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**For Immediate Release:**

October 20, 2009

### **FAIR CEO LEO ANNOUNCES DECEMBER RETIREMENT**

*Turlock*—After 29 consecutive county fairs, Tony Leo, chief executive officer of the Stanislaus County Fair, has awarded his last blue ribbon.

Last night, in a closed session with his board of directors, Leo announced his retirement effective December 30, 2009. “For almost 30 years I have had the pleasure to work with some very dedicated and hard-working fair employees and some very astute directors. For that I am so grateful,” said Leo. “But to all things there is a season.”

“Tony has been one of the best CEOs I have had the pleasure of working with over the years,” said Dale Butler, president of the Stanislaus County Fair board of directors. “He is a man of few words and much substance. He has always had the best interest of our fair and the fair industry at heart. On behalf of the board and staff we wish him and his wife Rosemary a well-deserved retirement. Tony will be sorely missed.”

The fair board will conduct an exhaustive, industry-wide search for Leo’s replacement. The board’s goal is to fill the CEO position by early spring 2010.

Leo has served as the CEO of the Stanislaus County Fair since February 1998. Under his leadership the fair has achieved financial solvency. Leo was committed to building a strong family-friendly environment for the Stanislaus County Fair. To that end, the Stanislaus County Fair received a first place award for “Best Overall Children’s Program” from the Western Fairs Association in 2008.

WFA is a non-profit organization that represents 130 of the finest fairs in North America.

Leo's county fair career began in 1980 when he was hired to serve as CEO of the Merced County Spring Fair in Los Banos. In 1983, he was hired to lead the Merced County Fair in Merced where he served as CEO for 14-1/2 years.

During his career Leo has served as a well-respected member of several committees for the California Department of Food and Agriculture, including the Advisory Committee on Fairs and the Audit Committee for California Fairs. In addition, he is the past vice-chair of the California State Fair Advisory Committee of County Fairs.

Presently, Leo serves as a member Turlock Convention and Visitors Bureau and as a member of the Turlock Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Committee. In 2001, he was named Agriculture Leader of the Year by the Turlock Chamber of Commerce.

The 2010 Stanislaus County Fair is slated for July 16 – 25 and is themed “Flavors of the Valley.”

Video remembrances of the 2009 Stanislaus County Fair can be viewed on the fair's website, [www.stancofair.com](http://www.stancofair.com), on the 2009 Schedule page.

To receive information regarding the 2010 Stanislaus County Fair by text message, text the word “FAIR” to 47645. Fair enthusiasts can also follow how the 2010 fair is developing at [twitter.com/stancofair](https://twitter.com/stancofair). In addition, become a fan of the fair at [facebook.com/stancofair](https://facebook.com/stancofair). Fair news and event listings are also available at [myspace.com/stancofair](https://myspace.com/stancofair).

The mission of the Stanislaus County Fair is to provide a family and community oriented experience promoting agriculture, entertainment and technology.

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