cisneros*

As Career Technical Education is getting a facelift across the state of California, Ag Education programs are booming! This year, our FFA chapter has grown exponentially to all time record numbers! In our small, single high school district, approximately a third of the student body is involved in FFA and 90 students are taking livestock to our local fair in the Salinas Valley making our chapter the highest in exhibitors. With the new classes that are being offered, fun FFA meetings and strong participation in Career Development Events, our Agriculture Academy has the ability to meet the diverse needs of many students. •



## STAR FARMER AWARD REGIONAL FINALISTS:

### *Emily Brewen* • KING CITY

My SAE focuses on beef production, but also includes sheep production, especially in the market and breeding beef areas. My SAE this year includes four market beef and seven breeding beef. It includes learning responsibility of an animal, how to feed, groom, and tame animals for show, and also how to get involved in the industry. I started in the business when I was nine, and began to show market steers at my county and state fairs. I soon got into breeding beef and showing them as well. I then began to breed those heifers and market the calves. My operation has continued the same way to this day. I use the most modern and effective practices available, such as different feed supplements and grooming supplies, to produce the highest quality beef product for consumers. I am always looking for new things to try to produce as high of a quality product as I possibly can. I also participate in the Farm Day my county fair holds annually and I speak to the public about my animals and what I do every day in this SAE. My everyday tasks include taking care of my animals and keeping them healthy, presentable, and comfortably stress-free.

### *Emily Nunez* • HEALDSBURG

My SAE includes market and breeding beef cattle, market and breeding rabbits, market swine, and market goats. From my first year of 4-H raising three market hogs, I knew that livestock was not just a hobby but a way of life. My freshman year I began FFA with a market hog, market steer, and raising market and breeding rabbits. I decided I wanted to expand my SAE projects to include breeding cattle. In the last three years I have purchased two beef heifers to produce my own cattle. When I purchased my first heifer, I began showing her at jackpots and fairs and found myself in the champion drive at many shows. I was excited when I selected the bull to artificially inseminate her to. I have since increased my herd, flushed my first heifer for embryos, and bred all my heifers via AI. I continue to breed and sell market rabbits for youth. Being able to produce my own herd has motivated me to continue growing each year and major in Animal Science Nutrition in college. Raising such a diverse group of species has allowed me to learn specific skills and common skills needed by all species, such as responsibility and time management.

### *Andrea Thomas* • COLUSA

I raise hogs, cattle, hay, and put on ag educational events for my SAE. I have had as many as three sows in production for show hogs to sell to 4-H and FFA members and feeder hogs for the local butcher market, as well as raising and exhibiting market hogs. For my swine project I have done the boar collecting, AI, farrowing, processing of piglets, and marketing of my product. I also have commercial cows to produce calves for the feeder calf market, and I've added to the herd by keeping two heifer calves. As part of my beef project I am responsible for pasture and fence maintenance, irrigation of the summer pasture, working the herd, and processing calves each winter. I am in a partnership with my dad on 154 acres of alfalfa and oat hay in Williams. I provide most of the labor and share in management and marketing. Before planting the alfalfa I grew a winter wheat crop and oat hay and grass hay on five acres at the school farm the past four years. I have been responsible for ground preparation, disking and rolling fields, irrigation checks and running the swather and rake. Finally, I put on Livestock Skill-A-Thon contests and showmanship clinics for 4-H and FFA members.

### *Adriana Coonce* • PHELAN - SERRANO

Over the past four years I have raised breeding and market sheep and breeding and market swine. Wanting to expand, I decided to raise market beef and start growing grains to feed to my livestock and sell to others. I have had the great opportunity to expand my knowledge further in the area of animal nutrition because of these projects that I take pride in. Raising my swine and sheep has offered me a lot of knowledge and experiences that I had to further my education and skills. I currently have 15 sows, a boar, five ewes, a ram, two steers, half acre of corn, and an acre and a half of barley that I maintain. My freshman year my dad would have to help me do everything, now I am running the barns and telling him what needs to be done. I also have my younger brother that assists me with the care of my stock, and I get the opportunity to teach him. Some of the responsibilities that I have to complete on a daily basis include: feeding, veterinarian practices, farrowing, castration, nutrition, genetics selection, assist in farrowing and lambing, seed, fertilizer application and pest control with my crops, and general care and maintenance of all projects.

### *Kent Norman* • RIPON

The past three years I have grown wheat on acreage leased from Robert Norman Farms, increasing my acreage from 10 to 46 acres. My interest wheat production came around 10-years old when I helped my father on the farm. Upon entering high school I leased my own land to grow wheat through Robert Norman Farms who also offered the equipment necessary for production. Our rental agreement allows me to pay for the equipment and land use after harvest and receipt of income from the crop. The project began with setting up the field for planting and irrigation by a furrowing implement and utilizing a GPS system to create the straightest furrows, maximizing the total number of beds and furrows, which increased ideal planting conditions. I then watched the weather forecast to gauge the soil's moisture level to provide the optimal germination rate. I calibrated the grain drill, to plant 150 lbs. per acre; less would lower the yield and too much would create plant crowding. I irrigated the wheat twice due to the drought conditions. Once the wheat met the required moisture level, I set the cylinder on the combine to the correct setting to not damage the kernels while harvesting.

