

ILLINOIS FFA NEWS

Winter 2020



A Word from Lane

Everyone here at the Illinois FFA Center has been busy planning the 92nd Illinois FFA State Convention. We are looking over every little detail and we can only ENVISION how amazing our State Convention is going to be!

While Convention is on our minds, National FFA Week is coming right up! Brodee, Emma and Gage will be going to Section 8 for Chapter Visits! While Collin and I will be travelling around the state attending chapter events to celebrate National FFA Week with some of the most amazing members out there!

National FFA week will be followed by chapter banquets. Crazy right!? Chapter banquets make for a busy time for the Major State Officers. We will be attending chapter banquets to give keynote speeches and to celebrate a year full of successes and achievements of amazing Illinois FFA members.

We are looking forward to visiting members from all around the state for Chapter Visits, Chapter Banquets, and then finally the 92nd Illinois FFA State Convention! We cannot wait to see you there!

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NATIONAL DELEGATE PROCESS



By: Emma Freebairn

The 92nd National FFA Convention and Expo was held on October 30 through November 2 in Indianapolis. Most FFA members that attended National Convention enjoyed the Expo, where hundreds of colleges and agricultural businesses had booth showcases. Members attended sessions where they watched National Officers give retiring addresses and recognized proficiency and contest winners. They also met students from all over the country and made new friends. However, most people are unaware of what happens in the few days prior to the start of National Convention. 470 representatives from all 50 states and two surrounding territories gathered to carry out committee work and the National Delegate Process. These delegates voted on constitutional changes, by-law amendments and worked to make recommendations on ways to improve National FFA to the FFA National Board of Directors. Illinois had 12 delegates that served the state and nation. They served on committees that evaluated Production Agriculture, Urban Agriculture, State Association Needs, National Regions, Competitive Events and Membership Experiences.

On the Production Agriculture committee State President, Gage Miller, and Section 17 President, Morgan Jones, served as delegates. This committee explored ways to keep production agriculture relevant and recommended finding ways to include production agriculture in curriculum for conferences like 212, 360 and WLC so that there is a balance between leadership skill training and agriculture education. They recommended National FFA develop an online resource for members interested in production agriculture internships and scholarships and make promotional videos for the Next Generation and New Century Farmer Conferences.

The Urban Agriculture Committee worked to evaluate how urban schools can be better served. Section 7 President, Avery Plote, and Section 14 President, Emily Curry, worked to form recommendations for this committee. This committee shared with the board that urban schools with agricultural education programs would benefit from grants for newly chartered programs and offering more easily accessible resources pertaining to SAE, SAE for all, degrees, urban agricultural education curriculum, etc. They also asked the Board to create a definition of urban agriculture and create an American Degree tutorial video.



State Vice-President, Lane Harvey, and Section 9 President, Molly Schempp, worked on the State Association Needs Committee which was formed to help National FFA better understand where and how they can work to better serve the needs of the states. This committee recognized a need for more Local Program Success specialists who work with states to answer any questions they have and aid with any other state needs. They recommended a revision of 212/360 conference curriculum to make it more relevant to respective state associations and the formation of an online training resource to inform agriculture educators who lack FFA knowledge.

Currently, the National FFA Organization is divided into 4 regions. There are 11 states in the Western region, 11 states and territories in the Southern region, 12 states in the Central region, and 18 states in the Eastern region. State Reporter, Brodee McCormick, and Section 23 President, Coy Crull, served on this committee which recommended that National FFA form a committee of experts and FFA members to re-evaluate how the regions are divided. The goal is to make these regions more equal in membership numbers as well as the number of states.

In the Competitive Events Exploration Committee, State Secretary, Collin White, and Section 16 President, Zane Gardner, explored new ideas and recommended starting new events such as an agricultural education CDE. This committee recommended to the National FFA Board to create a panel of agriculture stakeholders to evaluate the use of new innovative technology and ideas in current CDEs. The panel would also explore middle school student inclusion in contests at the national level and the implementation of

STEM educational standards. They also made a recommendation to establish a recognition or award program to highlight chapters with outstanding agricultural advocacy projects.

