

## Reardan FFA Ag Issues

### Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery

The National FFA Organization is the largest student leadership organization in the world with over 300,000 members worldwide. The organization develops premier leadership and personal growth through agriculture and natural resource education. One of the primary mechanisms in developing the growth potential in youths is through Career Development Events (CDE), which requires students implement industry skills within the confines of competition. The Agricultural Issues Forum is a CDE that requires students to research an agricultural or natural resources issue and equitably present both sides of the issue. At the end of the presentation, students are directed with questions by the judges/audience that tests their depth of knowledge or opinions about the topic presented. As part of the requirement for state level competition, teams are required to build a portfolio of public presentations; this is where your group comes in.

The Reardan FFA Chapter Agricultural Issues team has developed a presentation about the plight of Southern Resident Killer Whales in and around Washington State. The students make arguments integral to the recommendations set forth by the Southern Resident Killer Whale Task Force appointed by Governor Inslee and make arguments on both sides of this complex issue. Much of the argument centers around Northwest salmon recovery efforts. The presentation is about 15 minutes long and afterwards, we ask that you question the students about the content of their presentation to test their depth of knowledge and soundness of their arguments. If at all possible, I'd like to help with an introduction and relay information about where these kids have been and where they are going in terms of competition and public presentations. Students will stand on either side of a projected image that has supporting information in a powerpoint, typically at the head of the room. One of the presentation requirements is that the topic must be phrased in the form of a question. This year's question is **"Puget Sound's Southern Resident Killer Whales – Is This What Extinction Looks Like?"**

The presentation is a continuous flow – about 15 minutes long. It's more a staged debate (scripted performance) than a true question answer format debate. At the end of the presentation, we ask the audience to ask questions to test depth of knowledge, vet information, and challenge the students. Understand, we only have 15 minutes to present, so on a topic as complex as this, there are holes in the presentation – this is by design – we hope you ask those questions – it's a trap! After the presentation, we usually allow the students to have what turns out to be a round table discussion on certain aspects of the presentation. This is where we appreciate feedback and clarification on questions and answers.

Please be willing to share information with the students that can help them in their future presentations as well as prepare them for, what we believe, a state winning agricultural issues

presentation! Please feel free to call, text, or email any additional questions or comments. (509-981-4840 – [rperleberg@reardansd.net](mailto:rperleberg@reardansd.net))

Thank You,

Rick Perleberg- Reardan FFA Advisor