

FFA Update

T O M A L E S F F A

Governor Brown Proposes to Eliminate Agricultural Education and the FFA Programs in our Schools!

Since the inception of current Agricultural Incentive Grant funding, innovative programs and coursework have been developed that are attracting record numbers of students into Agricultural Education programs throughout the state. These programs currently send more students onto post-secondary colleges and training institutions, where they graduate with degrees in larger numbers and in shorter time frames than their peers in general academic programs.

This proposal to eliminate the Agricultural Education Incentive Grant threatens a nationally-recognized delivery model in Agricultural Education that has over 1330 courses approved for admission recognition by the UC and CSU systems, and which provides essential Agricultural Education and leadership training experiences for students interested in careers in Agriculture – a vitally important component of California's economy.

Specifically, this proposal would:

- Remove targeted incentive funding from high schools currently offering Agricultural Education programs and redistribute those funds across the board to all schools in California with total discretion for use at the local level. Schools currently offering Agricultural Education programs would no longer receive those funds, which would be folded into the Local Control Funding Formula base grant for distribution to all schools. The net impact of adding these monies to the LCFF base would amount to less than 66 cents per student per year.
- Remove any incentive for districts to continue to offer Agricultural Education programs, since these courses and programs are not part of the state-mandated graduation coursework, and are not part of the computation of current school accountability measures.
- Virtually eliminate the capacity of these programs to carry on programs and activities involving the Future Farmers of America student organization, which currently has over 74,000 members in over 300 local chapters throughout California.
- Eliminate programmatic funding for other Career Technical Education programs such as Specialized Secondary Programs and Regional Occupational Programs, which also make up an important component of Agricultural Education programs statewide.

Threaten California's economic and agricultural future while producing virtually no benefit to existing educational funding streams.

Important Information Regarding Agricultural Education:

- ✦ Enrollment in Agricultural Education has increased from 21,000 students in the mid 1980's to over 74,000 students today – while enrollment in other CTE sectors has declined during that same time.
- ✦ Of the students enrolled in Agricultural Education today in California, 51% are Hispanic, while 35% are White.
- ✦ There are 1,337 Ag Education courses approved by UC/CSU for meeting the admission requirements of those universities, representing 45% of Ag courses offered statewide.
- ✦ Ag Education programs have compiled graduate follow-up data for their graduating seniors since 1984. If students complete a minimum series of 3 courses in Ag Education during their high school tenure, they enter postsecondary education at a 76% level, which is substantially higher than the general high school population.



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MFE & ALA CONFERENCES BY: ALEJANDRA FLORES

The weekend of January 10th and 11th, 14 members of the Tomales FFA Chapter traveled to Sacramento to participate in a two-day, one-night leadership conference known as MFE/ALA, (Made for Excellence and Advanced Leadership Academy). The Sophomores attended the MFE conference while the Juniors went to the ALA conference.

This journey helped the members discover their inner leadership skills through a series of challenges and activities that they participated in. After the first day's conference sessions were over a dance was held for the students in the Hilton Hotel's ballroom. The members that attended the event enjoyed meeting new people and interacting with them using their new found confidence from the conference.

The hotel was spectacular and

the people who were staying right down the hall from the Tomales FFA Chapter will surely become life long friends after sharing this experience together. The dance was a fun filled event and a great release after having such an activity packed day.

Summer Cassel said, "There's no doubt in my mind that I'd certainly love to attend this conference again, and I'm sure anyone else would say the same who went to ALA".



MID YEAR OFFICER RETREAT BY: MADI SORENG

On December 20th, the Tomales FFA Officer Team went to Mr. Costanzo's house for the annual Mid-year Officer Retreat. The purpose of this yearly gathering is to review the progress the team has made so far in the school year and to discuss upcoming events. The evening started with social discussions over the dinner that Mr. and Mrs. Costanzo made. Then the evening progressed into team building activities and charades.

Afterwards, Mr. Costanzo had an individual meeting with each officer to track the events that they will be

coordinating in the near future, as well as to give constructive advice on how to improve their performance as leaders of the Tomales FFA Chapter. Before departing, there was a white elephant gift exchange, which was very fun. Looking back on the event, everyone had a great time. They especially liked Ryan Giammona's stories about what he finds on roadsides around the area. The Officer Team is excited about all of the events this spring and they hope that all the members are too!



