

SANTA MARIA FFA

“Unidos”

2023-2024 Newsletter
Volume 1 Issue 1

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FAIR

By: Ayari Portillo and Jhoana Hernandez

This summer the Santa Barbara County Fair took place in the second week of July. We had 39 sheep, 8 goats, 13 chickens, 10 rabbits, 27 turkeys, 6 cattle, 26 pigs, and numerous other still exhibits. Thanks to our community and their amazing support. We were able to sell all of our projects and gain over \$150 thousand dollars combined for all of our exhibitors. We also had add-ons which were donations that were added to contribute to student projects. Students all had different amounts of hours depending on what they raised or built. Some projects started from November which involved animals like Cattle while others were started a month or two prior to the fair such as small stock or some of the still exhibits.



“It was a good experience making it all the way to the fair with my animal and being able to show off my project to the judge and being in the show ring. Being able to show my steer at the fair was like a reward for all the work I put into it and overall it was fun being able to compete against other people ” stated Pilar Diaz, a senior who raised steers all throughout high school and has been raising other animals before high school.

“This year’s fair was fun and enjoyable. It was a big change from going from a small animal to a big one, more things to do but still very fun and lots of memories were made” mentioned Perla Delgado, a senior who got the opportunity to raise a pig this year. She also got to experience of raising both a small and large animal. It is an amazing opportunity to raise animals and connect with people.

The Santa Barbara County Fair is a week filled with excitement but also hard work. Students are getting to show their animals which sometimes can be their first time. We hope to see more students join Santa Maria FFA this upcoming year and take the initiative to raise livestock.



FUNDRAISERS

By: Carolina Espinoza
& Melissa Ramirez

Santa Maria FFA has once again come together as a chapter and helped at the **Firework Booth** taking time off their summer to show support for their own chapter as well as all our advisors. Our FFA members who were unable to come out supported their chapter by purchasing fireworks or promoting the booth on social media . We are happy to say we have had another successful year in terms of the support that we received from the community. The Santa Maria FFA Firework Booth on 750 E Main Street was up and running starting from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on June 30th and continued until July 4th.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR
TEACHERS, STUDENTS,
AND OUR COMMUNITY FOR
CONTINUING TO SUPPORT
THE SANTA MARIA FFA
CHAPTER ONCE AGAIN.



We also hosted our annual **Parking Lot** Fundraiser during the Santa Barbara County Fair from July 12-16 th. Our FFA members gave all their energy from morning to night switching shifts and making a welcoming and enjoy able environment, while other members stayed all day.

INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS By: Karen Martinez



May 11th was a very exciting day for these young ladies as they were elected as our 2023 - 2024 Santa Maria FFA Chapter Officer team.

These ladies are excited to have a year that they are sure will be filled with so many amazing memories. They have been planning and working together along side the rest of the leadership team to make this a great year for all the members of our chapter. They are so excited for what this upcoming year has in store for our chapter!

We want to thank everyone for their continued support of our FFA Chapter and look forward to all of the activities and events this year. Go Saints!

“I am looking forward to ending off my senior year with a good year of service, making sure that all our events are fun and that our students find their passion within this organization. I am eager to better meet new and current members and hope to see you all at our upcoming meetings!” - Melissa Lua (Chapter President)



Pictured left to right: Perla Delgado (Sentinel), Kayce Van Horn (Reporter), Jessica Avendano (Treasurer), Johana Hernandez (Vice President), Melissa Lua (President), Vanessa Nunez (Vice President), Emily Guzman (Secretary), Karen Martinez (Reporter).

FFA LEADERSHIP RETREAT By: Gabriela Cabrera

Leadership Members of the Santa Maria FFA met over the summer for a three-day retreat to plan activities for the upcoming year. The retreat took place at Santa Margarita Lake June 11th-13th, 2023.

Prior to beginning the retreat, members took part in the Vista Lago zip lining and ropes course at Lopez Lake. Students were challenged to face their fears and take a step into each course. Most getting out of their comfort zone and jumping off platforms while others went through both rope courses and series of ziplines.



The team worked effortlessly to create ideas for the upcoming school year. Newly elected Chapter President, Melissa Lua-Duarte, and other officers lead team members in group discussions and team building activities

“As this is my first leadership retreat, I’m excited to learn about the future leadership roles I will be taking on during the upcoming school year. I am excited to meet new friends and make new memories!” – Leonardo Villanueva

In addition, leadership roles were decided upon. Dates were set for Upcoming events like the staff breakfast, Fireworks, the Santa Barbra County Fair, and the Fair Parking Lot Fundraiser, but most excitingly the team selected the Santa Maria FFA year’s theme “Unidos”.

