

People & Places

Farmer tends crops from A to Z

By JULIA HOLLISTER
For the Capital Press

SANTA ROSA, Calif. — Lee James and her brother, Wayne, started Tierra Vegetables in 1980 on 20 acres. Today they grow everything from A to Z — asparagus to zucchini.

The farm specializes in chiles and grain corn. James said grain corn is not sweet corn or feed corn but corn for human consumption for polenta, cornmeal and tortillas.

The farm also has many heirloom varieties.

“We grow 50 varieties of pesticide-free chiles,” she said. “Of these, one dozen are grown exclusively for drying, seven are specifically for our smoked chipotles; 10 are our milder New Mexico varieties and our hottest Habanero and Cayenne are sold fresh and dried. During the growing season we can ship fresh chiles to customers in our produce boxes.”

Community Supported Agriculture — CSA — customers can choose fresh produce in their own custom assortment of artisan, organic produce. The boxes are delivered to customers’ doorstep or farm pickup and feature unique selections such as chiles.

James said in farming business there really isn’t one vegetable that is hard to grow. But, depending on the weather, it’s hardest to get the grain corn to mature before the end



CUESA

Lee James and her brother, Wayne, grow a vast array of produce on their 20-acre farm near Santa Rosa, 70 miles north of San Francisco. They have a CSA and sell through their farmstand, a distributor and at two farmers’ markets.

of the season.

“Yes, we harvest year-round,” she said. “We have a lot of processed goods. They keep us going through the winter because of our commercial kitchen and the corn and bean crops. But we pick fresh almost every single week of the year: carrots, parsnips, kale, Brussels sprouts, celery and celeriac and we also have ‘hoop’ houses in which we have salad greens.”

Hoop houses are like greenhouses but are set up in the field with a sheet of plastic stretched over metal or plastic hoops.

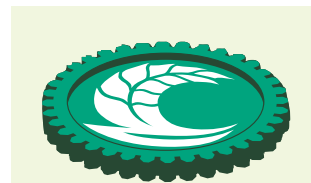
James sells their pro-

duce at several outlets: their farmstand, CSA, Ferry Plaza Farmers’ Market in San Francisco, Santa Rosa Farmers’ Market and the FEED Sonoma restaurant distributor. In addition to the fresh vegetables, she makes chile jam and vinegar-based Caribbean-style hot sauces. They also pickle, smoke and freeze produce.

Earlier this year the farm also hosted a tortilla-making workshop led by an aficionado with an extensive background in the history of tortillas. James said the event was extremely informative, and the attendees were enthusias-

tic. They will be presenting the same workshop at the Ferry Plaza Farmers’ Market in November.

“For 25 years, Tierra Vegetables has brought an incredible variety of crops to the Ferry Plaza Farmers’ Market for San Franciscans to enjoy, including heirloom corn, rare beans, and sweet and spicy peppers,” said Brie Mazurek, communications director of CUESA, the Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture. “They are food preservationists in every sense of the term — preserving the season’s best in their



Western Innovator

Lee James

Occupation: Farmer and owner, Tierra Vegetables

Hometown: Santa Rosa, Calif.

Family: Brother Wayne, co-owner and operator of Tierra Vegetables

Quote: “We need to encourage more young people to get interested in farming. So many people don’t understand where their food comes from and we’d love to see agriculture taught in high school.”

food-craft products, while preserving biodiversity on the land and within our food supply.”

James says challenges are inevitable.

“Our farm is busy with new ideas daily, but, in my opinion, there is a problem facing California agriculture,” she said. “Our biggest challenge as a small farm is the fact that people don’t eat enough vegetables or cook at home.”

Future Natural Resource Leaders meet in Scio

By JAN JACKSON
For the Capital Press

SCIO, Ore. — Scio High School hosted the first-of-the-school year Future Natural Resource Leadership of Oregon Career Development Event on Oct. 11, drawing 193 students who competed in activities that included forestry skills, tree and tool identification, first aid procedures, map reading, speeches and job interviews.

FNRL, chartered in 2016 to bridge the gap between classroom training and real world applications, is one of seven Career and Technical Student Leadership Organizations in Oregon.

Students from Clatskanie, Corvallis, Knappa, Sabin (Milwaukie), Philomath, Scio, Sweet Home, Tillamook, Waldport and Yoncalla high schools competed in the events.

Rex Lowther, who has been teaching forestry, wood shop and small engine classes at Scio High School since 2004, said he was satisfied with this year’s event.