### *Mark Cavallero* • MADERA

My SAE projects are growing and harvesting grapes that I sell to Constellation Wines for champagne and almonds to sell to Holland Nut Company. As early as sixth grade I would help my dad in the orchard and vineyard after school and on weekends with odd jobs. As I got older my jobs increased and I learned the things to have a successful orchard and vineyard in the future. I inherited ten acres of grapes from my grandfather when he passed; he wanted me to be involved in the family business. While I have always worked in the vineyard and orchard with my family, I started to manage my own acreage six years ago when I rented ten acres of almonds and began to grow my own business in addition to grapes. My first year was rough, allowing me to see the management side versus the worker side of my operation. Now that I'm eighteen I make all decisions for my project. I have continued my vineyards' productivity and grown my almond acreage by renting more acres of mature almonds, and developing long term leases to plant young trees. I am excited to continue growing my business and I plan to purchase the land I now rent.

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## STAR AGRICULTURAL PLACEMENT AWARD REGIONAL FINALISTS:

### ***Jacob Eyraud*** • POWAY

My SAE is a position as a yard worker and delivery serviceman at California Firewood, a supplier of firewood to homeowners and businesses throughout San Diego County. My position allows me to locate trees to be removed, break down trees, recognize the cause of tree decline, identifying different varieties and qualities of wood, and many other aspects of the business. The business has found a niche reselling wood from trees that are removed at a homeowners request or because they are a hazard to residential homes and trees located in a forest with high fire danger due to the drought. This position has given me technical knowledge of forest products, how different woods produce different amounts of heat, the effect that different woods have on structures like chimneys and wood burning stoves, and the experience of working with people of different cultures, ages, and economic status. My bilingual skills have helped me to connect and service the large Latino culture in San Diego County. I have also learned the benefits of knowing my limits by listening to my body and keeping my well-being in mind, thus making myself the most efficient worker I can be.

### ***Matthew Umbarger*** • KING CITY

My SAE is working at New Holland Coastal Tractor Company where I perform repairs on tractors that are either warranted or are paid to be repaired. My job also consists of sweeping the shop, cleaning parts, maintenance of the shop/store and any tractors that are due for servicing, programming harvester GPS systems, and pressure washing the protective coating on the harvesters. I am also trusted to deliver all tractor parts or items that are away from the shop mainly to local businesses and farms. and repair any tractors that are located within our company's range. My greatest challenge in this area of work was at first not knowing anything about the tractors internal parts such as a radiator, oil reservoir, oil filter, driveline, etc., but after working with the manager of the shop, he was able to teach me along the way what exactly every part and item of the tractor was. Being a part of the FFA Farm Power and Machinery Team has also helped me gain knowledge that is needed for me to move up in my range of work at the shop. After learning these items and parts I am now able to work efficiently and independently.

### ***Anthony Misura*** • HEALDSBURG

I was first exposed to the dairy industry when in fifth grade my mother married my stepdad, John Bucher. John is the owner of Bucher Farms in Healdsburg, which consists of both wine grape vineyards and an organic dairy. Since my first exposure I remember waking up at 5:00 am to watch John artificially inseminate the cows, feed, assist in parturition, and decide which heifers would become part of our family's herd. Since then, my experiences have grown. Now my typical workweek includes feeding calves, heifers and cows, palpating cows for pregnancy, cleaning free stall barns and calf hutches, and performing maintenance on various pieces of equipment. My favorite aspect of working at the dairy is performing artificial insemination and preg-checking cows. Since acquiring a job at Bucher Dairy as a freshman I have developed a passion for the dairy industry and hope to return to the dairy after college to begin the transition of taking over. I would like to continue the family tradition while making improvements to our current practices. My work experience is related to the proficiency area because of the skills and tasks that I do on a daily basis at the dairy.

### ***Kaleah Bese*** • MERCED - GOLDEN VALLEY

Nestled on 30 acres in between the towns of Merced and Planada, Hullana Farms originated in the 1940s as a family based Agriculture Sales entity which got its start attending San Francisco Farmers Markets on a weekly basis to market their locally grown produce. I grew up attending these markets with my grandfather and as my grandparents slowed down in energy, they needed the extra help to stock and market the produce. As I obtained more knowledge and appreciation, my love for agriculture flourished even more and still I attend every weekend to lead the family business. Currently, I grow many various types of specialty vegetables that include squash, bell peppers, chilies, Korean based products, and sweet potatoes. In addition, my project also encompasses the production of various fruits and melons that include yellow watermelon, red watermelon, orange watermelon, cantaloupe, Korean melon Ambrosia melon, Sharlyn melon, guava melon, Canary melon, orange honeydew, green honeydew, Kadota figs, and Black Mission figs. Throughout the years, I have been able to help establish new irrigation techniques that will allow for higher efficiency. The operation, since the beginning, has grown and marketed 100% of the harvested crop.

