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California

Fair exhibit touts water conservation even in wet years

By **TIM HEARDEN**
Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — A state agency is returning to the farm at the California State Fair to tell attendees that conserving water is still important even after a wet winter.

The Department of Water Resources made irrigation tips and displays of water-saving landscapes a fixture at the farm during the recent five-year drought.

This year, officials will highlight lessons learned and urge fairgoers to keep the next drought in the backs of their minds as they use water, said Doug Carlson, a DWR spokesman.

“We all have shown we have the ability to conserve water when called upon to do so,” Carlson said. “The governor (Jerry Brown) asked us to do that in 2015 and for two straight years, the people of California managed to come pretty close to his target.”

“We know now that we can do it,” he said. “So let’s continue to do something to make it a way of California life.”

The agency’s exhibit, “Water Conservation: Rain or



Photos courtesy Calif. Dept. of Water Resources

Julie Saare-Edmonds, a landscape specialist for the state Department of Water Resources, offers advice on how to water trees in a drought at a booth in the California State Fair’s farm in 2015. The DWR is hosting another water-saving exhibit and talks at the farm this year, highlighting the need to save water even in wet years.

Shine,” showcases water-saving plants and other landscape features and gives reasons that Californians should make conservation a lifestyle. For instance, aquifers in many areas are still woefully depleted as growers had to rely on them as surface water grew scarce during the drought.

For urban dwellers, the display will offer tips on how to replace lawns and access up to \$2,000 in state rebates for doing so.

The DWR’s booth has become an annual feature at the

34-year-old farm, one of the most popular destinations for fairgoers. The farm’s attractions include a daily farmers’ market, an outdoor kitchen grill, an aquaculture exhibit, an insect pavilion and talks by the University of California’s Master Gardeners.

This year, the DWR is teaming with the state Department of Food and Agriculture to present new exhibits in the insect pavilion about beneficial and harmful insects, according to a news release.

The Golden State’s abun-



Water-saving plants and landscape features are displayed on the farm at the California State Fair in Sacramento.

dance of crops and farm animals always takes center stage at the fair. The livestock building and adjacent shaded stalls feature some 4,500 entries during the course of the fair, as livestock exhibits are shown in shifts.

Among the building exhibits this year is one that focuses on farmworkers and their historic leaders, saluting their work and sacrifice to sustain what is today a \$47 billion agriculture industry, the fair’s website notes.

The 17-day fair runs through July 30. Admission at the gate is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors 62 and older, \$8 for children 5-12 and free for children 4 and younger. Visit www.castatefair.org.

Farmer sues Marin County over building permit requirements

By **TIM HEARDEN**
Capital Press

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. — A turkey farmer is suing Marin County and the California Coastal Commission over building permit restrictions he says could prevent him from retiring.

Willie Benedetti, owner of Valley Ford, Calif.-based Benedetti Farms and Willie Bird Turkeys, claims rules in the county’s coastal agricultural zone would require him to stay involved in his family’s business if he were to build a house on his property for his son.

The Pacific Legal Foundation filed suit on his behalf July 14 in Marin County Superior Court, arguing the zoning regulation amounts to a “forced-farming mandate” that violates the constitutional rights to liberty and property.

“I just want to build a house for my son,” Benedetti said in a videotaped statement released by PLF. “We’re not talking about environmental issues. We’re just talking

about building a house, and I have to stay in agriculture to see that it gets done. Otherwise we can’t build it.”

Brian Washington, an attorney for Marin County, said he hadn’t yet reviewed the case but added county officials believe the regulation “would provide flexibility for inter-generational housing” and passing on properties from one generation to the next.

“We’ll certainly look at the complaint with (succession) in mind when we see it and analyze it carefully,” he said.

Coastal commission spokeswoman Noaki Schwartz said July 14 the agency’s attorneys had likely not yet seen the complaint.

The suit centers on elements of the county’s Local Coastal Program, a land-use document required of coastal counties under state law. Updates are subject to the coastal commission’s approval.

The document identifies the location, type, densities and other ground rules for future development in the coastal zone.

