

Hard-working Scio FFA members help Expo

By GEOFF PARKS
For the Capital Press

As Macy Bodine heads into her junior year at Scio High School, she is confident that her previous year of experience with the school's longstanding FFA partnership with the Willamette Valley Ag Expo will put her in good stead for this year's event.

Bodine, 16, the Scio FFA chapter's vice president this year, is in charge of moving forward the chapter's successful 18-year relationship with the growing Expo. Though she's been an FFA member for two years, this year will be her first on the officer team. Last year's Expo was her first in the



Geoff Parks/For the Capital Press
Macy Bodine, vice president of the Scio High School FFA chapter, helps organize the group for its participation in the Willamette Valley Ag Expo.

trenches of volunteer work for the three-day event.

"Last year I worked all three days of the Ag Expo," Bodine said. "I actually worked the most hours of anyone last year — 40 hours — and I was pretty proud of myself."

She said she took on sev-

eral shifts working in the ticket booth and taking tickets at Dine Around Oregon.

"I love meeting new people," she said. "It's just one of those things that's easy for me to do, and being at Ag Expo makes it a lot of fun."

Money raised from the 10 to 12 FFA member volunteers at the Expo goes into their club savings accounts to help pay for attending such events as the state and national FFA conventions.

The Expo in return gets an huge dose of the enthusiasm of the youthful FFA members, making for a winning symbiotic partnership that has endured since 2000.

Wilco Co-op grows with the Expo

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Besides a longtime relationship based on business and a deep involvement in the agriculture industry, Wilco Farmers Co-op shares another particular trait with the Willamette Valley Ag Expo: Both are thriving and growing every year.

The Ag Expo is put on each year by the Willamette Valley Ag Association, a non-profit organization. Proceeds from the Expo go toward the association's college scholarships. In 2017, 180 vendors took part in the Expo, up from 168 the previous year.

Wilco Farmers Co-Op was formed 51 years ago, gradually absorbed seven local cooperatives over the decades, then added several other supply companies and the Valley Agronomics concern. Today it has expanded to provide service to much of



Wilco Farmers Co-op
FFA members, company officials and guests dedicate the new Redmond, Ore., Wilco store in August.

Marion, Polk, Clackamas and Yamhill counties in the Willamette Valley.

Jake Wilson is the marketing director for Wilco. He said the cooperative currently has 3,000 farmer-owners and only last month celebrated the grand opening of its 20th retail store, this one in Redmond, Ore.

"There are four services we provide to farmers," Wilson said. "First is the farm stores, then we have bulk fuels that also operate under the Wilco name. The third is Valley Agronomics and finally there is the Hazelnut

Growers of Oregon, which merged with Wilco about two years ago."

With that merger, Wilco quickly began building a new, 120,000-square-foot hazelnut processing facility in Donald, Ore. The plant is taking in its first crop this year and expects to process both in-shell and kernel hazelnuts to supply them to world markets. It can handle up to 160,000 pounds of nuts per hour.

The expanded collection of businesses makes Wilco's commitment to the Expo secure, Wilson said.



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