State Treasurer, Emma Freebairn, and Section 3 President, Josh Sims, served as delegates on the Membership Experience committee. This committee evaluated how the experiences of members from all different backgrounds such as race, religion, and financial situations could be improved to ensure we are being inclusive to all people. They made recommendations to explore modifications to the FFA jacket so that it can be fastened differently or stretched for individuals with differences of ability. It was also moved to explore the possibility of lowering the cost of affiliation membership by tier to make it more affordable for chapters and states to become affiliated. They also recommended relaunching a “We Are FFA” campaign to showcase all of our talented FFA members and focus on the unity of our organization and respect for all people.

The recommendations each of these committees made were formed into reports that were passed by the delegate body at National Convention. They will now be sent to the National FFA Board of Directors for consideration and further action.



STATE LAND USE

By: Gage Miller



The State Land Use Career Development Event was held on October 22, 2019 at Black Hawk East Campus. The contest consisted of participants analyzing and evaluating four different soil pits. The event components are associated with landscape characteristics, soil profile characteristics, soil structure, calculation of soil loss and determination of the slope, as well as the evaluation for non-agricultural use.

“The wealth of Illinois is in her soil and her strength lies in its intelligent development.”
-Draper 1899.

Nobody knows this quote better than this years Land Use contestants. The state contest was definitely a cold one but students embraced the low temperature and dressed extra warm, making the most of this very iconic and competitive contest. Illinois FFA can't thank Black Hawk East enough for hosting the contest and adapting to the harsh conditions.

Varsity Division - Top Teams

- 1st - Cambridge
- 2nd - United
- 3rd - Midland
- 4th - Vandalia
- 5th - Princeville
- 6th - Seneca

Varsity Division - Top Individuals

- 1st - Alec Thompson, United
- 2nd - Victor Snook, Cambridge
- 3rd - Kendra Downing, Cambridge
- 4th - Colton Stahl, Cambridge
- 5th - Cole Boock, United
- 6th - Reed Yung, United
- 7th - Gavin McDonough, Cambridge
- 8th - Elizabeth Cable, Vandalia
- 9th - Leah Pyles, Midland
- 10th - Cole Probst, Teutopolis

Middle School Division - Top Team

- 1st - Liberty

Middle School Division - Top Individuals

- Jacob Davis, Liberty
- Cody Liggett, Liberty

Alternate Division - Top Individuals

- 1st - Cassi Tierney, United
- 2nd - Annie Johnson, Cambridge
- 3rd - Jake Johnson, Cambridge
- 4th - Ren Bodnar, Cambridge



NATIONAL CONVENTION CHAMPIONS

By: Collin White



The streets of Indianapolis were flooded with countless blue jackets, parents, alumni, advisors and guests October 30 - November 2 for the 92nd National FFA Convention and Expo. During all of the glamor and excitement that National Convention has to offer, Illinois Association FFA competitors made their name heard! With one National Leadership Development Event winner, two National Proficiency winners and one National Agriscience winner, Illinois FFA chapters and members took home a number of titles.

This year, chapters all across the state represented Illinois in 26 Career Development Event and Leadership Development Event areas. This year, the Prairie Central FFA Chapter Agricultural Sales team took home the championship. The team was made up of Alexandria Brown, Cassidy Edelman, Kirra Gehring and Sydney Rothert. Edelman took home sixth place in the nation.