Jan Jackson/For the Capital Press

Competing in the timed cross-cut event from Knappa High School are Gus Lawson, left; Alexis Whiteside, right; and oiler Ryan Fresh. They took part in the Future Natural Resource Leadership of Oregon Career Development Event on Oct. 11 at Scio, Ore., High School.

“As far as I know, Scio’s program started in the 1970s as the Associated Oregon Forestry Clubs and ended in 2008 when they lost their funding,” Lowther said. “A core group of instructors kept the CDEs going until FNRL of Oregon was chartered in 2014 and began chartering chapters in 2016.”

“We had several industry volunteers help us on Thursday, which is great because it exposed the kids to different

job opportunities. For instance, Jeannie Shuttleworth, a log buyer from Giustina Resources, was our job interviewer and two kids were asked to interview for real with the company,” he said. “The two foresters who were teaching compass and pacing are local and manage a large family tree farm. It is nice to have people who are in the industry support these kids and give them exposure to potential future careers.”

Each high school program is locally controlled and varies by needs of the communities, strengths of the advisers and direction of the local school district. The FNRL is a state Career Technical Student Organization and is basically the leadership portion of the program. The CTSO also hosts different events for students including leadership training and FNRL state convention.

“The primary difference is that our students at the chapter level have the opportunity to grow in their leadership abilities and work and share directly with industry professionals,” Lowther said. “These students gain valuable experience, which gives them opportunities to learn to communicate directly with industry professionals and share what we do not only in our local programs, but also as a statewide organization.”

There are 24 students — 18 boys and 6 girls — in Scio High School’s forestry program.

“We are a little down from previous years mainly due to a decline in this year’s school

enrollment,” he said. “We’ll be focusing on recruitment for next year to try to bring up the numbers a bit. There is a point of diminishing returns, however, because if we get too big then it limits what we can do as a class overall. The most effective number is 15 per class period.”

Scio High School senior Grant Ortiz, current FNRL president, was also happy to see the event going so well.

“I competed in my first CDE in middle school, so this one will be my eighth,” Ortiz said while waiting to compete in the log rolling contest.

Scio always hosts the first meet of the season, the next one will be held in Tillamook in two weeks and then we won’t do any more until next spring,” he said. “This year’s event was different for me, though, because it is the first one I’ve participated in a leadership role.”

For more information on FNRL contact Kirk Hutchinson at 503-550-0471 or email him at hutchfnrl@gmail.com

Calendar

To submit an event go to the Community Events calendar on the home page of our website at www.capitalpress.com and click on “Submit an Event.” Calendar items can also be mailed to Capital Press, 1400 Broadway St. NE, Salem, OR 97301 or emailed to newsroom@capitalpress.com. Include “Calendar” in the subject line.

Saturday, Oct. 20

Preparing for Winter on Horse Properties Workshop. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, 7175 NE Evergreen Parkway No. 400, Hillsboro, Ore. Join the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District and Horses for Clean Water for a free workshop about managing mud, manure and pastures along with winter health care for horses. Website: <https://www.swcd.net/event/preparing-winter-horse-properties/>

Saturday-Sunday Oct. 20-21

All About Fruit Show. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Clackamas County Fairgrounds, 694 NE Fourth Ave., Canby, Ore. The show offers hundreds of varieties of heirloom fruit to see and taste. Types of fruit include apples, pears, quince, grapes, kiwis and more. Custom-grafted fruit trees are also available. Bring unknown apples for sleuthing by the Apple ID team. Website: <http://www.homeorchardsociety.org/contact-us/>

Sunday, Oct. 21

AgroFiesta. Noon-4p.m. O’Connor Field House, 2207 Blaine St., Caldwell, Idaho. Families and individuals who show proof of agricultural employment, such as a pay stub, will get in free. The event will feature food,

entertainment and booths with information about various programs that may benefit farmworkers and their families.

Tuesday-Wednesday Oct. 23-24

Nutrient Management Conference. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Embassy Suites, 1441 Canyon Del Rey, Seaside, Calif. The agenda will focus on the latest FREP-funded research results and practical applications of fertilizing materials for agricultural production in the state of California. Grower, CCA, and PCA credits will be requested. Website: <https://www.odfa.ca.gov/lc/fldr/frep/FREPConference.html>

Wednesday-Saturday Oct. 24-27

91st National FFA Convention and Expo. Indianapolis, Ind. This is the culmination of the year’s work for FFA members from around the nation. Website: <https://convention.ffa.org/schedule/>

