



Agriculture Advisory Meeting Notes

Date: December 5, 2022
Meeting Place: B-102 with Zoom Option

Called to order: 6:00 -7:30 p.m. **Chair(s):** Erin Krier **Note Taker:** Erin Krier

Council Members Present: Marc DeBernardi, Kevin Dwyer, Cathy Fisher, Guillermo Guerra, Hector Guerra, Miguel Guerra, Tom Gulliver, Ron Labastida, Larry Lahr, Jerry Mahoney, Yeni Martinez, Nic Tasca, Jill Vink

Council Members Absent: Dr. Sean Abel, Dr. Rita Abi-Ghanem, Mitch Ardantz, Dylan Bognuda, Teri Bontrager, Emma Chow, Rosemary Cummings, Tom Durant, Brenda Estrada, Jim Glines, Les Graulich, Dr. Christopher Greer, Eryn Gray, Dr. Jodi Jacques, Lacy Litten, Holly Nolan-Chavez, Christine Ready, Andrew Rice, David Rice, Danilu Ramirez, Luis Valdez, Claire Wineman, Montse Zarate

Guests Present: None

Agenda No. 1 Student Update

Discussion:

- Erin shared the story of two AHC agriculture program students who participated in the Cal Poly Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) over the summer in Animal Science and Plant Science.
- Student representative Yeni Martinez gave updates on his current academic experiences.
- Yeni reported that he is working as a field scout at Betteravia Farms while taking the classes he needs in order to qualify to take the Pest Control Adviser licensing exam. He appreciates the field experience that helps him connect what he learns in the classroom to his industry work.

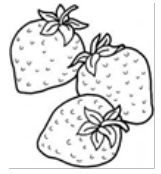
Action: None

Deadline: n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

Agenda No. 2 High School Partnerships

Discussion:

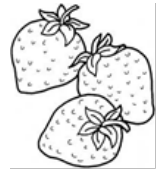
- Erin reported that the AHC agriculture program has approximately 20 concurrent enrollment course agreements with the district high school FFA programs so that many high school agriculture students are earning AHC credit for the classes they take in high school with an instructor who meets the AHC minimum qualifications.
- AHC hosted the first FFA Field Day in February 2022 and is scheduled to host the event again on February 18, 2023. A statewide save-the-date notice was recently sent to FFA. The contests offered will be the same as last year (Soil & Land Evaluation, Vegetable Crop Judging, and Veterinary Science) with the addition of Nursery/Landscape.
- Local FFA partners help tremendously with the event and significantly contributed to its success.
- It looks like there will again be funding from the California Community Colleges so that participation and lunch will be paid for and the FFA programs will not be required to pay a fee and will be provided lunch free of charge.
- Jerry Mahoney commented on the strength of the local FFA programs and how many news stories he sees that highlight the high honors of the area programs. Hector Guerra credited the strong programs for pushing each other to exceed high standards and continue in excellence.



Agenda No. 4	Western Growers Association Ag Tech Event		
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin informed the committee about an upcoming event that AHC has been approached to host with Western Growers Association highlighting and discussing emerging agriculture technologies: “Developing the Next Generation of Tech-Savvy Ag Workers” • The event will be February 23-24, 2023 on the AHC campus and will feature industry and faculty panels and California Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross will be in attendance. The first day will focus on panel speakers while day two will be a student networking event with Secretary Ross and possibly industry tours. • Erin asked for assistance from the committee in identifying industry members from start-ups or companies engaging in use of these emerging technologies that are increasingly used in agriculture. • Erin will share more information when details become available and will ask for committee assistance in promoting the event. 		
Action:	Share flyer and details to promote event as they become available.		
Deadline:	January 2023	Responsibility:	Erin Krier