- **Agricultural Business Management**
Prairie Central FFA - 9th place - Gold
- **Agricultural Communications**
Normal FFA - Silver
- **Agricultural Issues**
Midland FFA - Silver
- **Ag Technology and Mechanics**
Prairie Central - 2nd place - Gold
- **Agronomy**
Iroquois West FFA - Silver
- **Conduct of Chapter Meeting**
Paxton-Buckly-Loda FFA - Gold
- **Creed Speaking**
Lizzie Schafer, Taylorville FFA - Bronze
- **Dairy Cattle Reasons**
Prairie Central FFA - 2nd place - Gold
- **Dairy Foods**
Prairie Central FFA - 2nd place - Gold
- **Dairy Handlers**
Zachary Paul, Edwardsville FFA - Gold
- **Extemporaneous Speaking**
Cavit Schempp, Olympia FFA - Silver
- **Floriculture**
Glenbrook South FFA - Gold
- **Food Science and Technology**
Streator FFA - Gold
- **Forestry**
Olney FFA - 4th place - Gold
- **Horse Reasons**
Rochelle FFA - Silver
- **Employment Skills**
Sheridan Hawk, Mercer County FFA - 5th place - Gold
- **Livestock Reasons**
Tri-Point FFA - Silver
- **Marketing Plan**
Midwest Central FFA - Bronze
- **Meats Evaluation and Technology**
Prairie Central FFA - Silver
- **Nursery and Landscape**
Seneca FFA - 8th place - Gold
- **Parliamentary Procedure**
Olney FFA - Gold
- **Poultry**
Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA - 7th place - Gold
- **Prepared Speaking**
Mark Mehochko, Seneca FFA - Bronze
- **Veterinary Science**
Prairie Central FFA - 4th place - Gold

This year Illinois was excited to have two National Proficiency winners out of the 47 proficiency areas. This year, Braylee Finck, from the Maroa-Forsyth FFA Chapter, won the area of Agricultural Sales - Entrepreneurship. Tara Hummel, from the Tri-Point FFA Chapter, won in the area Goat Production.

“Building a business is not easy, but as a freshman, Braylee Finck had the opportunity to build one from a rough framework,” said Cassie Crouch, Tri-Point FFA Chapter Advisor. “Her drive and determination to seek out individuals who would help guide her in building her business goals was one of her accelerated business decisions.”

Finck’s business started her freshman year when she realized that the only florist in her small town was closing. She started servicing her high school’s homecoming but saw an opportunity arise. She began studying plant science and social media advertising and sought every opportunity from birthdays to prom to senior nights and weddings. With a stronger business sense, Finck was about to price compare and sub out materials to reduce customer costs while retaining quality her junior and senior year. She takes great pride in her business that her community has greatly supported. She has learned so much about interviews that it has become her strength from a deep history participation in CDEs/ LDEs throughout her high school career.

She is currently attending Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield IL where she is an Ag Business Transfer major. Her lessons learned in the Ag Sales Entrepreneurship SAE will be some of the strongest she falls back on as she enters the business sector.

Hummel has been involved in her family’s livestock operation for as long as she can remember. Her early chores included walking show goats, helping feed and just spending time in the barn. Since then, she’s learned about systematically and effectively running a small ruminant business in addition to necessary management practices. Hummel plans on eventually taking over the family business. She is supported by her parents, Holly and Dale, and her FFA advisor, Diana Loschen.

Illinois was proud to boast 21 projects competing in the Agriscience Fair at Convention but two individuals took home a National Championship. Eric and Lizzie Schafer of Taylorville FFA competed in f Animal Systems. The Schafer’s asked if synchronizing recipient bovine females with the use of controlled internal drug release (CIDR) increases successful heat cycles over the traditional method and therefore resulting in improved conception rates in recipient female cattle. After researching, testing and pregnancy checks, they were able to determine that using CIDRs in estrus synchronization resulted in a 15% advantage over not using them.



Congratulations to all of the National Convention contestants and champions!



By: Brodee McCormick, State FFA Reporter

WATERLOO WINS THE NATIONAL CHAPTER AWARD

Growing Leaders takes work! Learn how Waterloo did it!

Have you heard the news? Everyone is talking about it! The Waterloo FFA Chapter has won the National Chapter Award in the area of Growing Leaders!

