

## Young Farmers and Ranchers Program California Farm Bureau Federation

### **Who are Young Farmers & Ranchers?**

Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers are active agriculturists between the ages of 18 and 35 who are involved in production, banking, business, and many other areas of the farming and ranching way of life. Young Farmers and Ranchers develop leadership skills while volunteering time as active, vital members of the county Farm Bureau.

YF&R members have an opportunity to invest in personal and professional development, and gain valuable insights into all aspects of agriculture. Members learn how to promote the agriculture industry and gain a better understanding of key issues facing agriculture, all while building the skills to LEAD the industry into the future.

The following is a list of key programs, events and activities that the California Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers program participates in annually. We encourage all local YF&R committees to consider participating in or attending these events.

### **CFBF YF&R Conference**

Typically held at the end of February, this two-day leadership conference is attended by over 200 YF&Rs from across California and neighboring states. The conference is an opportunity to network with other YF&Rs, gain insight and ideas for building a better local YF&R program and receive updates on key issues and topics affecting the agriculture industry and young agriculturalists in California. A must attend event!!

### **Commodity Advisory Committees (CAC)**

CACs are the beginning of the CFBF policy making process and are the backbone of the organization. These committees are made up of Farm Bureau members from across the state who weigh in on issues relating to their respect sectors. A seat is available on each committee for a YF&R representative. Nominations are accepted in late summer and the CFBF President names the committee members from the list of submitted nominees. This is a great way for YF&R members to take part in the policy process and begin the transition to mainstream county and state leadership.

### **CAC/Leaders Conference**

With a few exceptions all CAC meetings are held in conjunction with the CAC/Leaders Conference each February. Committees meet on Monday and Wednesday with leaders having an opportunity arrive a day early or stay an

extra day and take part in the Leaders Conference on Tuesday. Leaders Conference activities include general session speakers on current ag issues, an organizational update and networking with County Presidents, Board members, CFBF staff and industry insiders. In the afternoon, participants choose between break-out sessions and workshops or legislative visits at the Capitol. The event culminates with a legislative reception where attendees, agency representatives, elected officials and their staff comes together to visit with Farm Bureau members in a social setting.

### **CFBF Annual Meeting**

YF&R participates in a variety of activities at the CFBF Annual Meeting (AM). A State Committee meeting is held Saturday of the Conference and is the final meeting for retiring committee members. Overall the meeting is an opportunity for YF&R to showcase some of the program's biggest events and activities.

### **Contests**

#### **Discussion Meet**

Farm Bureau's strength depends on its members' ability to analyze agricultural issues and decide on solutions that best meet their needs. The competitive event is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member. Applicants build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems.

As a leadership training and self-improvement activity, the Discussion Meet experience will:

- Stimulate logical thinking and a desire for accurate information;
- Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking;
- Improve the ability to listen;
- Aid the participant in overcoming timidity or stage fright;
- Assist the individual in the practice of giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner;
- Teach the value of compromise; and
- Develop leaders for effective problem solving through group discussion.

The Open Discussion Meets is held at Annual Meeting and over 20 competitors participated in 2014. The winner of the Open DM takes home \$4000 and goes on to compete at the AFBF AM in January.

The Collegiate Discussion Meet is held during the YF&R Leadership Conference. College students from across the state have the opportunity to compete and win individual scholarships along with a team scholarship for the representing school. The winner of the Collegiate DM takes home a scholarship and competes in the national Collegiate Discussion Meet at the AFBF YF&R Conference.

### **The Excellence in Agriculture Award**

The Excellence in Agriculture Award is designed as an opportunity to recognize Young Farmers & Ranchers who do not derive the majority of their income from an owned agricultural operation. Award winners contribute and grow through their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture. Participants are judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service and community). State winners will be announced and recognized at the Annual Meeting, with the winner representing California at the AFBF Annual Conference.

### **Young Farmer & Rancher Achievement Award**

The Achievement Award is designed to highlight a competitor based on his/her efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of his/her income subject to normal production risks. State winners will be announced and recognized at the Annual Meeting, with the winner representing California at the AFBF Annual Conference.

### **FARM PAC**

Each year, YF&Rs conduct a fundraiser raffle for Farm PAC ®, the Fund to Protect the Family Farm. In 2013 their efforts resulted in over \$60,000 raised to support farm friendly candidates.

### **Harvest 4 All (Year Long Program)**

This program is a partnership between the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Feeding America food banks. YF&Rs at the local, state and national level put on various events and takes part in activities to raise money and collect food to benefit Feeding America. The money raised, hours worked and amount of food collected is reported to CFBF, who in turn, reports the totals for the state to Feeding America. Awards are given at the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference to the states with the highest totals in each category. Recently, California took home first place in hours worked (over 6000) and most impressively, in pound donated. California YF&Rs worked to provide **over 10 million pounds of food** to area food banks in support of those in need.