

The FFA Update

From Pasture To Plate

By Ali Azevedo

Have you ever wondered how the steak you eat goes from the pasture to your plate? The process of butchering the animal is divided into seven different stages.

1. First is the processing and proper handling of the cattle as they are shipped to their destinations. This usually takes place either the evening before or the morning of butchering. After arriving at their destinations, the cattle are then unloaded, weighed, and placed in holding pens, which in turn are held in the stock yards before being moved into the plants.

2. After butchering, the hides and organs are taken care of. The hides are machine cleaned, and are either preserved through salt or brine curing, or are sent directly to the hide tannery. A variety of meats, like the tongues, livers, and hearts are inspected and then packaged.

3. The carcass is then split. Afterwards, the carcass is inspected and weighed, and once it has passed, multiple food safety measures are implemented. This may include steam vacuums, organic rinses, or a steam cabinet.

4. The meat is then cooled by placing the sides of beef into the carcass cooler, or otherwise known as the 'hot box'. The internal temperature of the beef drops from ninety degrees down to forty.

5. Once the carcass has been chilled, it is moved from the cooler to where it is graded by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Then it is selected for sale to customers.

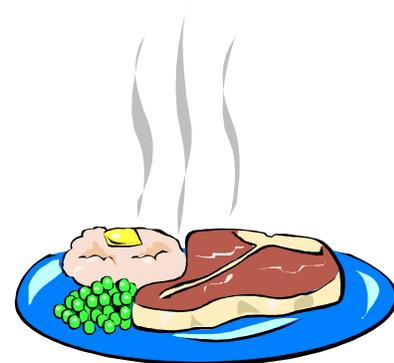
6. The processing floor is where the carcass is divided into the choice cuts that you and I purchase and en-

joy. The first set of smaller sections is known as the primals. Such cuts as chuck, loins, rounds and ribs come from this first process. The second smaller sections are called the subprimals which include top round, whole tenderloin, and rib eye.

7. After being cut into its sections, the meat is then moved into the packaging facility, where it is once again weighed, wrapped, boxed, and labeled. It is then stored at twenty-nine degrees until shipped to your local grocery store.

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National FFA Week

By: Terra Hargens

National FFA Week, February 21st through the 24th, was recognized at Tomales High School with dress up days and competitions as always. This year, there was a point system in place, which seemed to be a success. For every event, like



sunflower seed spitting and corn eating, the winner's class received points towards earning a pizza party. The class with the most students dressed up also received points. The point competition concluded with the rally on Thursday. There was a relay race and the winners of that the senior class. They ended the week with 110 points, and won the pizza party, which will be held the last week of March.

Overall, the point system was an effective



way to boost school spirit and competition. Therefore the Officer Team looks forward to sponsoring a similar arrangement next year. Thank you to all who participated and the Officers hope that you join again next year.

Picking a Market Lamb

By: Courtney Nygard

To find a good market lamb, you need to look at the many different qualities that they possess. You need to select a lamb that is approximately three months old, and weighs around fifty-five to seventy-five pounds. A key thing to look for is if the animal has any diseases before you choose it.

Evaluating a lamb is

very important. You should use your hands to feel that they have structural correctness, muscle volume, and expression. Look to see that the animal has good frame, adequate length and thickness, long, level top line, which transitions into a level dock, long, good hind legs, sound feet, and, finally, a body that they can grow into.

You will not always find the perfect lamb, so look for one that is the closest in style and type to the features you are looking for.



The Replacement Heifer Program

By: Christa Nygard

If you are the type of person who likes showing dairy animals and wants to earn more money while doing it, get involved in the Replacement Heifer Program. The Replacement Heifer Program gets people involved in learning how to take care of and raise a calf to a heifer. The program has been around for many years to help those 4-H

members that do not have the land or equipment to own a milking cow.

You receive the calf when it is a couple months old and raise it until it is almost full grown. You must show the replacement heifer in at least one fair, Petaluma or Santa Rosa, for four years. However, instead of showing with everyone else, your ani-

mal is placed in a class for replacement heifers of the same age and breed. When it is time for the auction, you will have learned so much about raising dairy heifers. Hopefully one day the program will be open to FFA members also. Maybe a beef program will be started also one day to encourage students to be more involved in the Beef Industry.

Sonoma Section Speaking Contests

By: Holly Soreng

This year, the Sonoma Section Speaking Contests were held on Friday February 24 at Elsie Allen High School. Tomales FFA had four participants in three different contests. Terra Hargens participated in the Prepared Public Speaking Contest, a favorite of Tomales FFA. Katie Arndt was our freshman Creed Speaker, and Holly Soreng and Jessica Arndt participated in the new speaking contest, Impromptu Speaking.