### ***Paul Barcellos*** • TULARE

My SAE project is working at Cain Trucking as a foreman in their Composting and Air Pollution Control Operations. In the composting operation we recycle cow manure into effective compost providing the option to mix in special nutrients requested by farmers, based on their soil test, to provide a product that best suits their needs. In the Air Pollution Control Operation, oil is sprayed on asphalt and dirt roads to keep dust from reducing the air quality, helping farming operations prevent fines and pollution. Since this is a family operation I have had the opportunity to work a lot of hours where I have gained a knowledge and appreciation for both recycling agriculture products and preventing air pollution. To gain the knowledge of the company's compost operation and to perform basic duties was not enough for me so I began working my way up the ladder of the success. I was not allowed more responsibility until I could demonstrate my mastery of my current duties. My goal is to manage and gain the necessary knowledge and skill to be successful at making compost and managing the operations. Each day I work I look forward to solving the management challenges that present themselves.

### ***Gus Macy*** • TULELAKE

My SAE project is working for my family's company, "Macy's Flying Service". Macy's was founded by my grandparents in 1965 and services the needs of the growers by providing a full line of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers to be applied by air or ground, depending on the grower's preference. Since my employment in 2013 my mornings start before sunrise at the shop where I organize and prepare the chemicals the crop dusters will need for the spraying. I am ready and prepared to quickly refuel the aircrafts because the longer that the aircraft sits on the ground the less chemical we are applying. Another responsibility I have is delivering fertilizer tanks to fields to be used to apply fertilizer through a process called chemigation. There is a lot of pre-checking with these tanks because a leaking tank is not good for the environment or the production farm ground and leaked chemicals are lost money that cannot be recovered. My experience working with Macy's Flying Service has led me to pursue a career in the agricultural aviation industry. I have currently logged over ten hours of flight time towards obtaining my pilot's license and expect to have my license by the time I graduate high school. •





by Colton Paoletti  
Galt-Liberty Ranch FFA Chapter

From March 8 to 11, sixty seniors from across California had the opportunity to participate in the Sacramento Leadership Experience. I, along with four others in my chapter had the honor of being chosen to act as mock legislators for the week. I was given the title of Assembly Member Paoletti of District 21.

After a day focused heavily on how a bill becomes a law, political parties, and the overall workings of the legislative branch of government we were ready to begin. Both the senate and assembly first met as committees where they were able to make amendments to the proposed bills and debate the issues. Though the various committee meetings were engaging and informative the highlight of the conference was debating on the assembly and senate floor.

SLE was by far the most educational and inspiring event that I have participated in through the FFA. The conference was far more than just learning the workings of government and how to better advocate for agriculture. It led me to the realization that there is hope for the future. All sixty of us were instilled the idea that we could make a significant difference if we work hard to achieve something. Now imagine for a moment those sixty members sharing that idea with the 83,000 members of the state association. I realize now that we have the power to change the world around us for the better. That gives me hope.



by Wesley Woolery  
McArthur Fall River FFA Chapter

Every year California FFA seniors apply to attend Sacramento Leadership Experience (SLE), this year there were over one hundred twenty students who applied and sixty got the chance to attend. SLE is the capstone leadership conference for California FFA, during the four days while at the state capitol the attendees stepped into the shoes of a state legislator as either a state senator or state assemblymember. They are assigned a district to represent its constituents while proposing, debating, and amending four different omnibus bills. This year the senators and assemblymembers proposed agriculture, food, education, and environment omnibus bills. During the conference FFA members got the chance to listen to state legislatures share their daily duties. Most attendees say that their most memorable moment during SLE is having the opportunity to sit in the California Senate and Assembly Chambers and debate the bills that were proposed. This once in a lifetime experience opens the eyes



of California FFA members of how legislation moves through our government and the importance of living to serve.

## FFA Street Beat

Include #FFANews to be noticed for the next edition



**Tz\_davis** 1313 Last week I had the time of my life at SLE!! Thank you to the counselors at the conference for teaching me the importance of our government and how I can make a difference advocating for agriculture and FFA.  
#ffasle #ffa #californiaffa #foreverblue

**hannahceciliajones** Beyond blessed to have been able to attend the #ffaSLE conference. From studying our bills to creating grand old party schemes it was an overall amazing experience at the Capital.  
#horsemeatanyone #majesticmoments

**lukeoleary** "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." - Ronald Reagan #ffaSLE

**kimberlydstrom** Such a great quote!