## Wednesday, February 18, 2009

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## Ag Briefs: Methane milk truck to hit road

By John Holland

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A milk truck fueled by methane from cow manure an idea developed in part in the Modesto area will make its debut Wednesday in Tulare.

The truck will be unveiled at 1:30 p.m. at the World Ag Expo, a three-day event starting Tuesday.

The truck runs on methane extracted from manure at a Tulare County dairy farm that sends milk to Hilmar Cheese Co.

Advocates say the technology can reduce diesel use and emissions involved in climate change.

Western United Dairymen, based in Modesto, launched a research project on the idea in 2007 with a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The expo is at the International Agri-Center, 4450 S. Laspina St.

 The Wal-Mart Foundation has donated \$75,000 toward construction of the second phase of the FFA State Leadership Center in Galt.

The money from the retailer's philanthropic arm will help with plans for a conference center and classrooms at the site.

The first phase, which opened in 2007, included space for administration, leadership training, curriculum development and other activities.

Kristen Steves, a 2008 graduate of Escalon High School, is president for this school year. Ryan McCoon, a 2008 graduate of Modesto High School, is treasurer. Brad Mendes, who also graduated from Modesto High last year, is reporter, responsible for chronicling FFA activities.

The organization, formerly known as Future Farmers of America, has about 65,000 members

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