In the Prepared Public Speaking Contest, the contestant must have previously written a speech, which the judges have gone over, the contestant delivers it, and

then is asked questions relating to their chosen topic. Terra took second in this competition and will progress to the Regional competition at the end of March.

The Impromptu Contest is similar in the sense that the contestants are giving a speech, but they choose their topics once they enter the room. They then have a minute to prepare, and once the minute is up, they talk about the topic for a period of at least thirty seconds to no longer than two minutes. Like Terra, Holly placed second and will also be continuing on to the Regional Contest at Santa Rosa High School in late

March. Jessica and Katie did not make it to the next level, but they both did very well in their contests. Hopefully, everyone will participate in the public speaking contests again next year to continue Tomales FFA's winning streak of the last six years.



8th Grade Recruitment

By: Cynthia Pantoja

On February 10, 2012 the 8th grade classes from both Tomales Elementary and West Marin Elementary paid a visit to Tomales High School. The students were there to take a tour of the newly remodeled school and also to learn about various



classes and activities that they could sign up for and join next year as

freshmen. One of their stops included visiting the Ag Classroom and learning a little bit about what FFA has to offer them. They watched a video, listened to a presentation given by two of the FFA Officers, and received packets of information regarding the Tomales FFA Chapter and the Ag courses that are offered by the program.

On March 2, 2012 Cynthia Pantoja, Holly Soreng, and Summer Cassel visited the 8th grade classrooms of Tomales Elementary and West Marin Elemen-

tary with Mr. Costanzo to give the students a more in depth look at the FFA experience. They presented a slideshow, and then asked questions at the end to see which kids were really listening to the presentation. The students that answered the questions correctly were given prizes for the National FFA Catalog such as: footballs, water bottles, hats and key chains. Hopefully these two events will encourage 8th grade students to enroll in an agriculture class at Tomales High School next year and experience the power of the blue jacket!

Tomales FFA

Tomales High School
Agriculture Department
PO Box 25
Tomales CA 94971

Phone: 707-878-2286
Fax: 707-878-2787
Email: Bill.Costanzo@shorelineunified.org

www.calaged.org,
www.ffa.org
www.tomalesffa.org



Other Noteworthy News

Tomales FFA's Advisor and Ag Teacher, Mr. Costanzo, has been nominated to receive the Teacher of Excellence Award from the California Agriculture Teachers Association. Way to go, Mr. Costanzo! He will find out the results in late June.

This year, Tomales FFA has a record number of 10 FFA State Degree recipients. Terra Hargens placed first at the Regional Speaking Contest and she will be moving on to the State Contest in April. The Chapter Scrapbook also placed first and it will be headed to the state contest in Fresno as well.

Visit our new website, www.tomalesffa.org

Ag Facts and Funnies

By Sara Souza

Settling a Cow Case

A big-city lawyer was representing the railroad in a lawsuit filed by an old rancher. The rancher's prize bull was missing from the section through which the railroad passed. The rancher only wanted to be paid the fair value of the bull. The case was scheduled to be tried before the justice of the peace in the back room of the general store.

The attorney for the railroad immediately cornered the rancher and tried to get him to settle out of court. The lawyer did his best selling job, and finally the rancher agreed to take half of what he was asking.

After the rancher had signed the release and took the check, the young lawyer couldn't resist gloating a little

over his success, telling the rancher, "You know, I hate to tell you this, old man, but I put one over on you in there. I couldn't have won the case. The engineer was asleep and the fireman was in the caboose when the train went through your ranch that morning. I didn't have one witness to put on the stand. I bluffed you!"

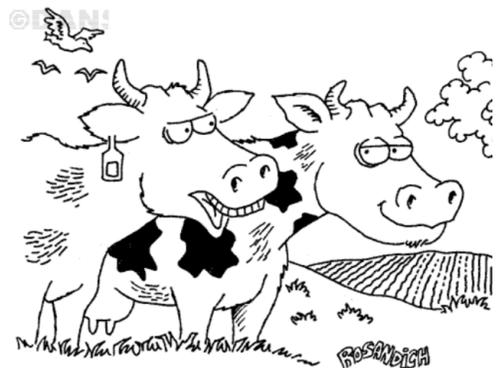
The old rancher replied, "Well, I'll tell you, young feller, I was a little worried about winning that case myself, because that durned bull came home this morning."

www.ahajokes.com

- The average person consumes 584 pounds of dairy products a year.
- The average dairy cow produces seven gallons of milk a day, 2,100 pounds

of milk a month, and 46,000 glasses of milk a year!

- Today's farmer grows twice as much food as his parents did- using less land, energy, water and creating fewer emissions.



"I'd really appreciate it if you'd quit calling me 'Big Mac'."