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Both advanced and beginning parliamentary procedure teams, and extemporaneous speaker Mackenzie Price pose with their 1st place banners at the Oregon FFA State Convention (from left to right: Esten Harrington, Mackenzie Price, Tristan Vincent, Cassidy Leatherwood, Madelyn Higgins, Lee Wesenberg, Zach Lor, Sydnee Tilley, Regan Leatherwood, Nolan Carson, Hailey Boehm, Grace Matteo).

Sutherlin FFA freshman Sydnee Tilley accepts the 1st place Beginning Parliamentary Procedure banner from Oregon FFA State President Shea Booster at the Oregon FFA State Convention (from left to right: Sydnee Tilley, Nolan Carson, Hailey Boehm, Grace Matteo, Zach Lor).

Sutherlin FFA Prepares for Nationals

During the 2016-2017 school year, 23 Sutherlin FFA members placed first in six different state level FFA competitions, or Career Development Events (CDE’s), and earned the opportunity to compete at the national level. Now, with the exception of the Soils team who competed in May at National Land Judging in Oklahoma, these students are preparing in their respective areas of Extemporaneous Public Speaking, Prepared Public Speaking, Advanced Parliamentary Procedure, Beginning Parliamentary Procedure, and Veterinary Science for their trip this fall to Indianapolis, Indiana where they will compete at the FFA National Convention.

The level of achievement shown at the state level took hours of studying and practice on behalf of all participants and even more preparation will be required before nationals in October. The students will continue to prepare for their contests in a variety of different ways. The Veterinary Science and Parliamentary procedure teams will study written materials and hold several team meetings and practices, and the extemporaneous and prepared public speakers will spend hours reviewing, revising, and practicing their speeches. Sutherlin FFA freshman Nolan Carson is a member of the Beginning Parliamentary Procedure team and said about the workload, “We invested a lot of time and effort into the state competition and it paid off, so hopefully as we continue to work hard we’ll be successful at nationals.”

Beyond the work that needs to happen in order to be ready to compete, the members planning on attending National Convention also need to fundraise nearly twenty thousand dollars to pay for travel and lodging expenses. However, while this is a difficult task, fundraising along with the support of local organizations, such as the Sutherlin School District, Sutherlin FFA Alumni, and other groups will make it possible.

Suffice it to say, there is a lot to be done. Nevertheless, the students are up to the challenge, and are thrilled about the opportunity to represent their chapter and state nationally. Extemporaneous speaker Mackenzie Price expresses her enthusiasm saying, “I have always loved public speaking and am so excited and honored to represent Sutherlin and Oregon FFA at Nationals. Competing is a really fun, thrilling, and memorable experience, and I am looking forward to meeting other people from across the nation.”

The 90th National FFA Convention and Expo will be held October 25-28, 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Twenty-five career development events will take place at the convention, and Sutherlin FFA will represent Oregon in five of these.

Results:

- State Extemporaneous Public Speaking**
 - 1st place - Mackenzie Price (junior)
- State Prepared Public Speaking**
 - 1st place - Lee Wesenberg (senior)
- State Advanced Parliamentary Procedure**
 - 1st place team - Chair Cassidy Leatherwood, Tristan Vincent, Madelyn Higgins, Taylor Moser, Hailee Holder (juniors), Esten Harrington (senior)
- State Beginning Parliamentary Procedure**
 - 1st place team - Chair Regan Leatherwood, Grace Matteo, Nolan Carson, Hailey Boehm, Sydnee Tilley, Zach Lor (freshmen)
- State Veterinary Science**
 - 1st place team - Taryn Whelchel, Raichel Wolfe, Destiny Pedersen (juniors), Kalana Granger (senior)
- State Soils**
 - 1st place team
- National Land Judging - May 4, 2017 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**
 - Sutherlin FFA - 10th out of 92 teams
 - 3rd High Individual - Keaten Clarno (sophomore) (out of 363 competitors), Kalana Granger, Mackenzie Price, Taryn Whelchel, Patrick Gerstner

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About Sutherlin FFA: Sutherlin FFA is a student-led organization, and is part of the National FFA Organization. FFA teaches students leadership skills. It is an integral part of Agriculture Education, combining agriculture with high school curriculum, as well as teaching students the skills they will need for the rest of their lives. Sutherlin FFA strives to help students develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.

Learning to do, Doing to Learn Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

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