

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Board of Supervisors

BOARD AGENDA # \*A-5

Urgent

Routine

*[Handwritten initials]*

AGENDA DATE May 20, 2014

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES  NO   
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

SUBJECT:

Approval of a Commendation for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foster Farms Company

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approve a commendation for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foster Farms Company.

Contact person: Christine Ferraro Tallman, Clerk of the Board

Telephone: 525-4494

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2014-243

On motion of Supervisor Monteith, Seconded by Supervisor Withrow

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Withrow, Monteith, and Chairman De Martini

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) \_\_\_\_\_ Denied

3) \_\_\_\_\_ Approved as amended

4) \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST:

*Elizabeth A. King*  
ELIZABETH A. KING, Assistant Clerk

File No.



## HISTORY/TIMELINE

**1939**

### **The Original Farm – the Beginning of Locally Raised Poultry**

A young couple named Max and Verda Foster started Foster Farms in 1939 by borrowing \$1,000 against a life insurance policy. They invested in an 80-acre farm near Modesto, California, and began raising turkeys. In the beginning, Max worked as an editor at the Modesto Bee to help support their young business while Verda concentrated on raising healthy chicks. The original hatchery was built right off of their bedroom because the eggs required round-the-clock care. Verda would set a timer to alert her, day or night, when it was time to gently rotate the eggs. The back porch of the Foster's home became Max's office and the center of activity as they established their business.

**1950**

### **Growing to Guarantee Quality**

Max and Verda Foster's commitment to raising the highest quality chickens led them to purchase a feed mill in 1950. With this addition, they were able to ensure that all of their chickens enjoyed a consistent, healthy diet. By 1959, the couple had added a processing plant in nearby Livingston. By managing the entire operation, from hatchery through processing, they could guarantee the exceptional quality of their fresh chicken. This early vision for the company still guides our course today.

**1960s**

### **A New Home**

By the 1960s, the company had outgrown the original farm and more space was needed to meet the increasing demand for Foster Farms locally grown fresh poultry. The company moved its corporate headquarters to the small California Central Valley town of Livingston where it still resides today.

**1973**

### **Bringing Locally Raised Poultry to All Californians**

Increasing demand for fresh poultry led Foster Farms to expand into Southern California. By 1973, the Foster Farms brand was available from Del Norte County all the way to San Diego.

**1987**

### **Locally Grown Chicken – In Oregon**

Delivering the freshest, highest quality poultry products is dependent on having local poultry ranches and processing plants so that products get to the grocery store in a matter of hours. In 1987, Foster Farms acquired Fircrest Farms in Creswell, Oregon and a network of local growers which permitted the company to continue to market locally raised poultry in the Pacific Northwest. Then, in 1998, the company built the first new Foster Farms plant outside of California in Kelso, Washington. Today, Foster Farms is the leading poultry brand in the Pacific Northwest region.

**2005**

### **Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award**

Foster Farms received California's highest environmental honor, the Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award, (GEELA), from then Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The award was issued as a result of the company's success in finding an innovative way to dispose of one million pounds of organic waste per week from its poultry processing facilities. In collaboration with EBMUD, Foster Farms developed an innovative process to generate electricity through the process instead of using it.

### **Recognition as a Biosecurity Leader Amidst Avian Influenza Fears**

In November of 2005, Foster Farms worked actively with state agricultural officials and the USDA to significantly limit the spread of influenza on the West Coast during a worldwide epidemic. Foster Farms' efforts earned significant media attention including a front page cover story in USA Today, which highlighted Foster Farms as a leader in the poultry industry because of its efforts to prevent the spread of avian influenza and its success in ensuring its birds throughout the state were protected from avian disease.

### **2007**

#### **Goodwill Large Employer of the Year Award**

Foster Farms received this award for hiring more than two dozen Goodwill clients through a Vocations Unlimited program in its Longview, Washington office. The partnership allowed Foster Farms to hire trained employees while helping prepare Goodwill workers for future employment opportunities.

### **2009**

#### **The "Say No To Plumping" Campaign**

Foster Farms fresh chicken labeled 100 percent All Natural is never injected with saltwater, a common industry process that has come to be known as "plumping." In 2009, Foster Farms launched its "Say No to Plumping" campaign, to raise awareness of the health risks associated with excessive salt and to ensure that consumers received full value for the fresh chicken they were buying. Today, plumped chicken is no longer found in retailers on the West Coast.

#### **Foster Farms Saves Farmerville Facility, Regional Poultry Industry**

In 2009, Foster Farms entered into agreement with the state of Louisiana to purchase a bankrupt Pilgrim's Pride facility in Farmerville, Louisiana, virtually saving the poultry industry in the Northeast portion of the state. The move saved thousands of jobs and avoided the loss of more than \$100 million in state and local tax revenues. Following a \$72.2 million renovation, the Farmerville plant was inaugurated by Foster Farms CEO Ron Foster and Governor Bobby Jindal.

### **2010**

#### **Foster Farms Heads to the White House**

Foster Farms had the unique privilege of raising the National Turkey to be pardoned by President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony with roots dating back to 1947, the official first turkey pardon occurring in 1989. The birds were raised on Wellsford Ranch in Modesto, Calif., in the heart of the Central Valley. Foster Farms partnered with the Agriculture in the Classroom program to help educate West Coast schoolchildren about raising turkeys and the Presidential Turkey Pardon, taking turkeys from the official Presidential Flock to local fairs and schools across the West Coast.

### **2011**

#### **Foster Farms Encourages Californians to Eat Locally Grown Foods**

Foster Farms found that 83 percent of Californians were more likely to buy fresh chicken that had been grown on farms located in California than grown in other states. The company joined the California Poultry Federation and other leading agricultural groups supporting Eat Local, Buy California Grown and also launched a program devoted to its fresh, local chicken production in California. ACR 42, a proposition passed by California Senate and endorsed by Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, declared Sundays as "Eat Local, Buy California Grown Day" and encouraged families, restaurants and grocers to buy California-grown foods on Sundays. Today, on the West Coast, Foster Farms chicken is delivered fresh to the store in 48 hours or less.

### **2012**

#### **Foster Farms Recognized for Contributions to Agricultural Education**

Foster Farms has made significant contributions to agricultural education in the state of California. Grants have been given to UC Davis, Fresno State and Cal Polytechnic State University. Foster Farms efforts have been recognized throughout the state education system, including when CEO Ron Foster was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for his leadership with the school as advisor, fundraiser, benefactor and collaborator for more than 15 years.

**2013**

**Commitment to Animal Welfare – Foster Farms’ “AHA” Moment**

Since 2005, Foster Farms has consistently received the highest animal welfare ratings from independent auditors such as Silliker, Inc. In 2013, Foster Farms became the first major poultry producer to be certified by the American Humane Association, the nation’s first national humane organization for children and animals.

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For more information, visit [www.fosterfarms.com](http://www.fosterfarms.com)

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Lorna Bush  
415.392.1000 (O), 510.759.9528 (C)  
[lbush@finemanpr.com](mailto:lbush@finemanpr.com)