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Fresno County Farm Bureau Salutes Journalism Excellence

Journalism Awards presented Thursday, July 30

Fresno County Farm Bureau announced the recipients of its 15th Annual Journalism Awards at the organization's Media and Partners' Appreciation Night held Thursday, July 30 at P-R Farms in Clovis.

Recognized for excellence in agriculture reporting were:

2009 FCFB Journalism Awards winners Print Media—General Media

First place: Chris Collins, *Fresno Bee*, "West side stories of loss," March 24, 2009-- a compelling report about the human impacts in the community of Mendota, as it comes to grips with high unemployment and suffering businesses resulting from water losses and idled farmland.

Runner-up: Rebecca Pelvin, *Vida en el Valle*, "Three residents, three stories on how water has affected them," April 15, 2009 -- a report about three people's reasons to participate in the California March for Water, looking at how a farmer, a farm worker and business owner have been impacted by the lack of water and jobs on the west side of Fresno County.

Print Media—Farm Trade Media

First place: Patrick Cavanaugh, *Vegetables West*, "Sano Farms – tomato manager juggles many challenges," Sept/Oct 2008 -- a comprehensive account of the challenges facing a tomato producer on Fresno County's west side, from frost to sugar beet leafhopper pressure and from water restrictions to increased production costs.

Runner-up: Megan Pierce, *Dairy Herd Management*, "Recognize the signs of stress and possible depression," May 2009 -- a detailed report about the human

impacts from the economic crisis in the dairy industry, offering resources to help dairy producers and their families cope with the emotional stress.

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Television Media

First place: David Ibarra, reporter; Jose E. Munoz, photo editor; KFTV-TV 21 Univision, “No water, no life,” March 2009 -- a comprehensive three-part series that reports on the economic and human consequences from reduced water supplies on the west side, focusing on impacts in Firebaugh, Mendota and Huron, as well as examining the environmental problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Runner-up: Ashley Ritchie, reporter; Ryan Brooks, photographer; KMPH/FOX 26, “Water debate coverage and controversial comment follow-up,” Feb. 5 and 6, 2009 -- coverage of a debate on California water policies and the aftermath of a derogatory comment by a local environmental advocate aimed at farm workers.

Honorable Mention: Norma Yuriar, Cody Gless, Kristine Flores and Justin Chandra, production team, KMPH/FOX 26, March 2009 -- a two-part report covering the California March for Water from different perspectives, including educational background on the biology of the Delta Smelt and its habitat.

Radio

First place: Sasha Khohka, KQED Public Radio/The California Report, “Ag Water Technology,” June 9, 2009 -- an in-depth interview with two farmers about the latest trends in irrigation management and new technology they use to help save water on the farm.

Runner-up: Blake Taylor, KMJ AM 580 and Fm 105.9, “Poachers,” June 10, 2009 -- a report about the increasing problem of poaching in California and efforts by the California Department of Fish and Game to prevent it.

Photojournalism Media

First place: Ed Boling, *Reedley Exponent*, “Blossom Trail coverage,” Feb. 12, 2009 -- Coverage of the opening ceremonies of the 2009 Blossom Trail, complete with video and photographs of deciduous fruit trees blooming throughout the east side of Fresno County.

Runner-up: Justin Willis, KSEE-24 News, “World Ag Expo,” Feb. 10, 2009 -- A pictorial overview of the many agricultural innovations and cutting-edge farm equipment on display at the World Ag Expo in Tulare.

Almost 30 entries were received from local publications, radio and television stations. The criteria for the awards are: awareness of agriculture’s importance in the Valley; use of visuals to tell the story, where applicable; thorough and objective coverage of the issue, given time and space limitations; educational element for

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farmers/producers (Ag Print category) and for the consumer (General Media); and portraying the “human side” of the industry, making the issues relevant to consumers and/or producers. News articles or stories published or broadcasted from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 were eligible.

Serving as judges were: Dan Errotabere, FCFB president; Brian Pacheco, FCFB first vice president; Chris Valadez, director of regulatory affairs, California Grape and Tree Fruit League; Denise Junqueiro, co-president California Women for Agriculture, Central Valley Chapter and marketing coordinator, California Tree Fruit Agreement; Dennis Pollock, retired business reporter and agricultural journalist; and Mike Henry, assistant executive director, California Farm Water Coalition.

“This year, San Joaquin Valley agriculture has been in the forefront of many news stories. So many of the issues have and will continue to affect all Valley residents, whether it’s declining commodity prices in the dairy industry to the water situation on the west side, just to name a few. We are grateful our local media provided the agricultural perspective and included the human impacts as part of their coverage of the issues,” said Errotabere.

Fresno County Farm Bureau represents more than 4,800 members on trade, land use, water, immigration and major agricultural related issues. Fresno County produces more than 400 commercial crops annually, totaling almost \$5.7 billion dollars in gross production value. For information about Farm Bureau, call (559) 237-0263, or visit www.fcfb.org.

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