While you might have been enjoying the career show, shopping mall, rodeo, sessions and concerts at the 92nd National FFA Convention, Charlie Dake, Waterloo FFA Chapter Vice President, and Alexis Mudd, Waterloo FFA Chapter Reporter, were busy practicing and preparing for their chapter's presentation. Dake and Mudd presented the Waterloo FFA's "Fun Fitness in Agriculture" event with a top 10 application, 8-minute presentation, and 8 minutes of questions from the judges.

After the FFA members returned from a jam-packed and successful Convention, we were able to interview, Chapter Vice President and senior, Charlie Dake to gather some more information about their successful event.

While Waterloo was the National Champion, Illinois had FOUR other National Chapter Award Finalists!

Normal FFA:

- Model of Excellence AND Building Communities National Finalist

Central Burlington

- Model of Excellence National Finalist

Flanagan-Cornell

- Growing Leaders National Finalist

Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences

- Strengthening Agriculture National Finalist

We are proud of all of our chapters for their hard work and dedication and for making it to the National Level!

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

-John Quincy Adams

- **Tell me about the project?**

“Fun Fitness in Agriculture got its start when a committee was formed due to the common interest of starting to make an ag-based exercise video for younger kids. After further research, it was determined that students and the grade school PE teacher had an interest and saw the value in the agriculture workout videos. The committee’s first video was roughly 30 minutes long and included stretches, the workout, a bonus relay race at the end, agriculture facts throughout and it showcased five of the chapter officers.”

- **What is the main impact you saw from this workout video?**

“To date, our video has been shown to over 400 students in our grade school. Not only are the students getting up on their feet and being active, but they are also learning about agriculture and FFA. We would be working out, learning agriculture facts, AND “Turnin’ up the Beet.” We also conveniently chose the name of “Fun Fitness in Agriculture” because of the ability to abbreviate it FFA. During the video, we talked about all of the opportunities that FFA has to offer and how it can benefit our everyday lives. Having this exposure to agriculture and FFA will hopefully encourage and motivate more members to join the organization when they are in high school.”

- **What was the hardest part and your favorite part of the whole presentation?**

“The hardest part of the project would have to be continuing to be motivated and driven to succeed, even when the video wasn’t the exact way we wanted it. We had to re-film pieces and edit parts, again and again, to make sure that it was the quality that we desired. While we were constantly working hard, my favorite part of the experience would be hearing about all the fun times the students had while participating in the video and hearing that they were going back to their homes and continuing to be excited about a healthy lifestyle and agriculture.”

- **Do you have plans in growing/expanding your workout video’s public reach?**

“We are planning to continue showing the video in the grade school classes and encouraging the members to be involved in the FFA Organization. We are also considering live streaming the workouts on YouTube or another platform to try and get more of the general public involved. In addition to live streams and continuing to show the videos in school, we began hosting yoga nights that take place once a month to encourage and promote the importance of a healthy lifestyle.”

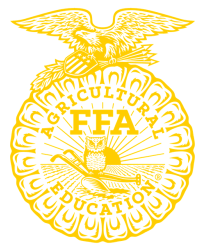
We would like to give another healthy congratulations to the Waterloo FFA Chapter for being selected as the National Champion of the National Chapter Award in the area of Growing Leaders. “Having this exposure to agriculture and FFA will hopefully encourage and motivate more members to join the organization when they are in high school,” said Dake in his interview. We are beyond proud of Waterloo FFA and can’t wait to see who else you will inspire with your healthy lifestyle promotion.





ISBE TESTIMONY

Has your chapter benefitted from the Agriculture Education Line Item?



By: Brodee McCormick, State FFA Reporter

Has your chapter purchased new iPads, gardening tools or veterinary science laboratory supplies this year? Or maybe you noticed that someone from Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) was visiting your school and talking to your agriculture education teacher and school administration? Whatever it may be, your FFA chapter and agriculture classroom have benefitted from the Agricultural Education Line Item in some way, shape or form. The Agriculture Education Line item is an allocation of financial support distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education. For the 2020 fiscal year, the Board allocated \$5 million to help fund FCAE, the three circles grant, incentive funding grant applications and Growing our Agricultural Science Teachers grant, to name a few of the programs.