Monday-Wednesday Nov. 5-7

2018 Advances in Walnut Production Short Course. Activities and Recreation Center Ballroom, University of California-Davis. This course is designed for new and experienced growers as well as other industry members interested in commercial walnut production. Website: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/walnutshortcourse/>

Tuesday, Nov. 6

Water Rights Boot Camp. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Keizer Community Center, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, Ore. This seminar will address

water rights, title issues, transfers and other related issues. Sponsored by the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District. Cost: \$25 Website: <https://www.marionswcd.net/>

Wednesday-Thursday Nov. 7-8

Dairy West Annual Meeting, Boise Centre, Ninth and Front streets, Boise, Idaho. Guest speakers Nov. 7 include former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, now president and CEO of the U.S. Dairy Export Council and a Feeding America board member; Sara Dordland, managing partner at Ceres Dairy Risk Management; and Alison Van Eenennaam, University of California-Davis animal biotechnology and genomics researcher. A public showing of the film “Food Evolution” is slated at 7 p.m. Website: <https://dairywest.com/>

Wednesday-Friday Nov. 7-9

Weed Conference. Wenatchee Convention Center, 121 N. Wenatchee Ave., Wenatchee, Wash. The 68th conference provides information on all aspects of weed control and management. It covers crops of all kinds, turf and ornamental, vegetation management and aquatic. Website: www.weedconference.org

Friday-Sunday Nov. 9-11

Tilth Conference. Davenport Grand Hotel, 333 Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, Wash. Tilth Conference brings together hundreds of farmers, producers, researchers and food system professionals for a week-

end of learning, building relationships and sharing best practices for growing a healthy food system. The speakers will include Mai Nguyen, who grows heirloom, ethnic grains in Sonoma, Calif., and is the California Organizer for the National Young Farmers Coalition, and Audra Mulkern, the founder of “The Female Farmer Project,” a documentary project chronicling the rise of women working in agriculture. Website: www.tilthalliance.org

Tuesday, Nov. 13

Washington Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Yakima Convention Center, 10 N Eighth St., Yakima, Wash. Among the speakers will be André-Denis Wright, dean of the College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University; Brian Hodges, senior attorney at the Pacific Legal Foundation; and Caroline Lobdell, executive director and clinical law professor at the Western Resources Legal Center. Website: <https://bit.ly/2ObTgge>

Tuesday-Thursday Nov. 13-15

Willamette Valley Ag Expo. Linn County Fair and Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road E, Albany, Ore. The Expo features 250,000 square feet of exhibits, seminars, antique farm equipment and the unique Dine Around Oregon progressive dinner. Hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Wednesday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday. Website: <http://waexpo.com/>

Wednesday, Nov. 14

Big Idaho Potato Harvest Meet- ing. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Shoshone-Ban-

nock Hotel and Event Center, 777 Bannock Trail, Fort Hall, Idaho. The meeting brings industry leaders together for a single post-harvest event to discuss the growing season, field trends and forecasts, and research. Website: <https://bit.ly/2IPiUY>

Thursday-Friday Nov. 15-16

Washington State Grape Society Annual Meeting and Trade Show. Church of the Nazarene, 500 N. Elm, Grandview, Wash. Thursday lunch is included in registration. Cost: \$80 Website: <https://www.grapesociety.org/annual-meeting.html>

Friday, Nov. 16

Denim and Diamonds Dinner Auction, 5-10 p.m. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. Oregon Aglink hosts Denim & Diamonds, an awards dinner and auction, which raises funds for the Cultivating Common Ground initiative, ultimately supporting all of Aglink’s programs like Adopt a Farmer and telling ag’s story. This event serves to recognize those who have gone above and beyond in advocating the importance of agriculture to the economic, environmental and social well-being of the state of Oregon. Website: <http://www.aglink.org/event/denim-diamonds/>

Third Annual Post-Harvest Almond and Walnut UC IPM Workshop. 8-11 a.m. Chico Veterans Memorial Hall, 554 Rio Lindo Ave., Chico, Calif. A panel of Sacramento Valley IPM and farm advisors will talk about the latest research, 2018 field observations and discuss key pest management issues. Website: sacvalleyorchards.com

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Correction

A story posted Oct. 3 on the Capital Press website, capitalpress.com, incorrectly stated that a Washington appeals court upheld a nearly \$300,000 fine against Iowa-based Food Democracy Now. The correct name of the organization is Food Democracy Action! The case involved a violation of the state’s campaign finance disclosure law by failing to report the names of people who contributed through the organization to a campaign to pass a GMO-labeling initiative in 2013. The Capital Press regrets the error.