“When we were brainstorming for our theme of the year, we wanted to chose something that would encourage everyone to get involved and bring the chapter together. When we came across the word “Unidos” we felt as if the word would help everyone embrace their roots and bring us together to form a more connected FFA community!” – Johana Hernandez

Santa Maria FFA has some great leaders to start off the new school year. Those interested in keeping up with Santa Maria FFA can follow us on our official Santa Maria FFA social media platforms!



CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION TEACHER OF EXCELLENCE

By: Karla Vargas

This past summer one of our Agriculture teachers, **Mark Powell**, was awarded the Teacher of Excellence Award.



This award is given to agriculture teachers who have taught for 10 years or more and is based on their work in all three circles of ag education. This award is only bestowed upon 20 teachers each year. Powell has been teaching for 14 years now which 12 of them he has spent working at Santa Maria High School. He is a Santa Maria alumnus part the graduating class of 2002 and was in the FFA program for all his four years in high school. He is the coach of the Dairy Products Judging Team. He has had great success coaching his team which has inevitably led his team to win nationals in 2015. Alongside obtaining three state wins in years of 2015, 2017 and 2019. “As a student in his class and a member of his Dairy Judging Team I can say that he is very well deserving of this award, he has personally helped me to strive for better and to never second guess myself” states student Itzel Lopez



Five of our FFA Agriculture teachers have previously received the Teacher of Excellence award. This includes Marc Debernardi (2011), Shannon Powell (2021), Clemente Ayon (2012), Luis Guerra (2007), and Melissa Flory (2018). Mark Powell feels honored to have joined his fellow co-workers and friends in achieving this award.



The 2022-2023 school year was a rewarding one to Santa Maria FFA members as they had the opportunity to be certified for various fields like Agriscience Chemistry, Floriculture, Professional Communications, and Veterinary Medical Applications. Beginning this past April, online certifications were offered to close to 400 Santa Maria High students enrolled in Agriculture classes. Out of this number, 102 of them became proficient in Agriscience Chemistry, 112 in Floriculture, 25 in Professional Communications and 18 in the field of Vet Science. This brings our total of students certified in 2023 to a vast 260 students.

Senior Gabriela Cabrera took 3 out of the 4 certifications offered and became triple certified in such fields. She recalls “the time and effort it took for [her] to pass the certifications.” Nevertheless, Cabrera feels proud of her work and looks forward to using the certifications to experience occupations of her interest.

Students proficient in these fields will now be able to put forth their skills into the world and like Floral Design teacher, Sara Araujo explains, “it will give [students] confidence to possibly pursue a job...[and] will actually have a certification that they could provide to a future employer showing that they do have the basic skills needed.” Now, close to 300 students can, and will step forth to occupations and strive toward success.

2022-2023 CERTIFICATIONS

By: Vanessa Nunez



Congratulations to everyone who was certified!

STAFF BREAKFAST By: Clara Trenado

The start of our 2023-2024 year was kicked off by our first event, the staff breakfast in the AG department.

During this morning's event we had over 50 students helping in preparing food welcoming staff and making sure everything is on point. Our breakfast included pancakes, breakfast burritos, omelets, and many more delicious items.

The set-up crew included all advisors, leadership team members, and students from other AG classes that helped make this day possible. SMHS staff and district staff came and enjoyed the wonderful breakfast. Can't wait to keep this amazing tradition going.



“These breakfasts are always amazing. They get better and better every year can't wait for next years.”

-Mr. Manfreda (Dean of Students)



“Ever since I was a freshman this day has always been my favorite with seeing all the smiles and making all staff have a great start to their day,” said one of our leadership team members, Karla Vargas.

HAWAIIAN ICE CREAM SOCIAL

By: Kayce Van Horn

On August 23, we hosted our first annual FFA monthly meeting. The theme was a Hawaiian Ice Cream Social. At our first meeting, we had over 400 members in attendance!

We served ice cream and shaved ice as well as playing lots of fun games, such as water balloon toss, musical chairs, coconut bowling, limbo, and many more!

At the start of the meeting we had every member vote to see which 4 officers they wanted to see dunked. Then, at the end of the meeting Perla Delgado, Melissa Lua, Kayce Van Horn, and Jessica Avendano had a tractor full of water dumped on them! This event was a great way to start off the year.

“THIS WAS MY FIRST FFA MEETING AND IT WAS SO MUCH FUN. I MET LOTS OF NEW PEOPLE AND LIKED THE WATER BALLOON TOSS.”

-MARCO RAMIREZ (FRESHMAN)



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sectional Officer Leadership Conference (SOLC) 9/9/23-9/10/23



- Chapter GLC 9/15/23
- Farm Day 9/23/23



- Dodger Day 9/24/23

- FFA Chapter Meeting 9/27/23

- Benefit Dinner 9/30/23

