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

**AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES**

December 10, 2012

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| 1. **Dinner**

Dinner started at 5:00 pm as guests arrived. 1. **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm by AGNR Department Chair, David Lopes. A sign-in sheet was passed around to confirm those advisory committee members in attendance. Present were: Gil Awalt, Dave Botkin, Ty Parkinson, Jim Oliver, Fred Berry, Mark Thompson, Carl Buxman, Chris Williams, Michael White, Dr. Claudia Habib, David Lopes, Nancy Gutierrez, Dustin Sperling, and Tim Smith. 1. **Industry Updates**

Industry updates were provided by Dave Botkin, Fred Berry, Chris Williams, Mark Thompson, Gil Awalt, Jim Oliver, Ty Parkinson, and Carl Buxman. Some common themes discussed included food safety, labor management issues, record-keeping, regulations compliance, and the need for graduates that possess strong work ethic combined with good communication (written, verbal, & interpersonal) and computer skills. 1. **AGNR Department Update**

A handout summarizing current AGNR department staffing and highlights of department activities was provided and briefly reviewed. 1. **Individual Program Updates**
	1. Ag Business

Dustin Sperling reported that Bari Olive crushed and bottled 400 bottles of olive oil from the school olive grove. His Ag Sales class is in the process of applying the student-designed labels to the bottles. The bottles will be available for sale soon (tasting samples were provided on the meeting tables). Ag Business students will be involved in an intercollegiate marketing competition in March and an international marketing competition in London, England this coming summer. Dustin also reported on the status of the Reedley Middle College High School which has 20 freshmen students in its inaugural class. This program will hopefully provide a pipeline of students into the Reedley College Ag Business program that will be transfer ready after a relatively short period of enrollment. * 1. Animal Science

David Lopes reported that the animal science program is fortunate to have great students and great adjunct faculty. Students have been busy participating in numerous career development events, both on campus and off (e.g. California State Fair Swine Show, Fresno Fair Collegiate Livestock Show, Madera Bull Sale, Dinuba Bull Sale, FFA Novice Showmanship Field Day, Final Drive Steer Sale, and the Western All Breeds Swine Show & Sale) and have plans to participate in more events in the spring. Program needs include a second full-time animal science instructor, a full-time instructional technician devoted to animal science, and facility improvements. Some facility improvements have been made (e.g. new pipe fence for Pole Barn pasture), but much more is needed – particularly in regard to animal housing and handling facilities. * 1. Plant Science

Tim Smith reported that enrollment is up. Over 12 students have completed the PCA program and about 6 more are currently in the process of completing the program. The northernmost 5 acres of the lower vineyard will be grafted over to Syrah wine grapes in the spring. This joint venture with the Ag Business program will lead to the bottling of a Reedley College wine. Other new projects on the horizon include propagation of new olive varieties and pecan trees. The annual FFA tree and vine pruning contest will be held the last Saturday of January. Please contact Tim if you would like to serve as a judge (or know someone else who could). * 1. Grant Funded Programs

Nancy Gutierrez reported that the focus of the Ag Projects Office will be changing somewhat, as the grant funding process from the State Chancellor’s Office is being overhauled. Nancy is currently looking at applying for various grants from various sources, including a new “Sector Navigator” grant from the State Chancellor’s Office, a “STREAM” grant from the National Science Foundation, and a grant to develop on-line training for the irrigation industry. 1. **Other Topics/Open Discussion**

Considerable discussion took place in regard to the need to utilize on-line mechanisms for marketing products (e.g. processed crop products and livestock) produced by the school farm. Reedley College President Michael White expressed his commitment to the AGNR department and its programs. He believes strongly in advocating for agriculture and that Reedley College should be known as the “go to” AGNR program in the state. 1. **Adjournment**
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The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by David M. Lopes.