

State of California

California Exposition & State Fair
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MEMORANDUM

Date: February 21, 2018

To: Board of Directors
California Exposition & State Fair

Via: Rick K. Pickering, Chief Executive Officer

From: Jay Carlson, AG Program Director

Subject: Recommendation for Approval of 2018 Agriculturalist of the Year Award

BACKGROUND

The California State Fair annually recognizes the accomplishments and service of key individuals or organization through a series of prestigious awards. The recipient for the 2018 Agriculturalist of the year will be publically recognized and honored at the Friends of the California State Fair Gala on Thursday, June 21, 2018.

Included here is the process for selection of this award, and background of 2018 award honoree as recommend.

AWARDS SUMMARY

Agriculturalist of the Year

The Agriculturalist of the Year award is defined as someone who has contributed extensively and in a professional capacity to the agricultural industry. Each year, the public is invited to participate in an open nomination process. The nomination process closed on January 30 and the Agricultural Advisory Council met on February 20 to vote.

The Agricultural Advisory Council reviewed nominations and respectfully voted to recommend that **Paul Wenger** be recognized as the 2018 Agriculturalist of the Year.

Paul Wenger

Paul Wenger was elected president of the California Farm Bureau Federation in December 2009 and was re-elected to his fourth and final term in 2015. In December 2017 Mr. Wenger's full term as President concluded.

Wenger, who farms in Modesto, became a statewide officer in 1997 when he was elected Second Vice President. He was elected First Vice President in 2005. He also served as a member of the CFBF Board of Directors and chaired the CFBF Water Advisory Committee and the Board Water Development Task Force. He is a former President of the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau. In January 2011, he was elected to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Board of Directors and was re-elected in 2013. He also served on the Executive Committee of the AFBF.

A third-generation farmer, Wenger farms almonds and walnuts on the family farm, which includes property purchased by his grandfather in 1910. His farming operations also include sharecropping, custom farm work and walnut hulling. His operation includes an almond and walnut processing and marketing business under his Wood Colony Nut Company, to provide an opportunity for the fourth generation of the family to vertically integrate into the family farming operation.

Wenger attended Modesto Junior College before transferring to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where he earned a degree in animal science.

Wenger has been active in community affairs, serving on the Salida Volunteer Fire Department, the Hart-Ransom School Board of Trustees, and the Stanislaus Land Trust and Agricultural Pavilion Boards.

He and his wife, Deborah, have three sons and three grandchildren.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Agricultural Advisory Council and Staff respectfully request the Board approve the following award:

- I. Accept the Agricultural Advisory Council's recommendation to honor **Paul Wenger** as the 2018 Agriculturalist of the Year.