

DRAFT College of the Redwoods Farm Ag Advisory Committee Meeting
Humboldt County Farm Bureau Office
October 2, 2018

14 Attending: President Katherine Ziemer (Executive Dir. Humboldt County Farm Bureau), Secretary Janet Sclar (Farm Bureau Board member), Angelina Hill (CR VP), Kerry Mayer (CR Dean of Career and Technical Education), Franz Rulofson (CR faculty), Silas Sarvinski (CR Farm Director), Jillian (CR Student, Ag Leadership Club), Johana Rodoni (Cattlemaster and FB Board Vice President), Greg Dale (Shellfish and FB Board Member), John Vevoda (Dairyman and Farm Bureau Board member), Walt Giacomini (Cattlemaster and FB member), Jeff Stackhouse (Rangeland Advisor UC Co-Op Extension), Sandy Dale (NorthCoast Ag Partners NCAP), and Carrie Peterson on phone (California Community Colleges “Doing What Matters” regional rep for Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies)

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by President Ziemer and introductions were made.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting on January 29, 2018, were accepted.

2. Industry needs regarding students graduating from CR Ag Department
Informative discussion and brainstorming with highlights were as follows: truck and tractor driving, mechanics, plumbing, irrigation, milking, calving, herd health, feeders (math skills), soil testers, farm business management, dairy science, food safety, customer service, marketing and communication skills, horsemanship, fence building/repair, construction. The more skills a person has the higher they are paid, having a degree or certificate should mean the student is current in the field and has invested their time in acquiring those skills. Row crop farmers hire more manual labor seasonally. Carrie said she’s hearing about Ag Tech classes combining engineering, plumbing, mechanics, etc. Franz said CR brought back an intro to Ag Business class this past year, and a few in attendance fondly remembered the Ag Economics class taught at CR by John Regli being very advantageous. Creating a plumbing program was recommended, but thought too difficult to find a professional plumber willing to teach the class. Franz said one issue with class enrollment is that to transfer to Chico students need either Tractor or Ag Mechanics, so CR just kept Tractor and dropped the Mechanics class. Other ideas were solar, electrical systems, meat processing. A suggestion that cannabis growing might require certification was dubious to most, at least locally. Additionally, Jeff suggested a “Vegetation Management/Certified Burner” program to meet upcoming state regulations, with CR leading the way with a program including mechanical control, excavation, grazing, herbicides, managing fuel loads, etc. The Co-Op Extension has a Fire Advisor, and Jeff suggested referencing programs in Florida, Nebraska and Georgia. Franz said unfortunately a weed management class doesn’t articulate until the Junior year for transfer students.

3. CR Programming Franz said they are proposing a new Certificate of Achievement in Organic/Sustainable Ag, which is about a one-year program without requiring general education classes, yet still receive state funding. Revision of the AG.AS degree into a sustainable agriculture degree may help with recruitment as well.
 - B. Two tiny houses are being built which he hopes might become housing on the farm.
 - C. Sandy said that they currently have Eureka High and Fortuna High FFA students who are dual-enrolled for 3 units of CR credit, with potential to reach all high schools here and some in Sonoma County

4. CR Farm Report
 - A. Silas presented a Farm Sales Report dated from July 1 to the present, totalling \$23,723, most of that being produce sales of \$16,271.
 - B. Last Sunday’s Open House and U-Pick event was a huge success, with record numbers of visitors (500?) and sales (\$6,000+). Jillian did the facebook promotion and sandwich boards or permanent summer and winter directional signs were suggested for the future. People ARE willing to drive to the farm, but a lot got lost on the way, due to erroneous electronic mapping.
 - C. Poultry projects are on hold until a better security system can be put in place, or the chickens taught to come in at night. Perhaps trying game hens or turkeys again, but harvesting earlier and freezing them to control their size.
 - D. Beef cattle are utilized across the street from the school, using the Greenhouse Foundation Fund to pay for expenses.

E. Student labor

i. Students receive class credit to work the Farmer's Markets. The Farm does have one Federal work study student and the Greenhouse also has one that has helped at the farm this fall. The Farm work study student is funded for 100 hours.

ii. An internship program is being discussed that would be funded initially from CTE dept and then hopefully farm sales would carry on from there: Events Manager, Farmer's Markets Managers, all with Silas overseeing them.

iii. Farm Bureau typically funds 3 summer interns to help on the Farm.

iv. October 5, 2018, Farm Preview Day for area high school Juniors and Seniors, will include vegetable production, tractor class, fruit tree and forestry club presentations. Farm Bureau is paying for the lunch.

5. CR Ag Leadership Class/Club

Jillian reporting that they have been busy with the Welcome BBQ, camping at Ruth Lake, Farmer's Markets, personalized pumpkin project, and washing the ag vehicles, along with plans to go bowling. They'll have a pumpkin patch and a "Soil Splatter" demo at the upcoming CR Science Night. Nine students will also be attending the Ag Leadership Workshop Event at UC Davis.

6. CR Ag Student Enrollment, Retention and Support

A. Sandy made the strong argument that high school FFA students need the continuity of an Ag family experience when they enter CR. They need a fun class in Ag even if they don't intend to declare an Ag major. She shared three recent students who quit CR and left for Butte College after being registered in all general ed classes the first semester at CR. Jillian concurred with her own experience, and many said that the Ag teachers themselves become the counselors for Ag students, but Franz doesn't always get the names of the students entering CR for the follow-through. Discussion resulted in the suggestion that Franz attend the CR counselor meetings that happen twice a month. Kerry informed us that CR has hired a counselor specifically for CTE students.

B. It was also noted that Ag students need to go to high schools to recruit students, making it a regular annual event every March. The Bridge Plan including a site visit needs to be formalized between the high schools and CR, including the FFA advisors and the CATA quarterly meetings.

C. The Ag webpage is getting updated and CTE is getting dedicated marketing and advising which should all help.

D. In addition to the Farm Preview Day (above), CR will also host the Field Day event.

7. Information Sharing

Johanna asked how the meeting information will be utilized. Angelina said she will share the industry needs to the CR PVC Committee for review. Kerry said that she, too, will use that information in discussion with Franz and others. Franz said the minutes are always shared and on record for review.

8. Gasoline Costs and Funding

Franz said some recommend a raffle-type event to help with large gas expense to get students to the farm. Janet suggested that CR contact Renner Petroleum to see if they could be one of the recipients of their incentive programs, like Farm Bureau and KEET are, where Renner members designate their beneficiary, purchase gas, and then, depending on the total gas purchased every month, a check up to \$500 is received back from their headquarters. Katherine said she would share the local Renner contact info with CR.

9. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Janet L. Sclar