This past fall, the Major State Officers, industry friends, agriculture educators, and other FFA members attended four different budget hearings to testify and explain to the board why the Agricultural Education line item is essential to classroom and programmatic success. In Mt. Vernon, East St. Louis, Normal and Chicago, members and friends gathered together to share how the line item has directly affected each and every one of them. For students, it provided new lab materials and equipment to gain hands-on experiences in the classroom. For educators, it gives matching funds towards a twelve-month salary so the teachers can get the payment they deserve for all of the extra hours they work as a classroom teacher and FFA advisor.



“

It is important to get to know the board members to understand what is important to them and show the soft skills that agriculture education and FFA develops in students.

- Collin White

”

At an ISBE Budget Hearing, there are many groups in attendance testifying for their respective organizations. One at a time, groups are called upon to speak to the committee members. Presenting testimony in person is essential because it allows the board members to hear from the source how their decisions are impacting students, teachers, and industry friends. It is also beneficial as it will enable us to make connections and gain friendships with the State Board of Education. After the hearing is over, you have the opportunity to shake the members' hands, thank them for their time and make a personal connection. “It is important to get to know the board members to understand what is important to them and show the soft skills that agriculture education and FFA develops in students,” said Collin White, Illinois FFA State Secretary. “This helps the Agricultural Education line item by helping board members better understand what these funds go towards and the true results they produce.”

While presenting a statement in person is very important, submitting a written testimony is also valuable and encouraged. Everyone has the opportunity to write to the Board of Education and explain why the Ag Ed Line Item is vital to them. There is power in numbers, and when there is a large amount of thankfulness and support for the line item, the Board recognizes it. Make sure to check in with your advisor and ask how you can help support the Agricultural Education Line Item. Maybe you can submit written testimony, or perhaps you will be one of the members testifying at the next budget hearing.

CHAPTER VISITS



16,673 MILES · 7,197 STUDENTS · 309 CHAPTERS

By: Collin White

During their year of service, Major State Officers attend many events, host dozens of workshops and meet people from all across the state. State officer's year-long term is full of experiences, but the one genuinely unforgettable opportunity is chapter visits. So far, the Majors have traveled 16,673 miles and met over 7,197 students across 309 FFA chapters in the state of Illinois. These days are jam-packed with long drives and meeting countless students. Here is a look at just a day in Section 5 for chapter visits.

For our second day of visits, we had to leave the house at 7:35 a.m. to head to Metamora for a 45-minute visit. We had two section officers come to the house before we went and met one at Metamora. After the visit, we had a 50-minute drive to our Putnam County visit, and that started around 10:30 a.m., but since we had no time to eat before or after we ate in the car. We had Casey's chocolate-covered peanuts and whatever chips we packed in sack lunches. At Putnam County, we did two back-to-back, 45-minute visits with a 20-minute break



in between for some students lunch periods. The next stop was Roanoke-Benson High School, which was a 45-minute drive from our last visit. We had a snack in the car before our 45-minute visit there. We finally had a short trip to Eureka High school for our last visit of the day, which turned out to be a quick 30-minute workshop. After our last visit, the section officers got a quick nap on our 35-minute drive to Lacon, where we worked to set up the Leadership Training School which started the next day. We were finally able to go out and get a real meal at Buffalo Wild Wings at 8 p.m. That night, we put together some final details about LTS that began the next morning at 7 a.m.

Section Presidents take the time to put together chapter visit schedules balancing teacher preferences, times and trying to make sure LTS is all ready to go. On average, Major State Officers drive over 140 miles and meet about 60 students a day. After a whole day of visits, the Majors and Section President sit down and fill out a document that highlights the funniest and most inspirational moments of the day. Filling out a form can be difficult at times due to being allowed only one impactful moment per day. The extraordinary students we meet, teachers we create a relationship with, and parts of the state we get to travel to - it doesn't seem fair to pick just one. Thank you, Illinois FFA, for a great chapter visit season. Gage, Brodee and Emma can't wait to see Section 8 in February during FFA week!

