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## Yolo farmer Rominger wins ag leadership award

By **GEOFF JOHNSON**

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The California Climate & Agriculture Summit gave out its first Leadership Awards Tuesday -- and Yolo County's Rich Rominger could count himself among the winners.

Rominger, a fourth generation Yolo County farmer of Rominger Brothers Farms and Rominger West winery fame, was praised for his efforts as the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture from 1977 to 1982; for his time as the No. 2 position as Deputy Secretary at the US Department of Agriculture under the Clinton administration, from 1993 to 2001; and for serving as the Advisor on Production Agriculture to UC Davis, UC Riverside, California State University, Fresno and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

He continues to work with UC Davis and the University of California in numerous capacities, and chairs the Marrone Bio Innovations company, a start-up Bio-pesticide company.

"His contributions have been of incredible significance," to addressing climate change, said Judith Redmond of Full Belly Farm in Guinda.

That includes "countless hours" of contributions to California Climate & Agriculture Network-sponsored legislation, she said.

Asked about the state of climate change and agriculture today, Rominger said he was sad that climate issues had been sidetracked by budget issues.

The effects of climate change on agriculture are not always well understood, he said. While climate change could lead to wetter, rainier seasons, the same increases in temperature could warm



Rich Rominger, center, accompanied by his wife, Evelyne, speaks with Ed Thompson, the California Director of the American Farmland Trust. On Thursday, Rominger received one of the first CalCAN Leadership Awards and a basket of local goods for his efforts to combat climate change. (Deo Ferrer/Democrat)

snowpack too quickly -- leaving farmers without the necessary water they need. Changes in the weather could also disrupt orchard tilling periods, he said.

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