



Young agriculturalists win awards from Farm Bureau

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A Butte County farming family and a University of California dairy and plant science specialist from Glenn County will represent the state in a national recognition program for young farmers and ranchers, after earning statewide awards at the 94th California Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in Pasadena.



Lisa and Daniel "Rocky" Donati of Gridley earned the California Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award for their diversified rice and cattle operation. The Donatis manage 600 acres of rice and also run commercial cow-calf and registered Angus cattle herds.

Rocky Donati is a past president of the Butte County Farm Bureau and, in his award application, wrote that experience allowed him to see firsthand "the importance of county Farm Bureaus being actively engaged with local supervisors and city council members." He said he believes it is important to communicate with elected officials to share the stories and needs of family farms and ranches.

The couple met while attending Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and were married two months after graduating, Rocky with a degree in agribusiness and Lisa with a degree in nutritional science. The Donatis have three children.

Betsy Karle, recipient of the California Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture award, is a dairy program representative with UC Cooperative Extension in Glenn County and also serves as a junior specialist within the UC Davis plant sciences department. A mother of two young children, Karle serves actively in agricultural education activities through the county fair and serves as an unofficial liaison between the Glenn County Farm Bureau and the local 4-H program.

"When our agricultural community joins forces, we have been and will continue to be an exceptional resource for agriculture education in our community," Karle wrote.

Karle has a master's degree in agro-ecology and lives in Orland with her husband, veterinarian Michael Karle. The couple are partners in his veterinary practice and raise registered Holstein dairy cattle and Angus beef cattle.

As winners of the Achievement Award, the Donatis receive use of a Kubota tractor for one year, furnished by Kubota Tractor Corp., and a cash prize of \$4,000. For her award, Karle earns a \$4,000 cash prize. Contest sponsors include Cathie and Dick Bradley, the California Association of Pest Control Advisers, Farm Credit West, CoBank, American AgCredit and State Compensation Insurance Fund.

The Donatis and Karle will represent California in national competitions to be held next month at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in Nashville.

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