ALUMNI CONFERENCE



By: Lane Harvey

As a young adult, it is essential to have a support system. For my fellow teammates and myself, the Illinois FFA Alumni serves as that support system. No matter where we travel or what event we attend, the Alumni always has our back. They are supporting us in our journey every step of the way. Now, you may be wondering, "Who is the Illinois FFA Alumni?" The Illinois FFA Alumni is an organization filled with members across the state who believe in supporting youth in agriculture to succeed. To be an alumni member, you do not have to have any previous interaction or connection to the FFA. Anyone is welcome to join! If you are interested in becoming an Illinois FFA alumni member, contact your local FFA chapter or the Illinois FFA Center.

There are many benefits to becoming an Illinois FFA Alumni member! Not only do you get to support youth from across the state with a passion for the agriculture industry, but you get to attend many conferences as well. One of those conferences is the Illinois FFA Alumni Annual Meeting & Auction, which is January 31 - February 1, 2020, taking place at the President Abraham Lincoln on 701 E Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701. At this meeting, you will have the chance to participate in many networking events, idea exchanges, workshops and even the silent and live auctions. This auction is hosted to raise funds for FFA scholarships.

Whether your support is through purchasing items at the auction, checking in on FFA members and offering support, or involvement at your chapter level, becoming an Illinois FFA Alumni Member allows you to support 19,099 Illinois FFA members. We encourage everyone to become an Illinois FFA Alumni member, and we hope to see you at the Illinois FFA Alumni Annual Meeting & Auction January 31 - February 1 at the President Abraham Lincoln on 701 E Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701.

**To find registration and more information, go to:
ilaged.org > Support > Alumni Annual Meeting**



PAS Conference

By: Gage Miller

The Professional Agricultural Students (PAS) Conference was November 21 and 22 at Lincoln Land Community College. The annual conference does an excellent job preparing university-level agricultural students with life skills through a variety of different contests. Contest areas include Agricultural Sales, Prepared and Impromptu Public Speaking and the Illinois Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet.

The new PAS State Officers were elected the second night of the annual conference. The candidates gave a speech to the delegates on why they wanted to be an officer and what positive changes they would bring to the upcoming year. Those elected from left to right were Gwen Heimerdinger (President), Rob Janssen (2nd Vice President), Ryan Reeverts (1st Vice President), and Mazi Walker (3rd Vice President). When asking Gwen what changes she would like to see and what she is looking forward to most, she stated: “The team and I are extremely excited for this year,” said Heimerdinger. “Personally, I hope to increase the interactions members will have with PAS in various ways. I also look forward to showing the value PAS offers to current and future members throughout the state for professional development in agriculture.”



The colleges that attended the conference were:

- Lincoln Land Community College
- Southern Illinois University
- Western Illinois University
- Heartland College
- Parkland College
- Illinois Central College
- University of Illinois
- Illinois State University
- John Wood Community College
- Highland Community College
- Lake Land College
- Joliet Junior College
- Illinois College
- Illinois Valley Community College
- Kaskaskia College
- Richland College



“Personally, I hope to increase the interactions members will have with PAS in various ways. I also look forward to showing the value PAS offers to current and future members throughout the state for professional development in agriculture.”
-Gwen Heimerdinger



AG. LEGISLATIVE DAY

By: Lane Harvey

Each year, hundreds of blue FFA jackets flood Springfield, Ill. to advocate for agriculture education. This event, a long-standing Illinois FFA tradition, known as “Ag. Legislative Day,” is the second biggest event hosted by Illinois Association FFA, second to State FFA Convention. The last two years of this event have boasted an attendance of over 1,000 FFA members!