Agenda No. 5	Student Clubs		
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Young Farmers & Ranchers club has enjoyed robust student participation this semester. Engaging guest speakers at the meetings have included Las Cumbres Ranch talking about holistic rangeland management, California Farmworker Foundation, and Dare 2 Dream Farms. The semester meetings culminated with a fun ag trivia game where students tested their knowledge about agriculture and got to win some great prizes. The Young Farmers & Ranchers Club was awarded the AHC Club of Distinction Award for 2021-2022. The club is planning their spring break industry trip and members are considering visiting Apricot Lane Farms in Moorpark after being inspired by the viewing of The Biggest Little Farm during an Earth Day event YF&R hosted last April. Jerry Mahoney is willing to also be a tour site for a YF&R club meeting during spring semester. Tom Gulliver suggested that if the spring break trip leads to the Moorpark area, the club might consider a visit to Associates Insectary in Santa Paula to see commercial production of beneficial insects used in agriculture. • The AHC Rodeo Team hosted a very successful fundraising event in August, which funds the team coach and helps students pay for travel expenses. AHC rodeo competitors have been excelling in contests against other West Coast Region schools such as Cal Poly, CSU Fresno, and West Hills Coalinga. Students have impressively placed in barrel racing and breakaway roping. Some new team members are now being trained for rough stock events. 		
Action:	None	Responsibility: Erin Krier	
Deadline:	n/a		

Agenda No. 6	Agriculture Program Review		
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin explained the process of the 6-year Program Review that the Agriculture program recently completed in collaboration with the Viticulture & Enology program. • The recommendations of the program review validation team were shared with the committee: 		



- Prioritize permanent full-time agriculture faculty position
 - Approve, design, fund, and build appropriate classroom, office, and indoor lab spaces to accommodate the agriculture program
 - Approve, recruit for, and hire a permanent agriculture/viticulture lab assistant/farm manager
 - Purchase a shared vehicle for hauling student farm/vineyard items
 - Create, fund, and implement an equipment purchase/replacement plan to ensure all program needs are met
- Committee members were unanimous in their agreement with the program review validation team recommendations and offered to craft a letter of support, if needed, to encourage the District move forward with prioritizing the recommendations. The committee members asked what they can do as members of the committee to lend support to meeting program needs.

Action: None

Deadline: n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

Agenda No. 7 **Cathy Fisher – THANK YOU!**

Discussion: ● Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner Cathy Fisher is retiring and this was her last meeting on the AHC Agriculture Program Advisory Committee. Her support and guidance for the program have been immeasurable and she will be profoundly missed!

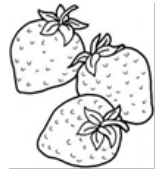
Action: None

Deadline: n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

Agenda No. 7 ● **Additional Input, Feedback, Suggestions from Committee**

Discussion:

- Tom Gulliver noted how great it has been to see the suggestions of the advisory committee come to fruition in the way of curriculum development, particularly recalling the first conversations when the committee provided input on the content of the new PCA preparation program.
- Larry Lahr offered to connect Erin with a contact at Primus Labs to assist as she works to develop a food safety curriculum.
- Hector Guerra offered to assist with whatever program needs the high school partners can help.
- Jill Vink offered to try to identify a lead Produce Safety Alliance grower trainer.
- Marc DeBernardi requested that AHC agriculture program representatives schedule classroom visits to the high school and keep with the plan for the AHC Career Day for on-campus tours.
- Jerry Mahoney suggested contacting the Ag Tech program at Hartnell for guidance on the development of a similar program, as they have a well-established curriculum and program.
- Nic Tasca suggested that the AHC CPR/First Aid course would be helpful for students who are required to have the certifications that are a result of that class – Ron Labastida agreed that these certifications are required by ranch foremen.



- Cathy Fisher mentioned that Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau will once again host the Spray Safe event on February 15 at the Santa Maria Fairpark and she encouraged growers to share the information with their applicators.

Action: Follow up will occur with specific committee members as needed.

Deadline: ongoing **Responsibility:** Erin Krier

Reports: Important Dates and Follow-up

- Next advisory committee meeting for spring semester will be Monday, May 1, 2023 at 6:00 pm