

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Students educate shoppers about nutrition on a tight budget

PENDLETON - In recognition of Food Check-Out Week, 18 members of the Blue Mountain Community College Young Farmer & Ranchers Program were at three Pendleton grocery stores giving tips to consumers on how to shop effectively to put nutritious meals on the table with fewer dollars.

The students passed out flyers from the Farm Bureau entitled "Tips for Better Nutrition on a Tight Budget," as well as reusable grocery bags with the Food Check-Out Week logo and stickers for kids. The group was divided between the Albertsons, Safeway, and Wal-Mart stores in Pendleton from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on February 24.

The event was organized by Umatilla-Morrow County Farm Bureau President Julia Spratling.

"It's a great opportunity for getting the next generation of agriculture producers out into the community," said Spratling. "And to promote how learning to use grocery dollars wisely ensures that nutrition isn't neglected."

"A lot of people don't know where their food comes from, and it's a chance to remind the public that it's farmers and ranchers who provide their food, fuel, and fiber," added Haylee Harper, President of Blue Mountain Community College Young Farmers & Ranchers Program.

Farm Bureau's Food Check-Out Week is devoted to helping teach Americans how to stretch their grocery dollars with healthy, nutritious food. America's farmers and ranchers are committed to producing safe, healthy, and abundant food. And they share a common concern with consumers when it comes to putting nutritious meals on the table while sticking to a tight budget.

With the continuing economic squeeze, many Americans are concerned that the cost of a healthy diet is out of reach. However, according to a U.S. Agriculture Department study, the cost of eating healthy hasn't changed as much as less-healthy alternatives. Eating healthy food within a budget does require smart shopping

The good news: a March 2008 USDA report favorably supports the economics of healthier eating. Recent food price data show that prices for unprepared, readily available fresh fruits and vegetables have remained stable relative to dessert and snack foods, such as chips, ice cream, and cola. Therefore, as defined by foods in the study, the price of a "healthier" diet has not changed compared to an "unhealthy" diet.

Farm Bureau has developed Food Check-Out Week educational materials dedicated to helping consumers make healthier food purchases. Information on several topics — including “Tips for Better Nutrition on a Tight Budget,” “How Much Should I Eat?,” “Understanding Food Labels” and “Understanding What MyPyramid Means” — is available on the American Farm Bureau website at <http://www.fb.org>.

Now in its eleventh year, Food Check-Out Week also highlights America’s safe, abundant, and affordable food supply, made possible largely by America’s productive farmers and ranchers. According to the most recent (2007) information from the USDA’s Economic Research Service, American families and individuals spend, on average, less than 10 percent of their disposable personal income for food.

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*** Attached is a 300-dpi photo from the event.**

Photo caption: In recognition of Food Check-Out Week, Farm Bureau went to Pendleton grocery stores to educate shoppers on how to shop effectively to put nutritious meals on the table with fewer dollars.

From left is Umatilla-Morrow County Farm Bureau President Julia Spratling, and some of the members of the Blue Mountain Community College Young Farmers & Ranchers Program, (from left) Josie Miller (Heppner), Crystal Deschaine (Milton-Freewater), Niki Linscott (Clackamas), Sadie Duncan (Baker), Joe Ramirez (Clackamas), Blue Mountain Community College Young Farmers & Ranchers President Haylee Harper (Pendleton), Shelby Forrest (Prineville), and Tyler Smith (Wallowa).

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* Note: “Farm Bureau” is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases.

The Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is a voluntary, grassroots, nonprofit organization representing the interests of the state's farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas. As Oregon's largest general farm organization, its primary goal is to promote educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement for its members and the farming, ranching, and natural resources industry as a whole. "The voice of Oregon agriculture," OFB works to find solutions that will benefit all of the state's agriculture producers.

First established in Oregon in 1919, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 counties and has more than 8,000 member families that are professionally engaged in

agriculture. Barry Bushue, an east Multnomah County berry and nursery stock producer, is OFB's 15th president.

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