The night before this event takes place, Illinois FFA hosts a seminar for those chapters in the state that are either National Chapter Award Finalists or chapters that participate in the Legislator Education in Agriculture Programs (LEAP). Chapters who participate in this program partner with a state legislator and work in close partnership with their legislator by inviting them to their chapter banquet or other significant events that the chapter will be hosting. Through the LEAP program, we have been able to successfully educate more legislators on the benefits of agriculture programs and the impact on FFA members across the state. The seminar that these chapters attend include an overview and training on how to successfully present messages to legislators on Ag. Legislative Day. Chapters attending the workshop also have the privilege of listening to a panel of lawmakers who will explain how they got where they are today and will also explain their knowledge of the FFA and agricultural education.

I took a moment to interview 2019-2020 Bill Johnson Agricultural Legislative Intern, Seth Mitchell, about Ag. Legislative Day.



Lane: “Seth, why is Ag. Legislative Day an important event?”

Seth: “Ag. Legislative Day is an important event because it enables legislators to connect with students. By allowing state legislators to hear firsthand stories about how FFA and agricultural education has impacted students, they better recognize the value in supporting our legislative agenda and providing continued funding for the Agricultural Education Line Item. It is a great way to make an effort and show that we care.”

Lane: “Seth, what makes it valuable for members to attend?”

Seth: “By attending Ag. Legislative Day, members are exposed to the real-world opportunities that exist in legislation and policy that may not be present in a classroom setting. Additionally, they learn the importance of advocacy and how to communicate their story to legislators.”

Ag. Legislative Day is an educational and fun-filled day, and all of us here at the Illinois FFA Center cannot wait to see many of you there. Our primary focus this year is to advocate for level funding for the Agricultural Education Line Item at \$5 million. The Agricultural Education Line Item goes to mini-grants, incentive funding and three-circle grants to agricultural teachers and agriculture programs across the state of Illinois.

We look forward to seeing you on March 3, 2020, at the State Capitol!



SUPER SATURDAY

By: Emma Freebairn

Super Saturday was on December 14, 2019, at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. Illinois Association FFA hosts the State Agricultural Sales, Agronomy, Dairy Foods and Meat Evaluation Career Development Events on one day, and because there are so many events taking place it has earned the name Super Saturday.

The Agricultural Sales CDE consists of activities related to the entire sales process. Each team consists of four members. The teams are given a product, product information, and customer profiles. They work together to develop a sales plan in front of the judges as a team, then individually work to close sales. The FFA members must demonstrate their knowledge of a product while also being evaluated on their verbal, written and interactive communication skills. Members must also identify prospective customers, introduce a product to the customer, conduct a sales call, close a sale and handle customer complaints. Fifteen teams and 60 individuals competed on Super Saturday. Those with the highest scores in their division were:

Agricultural Sales Room 1

- 1st - Kenna Skaggs, Prairie Central
- 2nd - Cameron Pace, Cambridge
- 3rd - Abbigail Kepp, Neoga

Agricultural Sales Room 2

- 1st - Patrick McGreal, Prairie Central
- 2nd - Lexi Mueller, Valmeyer
- 3rd - Jackson Craig, Mahomet Seymour

Agricultural Sales Room 3

- 1st - Ainsley Kratochvil, Prairie Central
- 2nd - Kaiden Vinavich, Cambridge
- 3rd - Colton Blunier, Midland

Agricultural Sales Room 4

- 1st - Evan Slagel, Prairie Central
- 2nd - Olivia Shike, Unity-Tolono
- 3rd - Kobe Lavender, Waterloo

Top Teams - Agricultural Sales

- 1st - Prairie Central
- 2nd - Cambridge
- 3rd - Unity-Tolono

While competing in the Agronomy CDE, students identify crops and weeds; complete a written agronomy test; evaluate grain, silage, and/or hay classes; and complete practicums in insects and/or soils. Forty-six teams and 167 individuals competed. Those with the highest scores in their division were:

