

Scio FFA members pitch in to make Expo a success



Geoff Parks/For the Capital Press

From left, Scio, Ore., FFA members Maddie Ferguson, Kyndal Porter, Cassie Hyde, Jocelyn Sutton and adviser Krysta Sprague in the Livestock Barn at this year's Oregon State Fair.

By **GEOFF PARKS**
For the Capital Press

The Scio FFA chapter's energetic cadre of students has been the most noticeable face of the Willamette Valley Ag Expo since the beginnings of the event in 2000.

The longtime WVAE-Scio FFA connection is not a contract "written down on paper," said the chapter's adviser, Krysta Sprague. "It's just an understanding that we are going to be the ones that are there when they're open, take tickets, run things back and forth. It's exclusive to us."

"Usually you sign up for different positions (at the WVAE)," said Cassie Hyde, 16, secretary of the Scio FFA chapter. "Last year, I worked every day (at the three-day event)."

At the big Dine Around Oregon event at the Expo, FFA members take tickets, advise people of where things are, run things back and forth to the various areas of the event, serve food and clean up afterwards.

All that work helping the Expo become a successful

event for the 16th year in a row pays dividends for the Scio FFA members as well.

"I think it's an excellent opportunity for our kids," Sprague said, "because we're interacting, first of all, with our county, the city of Albany and with agriculture in the Willamette Valley."

Her students also get a chance to meet with ag business leaders and those working in the ag industry, interact with the public and advocate for agriculture.

"It's a fundraising opportunity for the students, too, because they (the sponsoring Willamette Valley Ag Association) pay us, which goes directly into the kids' FFA accounts to pay for trips ... to the state and national conventions," she said.

Sprague said it costs anywhere from \$100 to \$150 per student to attend the state convention in the spring and more like \$1,000 each for the national convention in the fall.

Kyndal Porter, 16, the Scio FFA historian, and Hyde went to the national FFA convention, Sprague said, so they are doing a lot of fundraising.



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