

Career fair highlights options for students

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

FFA members will go from learning about career options at the Spokane Ag Expo and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum to meeting potential employers.

The Expo offers a career fair from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, following the FFA presentation on the many opportunities agriculture presents.

Many teenagers are unaware of the career opportunities in agriculture, so Expo organizers reached out to businesses to talk about the many careers that are available. In addition to farming and ranching, they include accounting, legal, marketing, finance, technology, sales, machinery design and maintenance and management.

"Our goal is basically to enlighten the high school students about the tremendous opportunities there are," said Myrna O'Leary, director of the Expo.

O'Leary said 600 to 700 students typically attend the FFA presentation. She encourages FFA advisers to have their students attend.

"There will be plenty of time to go through the career fair and hit the show floor, too," she said.

"Whenever my students can see the opportunities that may be available to them in the ag industry, they then can see themselves in those careers," said Allen Skoog, adviser for the Cheney, Wash., FFA. "The possibilities in the industry open up to them in their minds. This is especially true for nontraditional career opportunities for women and minorities."

Students can see the application of their learning in school in many areas represented during the career fair and the Expo, Skoog said.

"Students should consider a career in agriculture because it is so diverse and the science, marketing, business and communication skills they learn in school in their ag course work (relate) directly to industry," he said.

"Employers should know that these students will come to them with knowledge in communication, sciences, me-



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Spokane Seed Co. quality systems coordinator John Zamora speaks with students about jobs in agriculture during the career fair at last year's Spokane Ag Expo. The Expo will offer a career fair for students at 11 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5.

chanics, et cetera," Skoog said. "They will also come to them with strong values and work ethic that will be an asset to their company. These students who wear the blue jacket of the National FFA Organization are the future of our country and are the cream of the crop."

Students who go through the

career fair will also get a ticket to enter a drawing for iTunes cards.

The career fair will be in one of the new breakout rooms near the new north entrance of the Spokane Convention Center. Event sponsors are Carpenter, McGuire & DeWulf; Wheeler Industries Inc., and Washington Tractor Inc.

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