Top Individuals - Agronomy

- 1st - Lance Mitchell, Olney
- 2nd - Levi Steffen, Eureka
- 3rd - Travis Wilke, Olney
- 4th - Jenna Goslin, Seneca
- 5th - Burke Wettstein, Eureka
- 6th - Jasmine Miles, Paxton-Buckley-Loda
- 7th - Levi Maierhofer, Seneca
- 8th - Nick Baker, Olney
- 9th - Hannah Meffert, Midland
- 10th - Coy Crull, Mt. Carmel

Top Teams - Agronomy

- 1st - Olney
- 2nd - Eureka
- 3rd - Seneca
- 4th - United
- 5th - Mt. Pulaski
- 6th - Paxton-Buckley-Loda
- 7th - Iroquois West
- 8th - Prairie Central

The Dairy Foods Career Development Event focuses on areas of milk quality and consumer demand. Participants must identify conditions that affect fluid milk off-flavors and determine the cause of the problem; identify and score milk samples using the California Mastitis Test; identify dairy and non-dairy products; complete a written examination; score and criticize the appearance and use of milker unit heads; and identify one ring of sample cheeses. The students also participate in a team problem that will solve a selected situation relating to sanitation, marketing and distribution or other issues in the dairy health area. In the high school division, 32 schools, 31 teams, and 142 individuals participated. In the middle school division, six teams and 24 individuals competed. Those with the highest scores in their division were:

Top High School Individuals - Dairy Foods

- 1st - Laura Schaffer, Prairie Central
- 2nd - Morgan Lanz, Prairie Central
- 3rd - Ashlyn Kratochvil, Prairie
- 4th - Leah Pyles, Midland
- 5th - Brandon Collins, Midland
- 6th - Ashley Young, Prairie Central
- 7th - Alexis Kelley, Mulberry Grove
- 8th - Katie Huff, Mt. Vernon
- 9th - Derek Dotterer, Prairie Central
- 10th - Helena Ogle, Streator

"Competing in the State Ag Sales CDE has helped prepare me for my future career in agriculture and has taught me more about the industry as a whole as I have developed a better understanding of how to effectively communicate to ensure success for both myself and others. I plan to use the communication and problem solving skills that I have expanded upon in the Ag Sales CDE to pursue a career in agriculture in the future."

- Ainsley Kratochvil, Prairie Central

Top High School Teams - Dairy Foods

- 1st - Prairie Central
- 2nd - Midland
- 3rd - Unity-Tolono
- 4th - Mt. Vernon
- 5th - Milford
- 6th - Streator

Top Middle School Individuals - Dairy Foods

- 1st - Ellie Drach, Prairie Central Middle School
- 2nd - Madison Price, Prairie Central Middle School
- 3rd - Davis Howell, Clinton
- 4th - Connor Blunier, Midland

Top Middle School Teams - Dairy Foods

- 1st - Prairie Central Middle School



In the Meat Evaluation CDE, participants demonstrate knowledge and ability to evaluate meat animal products. This event requires students to grade a ring of beef carcasses for quality and yield. They must place rings of beef, pork and lamb carcasses or wholesale/sub-primal cuts. In the team competition, participants are responsible for solving a ground meat formulation problem. Thirty-three schools, 30 teams and 130 individuals competed in the 2019 State Meats CDE. Those with the highest scores in their division were:

Top Individuals - Meat Evaluation

- 1st - Cyrus Cook, Iroquois West
- 2nd - Olivia Ebens, Byron
- 3rd - Haven Slagel, Prairie Central
- 4th - Haley Brudi, Stockton
- 5th - Garret Platz, Prairie Central
- 6th - Ivan Miller, Prairie Central
- 7th - Rachel Ash, Iroquois West
- 8th - Nathan Pienert, Prairie Central
- 9th - Riley Zumbahlen, Newton
- 10th - Tyler Sulzberger, Seneca

Top Teams - Meat Evaluation

- 1st - Iroquois West
- 2nd - Prairie Central
- 3rd - Newton
- 4th - Seneca
- 5th - Midland