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

BY: SUMMER CASSEL

On December 14th 2013, the FFA Officer Team, Tomales 4-H members, Mr. and Mrs. Costanzo and a few FFA members joined together to go Christmas Caroling at the Stockstill House in Point Reyes. The Stockstill House is a home for elderly people who need comprehensive care. The kids put together a book of classic holiday songs like "Jingle Bells", "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", the "12 Days of

Christmas", and many more. It was great to see some of the elderly individuals joining along and singing with the carolers. After the FFA group was done singing, they were invited to have food and talk to the residents of the Stockstill House. This is a great tradition and also a great opportunity for the FFA to become more involved in the community that supports the program.



GOVERNOR BROWN'S PROPOSES TO ELIMINATE AG. ED. & FFA ... CONT.

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✦ Several studies have demonstrated that students nationwide that complete a series of 3 CTE courses graduate from high school in higher numbers, go on to postsecondary education in higher numbers, graduate from college in greater numbers, and complete their degrees in less time than their peers who do not take CTE coursework.

✦ The California Future Farmers of America student organization is a nationally-recognized model of excellence for developing leadership, critical thinking, and problem-solving

skills in high school-age youth. Nearly 5,000 students attend the State FFA Leadership Conference held annually in Fresno, making it the largest student organization conference in California and the largest convention gathering in the city of Fresno.

✦ Given that California is the leading agricultural state in the United States and a major component of our states' economic well-being, it is important that strong and vibrant Agricultural Education programs exist within our schools to attract talented and motivated people to seek careers in this vital industry. Agricultural Education pro-

grams have produced many leaders at the State, National, and International levels who credit those programs with motivating them and developing their leadership potential.

Agricultural Education programs combine rigorous academic instruction with learn-by-doing strategies – resulting in greater understanding and relevance to students. In an era that far too often emphasizes rote memorization and standardized testing strategies, Ag Education offers a unique and compelling opportunity for students to develop both their academic and personal life skills.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DAYLIGHT CALVES

BY: SAMMY STRODE

Scientific studies have documented that cows fed late in the day are more likely to calve during daylight hours. The easiest and most practical method of inhibiting nighttime calving at present is by feeding cows at night. The physiological mechanism is unknown, but some hormonal effect may be involved. Rumen motility studies indicate the frequency of rumen contractions falls a few hours before parturition. Intraruminal pressure begins to fall in the last two weeks of gestation, with a more rapid decline during calving. It has been suggested that night feeding causes intraruminal pressures to rise at night and decline in the daytime.

In a study conducted at Iowa

State University, there were more than 2,000 mature cows and heifers that either were fed late in the day (5-10 p.m.) or early in the day (before noon). Of the cows fed late in the day, 85% of their calves were born during daylight hours. Yet, only 49% of the cows fed in the morning calved during daylight hours.

Recently, Kansas State University and University of Idaho have taken another look at calving time. They investigated approximately 200 spring-calving cows at each location. Cows located at KSU were fed each day in the late afternoon (4-6 p.m.), and cows at the University of Idaho were fed in the early morning (6-8 a.m.).

Their study results were similar to previous studies in that when cows

were fed in the evening, 85% of cows calved during daylight hours. However, when cows were fed in the morning, only 52% of cows calved during daylight hours. Most importantly, results from this study indicated that cows tended to display very little variation in the time of day they calved from year to year. For cows fed in the evening, the time of day a cow would give birth could be predicted within a two- to three-hour window based on the average time of day she previously calved. However, cows fed during morning hours exhibited greater variability in the time of day they calved each year.

Ag. Facts and Funnies

-A hive of bees flies over 55,000 miles to bring you one pound of honey. A honey bee can fly 15 miles per hour.

-The bright orange color of carrots tell you they're an excellent source of Vitamin A, which is important for good eyesight, especially at night. Vitamin A helps your body fight infection, and keeps your skin and hair healthy!

What did the duck say after he went shopping?
(Put it on my bill!)

What do you give a sick pig?
(Oink-ment!)

What do you get if you cross a teddy bear with a pig?
(A teddy boar!)



Another downside of hoofs

Summer's Recipe of the Month:

Brown Sugar Smokies - Party Appetizer

- 1 pound bacon
- 1 (16 ounce) package little smokie sausages
- 1 cup brown sugar or to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Cut bacon into thirds and wrap each strip around a little sausage. Place the wrapped sausages on wooden skewers, several to a skewer.
3. Arrange the skewers on a baking sheet and sprinkle them liberally with brown sugar.
4. Bake until bacon is crisp and the brown sugar melted

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Contact us if you have any questions!

**"We are the past, present and future...
We are Tomales FFA"**

