***Reedley College Agriculture & Natural Resources Department***

**AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

November 18, 2013

Reedley College Staff Dining Room

1. Dinner

Dinner was provided at 5:35 pm.

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by David Lopes at 6:00 pm. The following individuals were in attendance: Gil Awalt, Dave Botkin, Dr. Sandra Caldwell, David Clark, Jan Dekker, Bob Herrick, Kent Kinney, David Lopes, Ralph Loya, Christina Marin, Roy Martin, Jim Oliver, Ty Parkinson, Monte Person, Tim Smith, Dustin Sperling, Mark Thompson, Kevin Woodard, Nancy Gutierrez, Karri Hammerstrom, Joe Camarillo, Dean Striebich, and Fred Berry.

1. Industry Updates

Several industry representatives discussed some of the key issues/hot topics impacting workforce needs. Some of the topics that arose during the discussion included:

* Livestock Show Ethics (the importance of teaching students proper ethics, who in turn, educate the public about the livestock industry)
* Development of Soft Skills (many graduates entering the workforce are lacking in this area)
* Increase in opportunities world-wide in the animal protein industry (biotechnology, vaccine development, etc.)
* Concerns over shortage of farm labor
* Concerns over implications of the affordable care act
* Concerns over the water shortage
* The need for more food safety training
* Writing ability (many graduates entering the workforce are lacking in this area)
* Increase in job opportunities in ag finance

Reedley College President Dr. Caldwell addressed the group, thanking them for serving on the committee and sharing their ideas. Dave Clark expressed appreciation for Dr. Caldwell’s support of the AGNR department, particularly in regard to the district approval of the new student housing unit.

1. AGNR Department Update
   1. Staff Update

Kent Kinney provided an update of department staffing. Newly hired natural resources instructor, Louie Long, was added to our department in August. Kent started his 3-year term as AGNR department chair, effective July 1, 2014. Dave Lopes will continue as the farm manager.

* 1. New Transfer (AST) Degrees

Dustin Sperling explained the history and purpose behind the development of the upcoming AST (Associate of Science Transfer) degrees. Three new AST degrees (for Ag Business, Plant Science, and Animal Science) are currently be vetted through the system statewide. Upon state approval, community colleges across the state will be able to develop local AST’s that will virtually guarantee students admission to CSU campuses with the corresponding BS degrees. It is anticipated that campuses will be able to start applying for these AST’s in Fall 2014.

* 1. Farm Plan Update & Visioning Process

David Lopes & David Clark reviewed the process being utilized by AGNR faculty for the purpose of making improvements on the school farm. Individual faculty will be posting their proposals for equipment acquisition, infrastructure improvements, and miscellaneous other projects that would benefit instruction to a shared computer drive. Sometime thereafter, faculty will meet to discuss and rank ideas.

1. Individual Program Updates
   1. Ag Business

Students & faculty were featured this past summer in CDFA’s *Growing California* video series, a partnership with California Grown. The video is a must see and can be found at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/index.html#video2013> (scroll the search bar and look for “Reedley’s Gold”). The story features the campus olive oil production-bottling-marketing project, a collaborative effort of the ag business and plant science programs. Dustin and some of his ag business students are once again planning to participate in the BRITCA *Farm to Fork* project during the summer of 2014. This fall, his students are raising and marketing Poinsettias for the holiday season.

* 1. Animal Science

Dave Lopes reviewed a handout summarizing the recently approved livestock herdsperson residence. The project is estimated to cost a grand total of $482,207.21. The residence will house 4 students who will work on the school farm in exchange for residency. Adjunct equine instructor Christie Marin highlighted the activities and future plans of the IHSA horse show team. Reedley has not had such a team in over 20 years. The students are excited.

* 1. Plant Science

Tim Smith reported that the PCA program is going strong and that students can look forward to solid career opportunities in the field. The Olive Grove is in its second year of olive oil production. The northern 5 acres of the old raisin vineyard were grafted over to Syrah wine grapes in the spring. The new growth looks great. Approximately 30 acres of grain hay have been planted. A new onion seed block project is being planned for the upcoming spring/summer. Plant science students are utilizing the horticulture unit greenhouses to propagate a variety of new trees.

* 1. Grant Funded Programs

Nancy Gutierrez is in her first year of managing the new Agriculture, Water & Technology State Sector Navigator grant from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office. While much about her grant management role has changed, she will still be able to coordinate a statewide post-secondary division conference (entitled the Ag, Water & Technology Summit) in Modesto December 5-7 as well as other events that will continue to benefit students and faculty on a statewide level.

Karri Hammerstrom continues her work with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant. Reedley College is part of a consortium of colleges, led by West Hills College, involved in an effort to provide comprehensive training to prepare students for employment in high-wage, high-demand occupations through education/classroom training and field experiences which will result in industry recognized certifications.

Both Nancy and Karri have also been busy investigating additional grant opportunities that would benefit our AGNR programs.

1. Other Topics/Open Discussion

It was noted that the date for the annual Pinot & Pints Fund Raiser (April 26, 2014) conflicts with the 100th Anniversary of the Clovis Rodeo, an event in which some of our key supporters are heavily involved. AGNR department faculty agreed to pursue another date option for Pinot & Pints.

1. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by David Lopes.