



## February 17 -24, 2024 (Always the week of George Washington's Birthday)

The Rotary Club of Santa Rosa has a long tradition of support for the FFA dating back to the origin of the club and the founding members with strong connections to local agriculture.

### Why do we continue this tradition of support?

The Rotary Club of Santa Rosa believes in supporting the youth of the community and has done so throughout its 100 year history. In addition to honoring the FFA during FFA Week, the club recognizes the value of supporting FFA members throughout the year with their supervised projects such as raising livestock to exhibit and sell at the Sonoma County Fair. This support traditionally comes in two forms – the ***purchase of student projects*** at the summer Junior Livestock Auction and the awarding of ***Jamison Merit Award*** grants to help with the expense of purchasing and caring for project animals. In 2023-24 the Club and Club Foundation provided over \$25,000 to support FFA members with their projects.

In Sonoma County, nine high schools have FFA Chapters with approximately 1200 members. Santa Rosa has chapters at Santa Rosa and Elsie Allen High schools with six ag teachers and approximately 500 students. California has over 100,000 FFA members in 350 schools.

In addition to learning about the science of agriculture, students practice leadership, public speaking, teamwork and many other important life-long interpersonal skills. Just like a three legged stool, the FFA provides students with development opportunities in the classroom as well as through supervised agricultural projects and leadership training experiences.

Agriculture is critical to the economic viability of Sonoma County and the FFA is the training ground for the farmers, ranchers, agribusiness operators and organizational leaders of the future. If you enjoy and benefit from the abundant supply of fresh local products and the beautiful open space of Sonoma County, you are reaping the benefits of local agriculture.

