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|  | **NEWS RELEASE****South Dakota FFA Association**Website: [www.sdaged.org](http://www.sdaged.org) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/south.dakota.ffa](http://www.facebook.com/south.dakota.ffa) Instagram: [@sdffaassocation](https://www.instagram.com/sdffaassociation/)**For more information, contact:** Wyatt DeJong; SD FFA Executive SecretaryWyatt.DeJong@sdaged.orgCaroline Hansen, SD FFA Leadership & Program Manager caroline.hansen@sdaged.org  |
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| **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**January 19th, 2024 |  |

**South Dakota FFA Hosts Legislative Breakfast**

PIERRE, South Dakota. — South Dakota FFA state officers in conjunction with 56 district FFA officers hosted over 40 legislatures and special guests for a legislative breakfast to connect about current trends in agriculture, education, FFA, and also the political process on Thursday, January 18th at the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center facility in Fort Pierre, South Dakota.

State officers led a breakfast program that allowed state and district FFA officers to meet with their district legislators to share the importance of Agricultural Education and FFA programming within our state. Through these conversations, FFA members learned about the legislative process and how their district legislatures came to their position and made their career choices. The opportunity for members and legislators to meet allowed FFA members to share their personal experiences within agricultural education and FFA. Laney Andrews, Vice President from District 3 said “Meeting with our legislators was an experience that I will never forget. They were open, honest, and willing to listen to our concerns about the future of South Dakota and the importance of agriculture.” The FFA members also visited the capitol and attended committee meetings. Andrews added: “We learned about new bills being proposed and how they would be important and necessary in our lives. I made personal connections with each of the representatives and they gave me insight on opportunities I can take to voice my opinion on the importance of agricultural education in our Capitol. The experience left me with a smile on my face and I have so much gratitude for the support our legislators give to FFA.”

The Legislative breakfast was one component of the two-day district officer training. During the training, state FFA officers facilitated workshops for the 56 district FFA officers that covered topics of being a host, leading for others, practicing authentic growth, communicating effectively, and building for the future. District officers worked as a team to develop plans for the upcoming year and crafting their message to share with others during their year of service. Brooklyn Rische, Vice President from District 6, noted “District officer training is really the first time we get to meet and send time together with our whole team. Getting to learn about things like leadership and communication skills are things we can take beyond our team and FFA. It was a great time and kickoff experience that will help me and my fellow team members throughout the entire year as district officers.”

District Officer Training and Legislative Breakfast are made possible by our sponsors, as a special project of the South Dakota FFA Foundation: Citi, South Dakota Association of Cooperatives, South Dakota Bankers Association, South Dakota Farmers Union, South Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators, South Dakota Crop Improvement Association, and South Dakota Wheat Commission, and our SD FFA Star Partners: Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers, Farm Credit Services of America, Bayer, CHS Foundation, South Dakota Corn Utilization Council, Agtegra Cooperative, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, Macksteel, BankWest, Butler Machinery Company, Corteva Agriscience/Pioneer, The First National Bank of Sioux Falls, Dacotah Bank, First Dakota Bank, RDO Equipment, C&B Equipment, Prairie Grain Partners LLC, Army ROTC, East River Electric, Hanson & Associates, LLC, Midwest Veterinary Service, BASF, Croplan by Winfield United, Riverview, LLP, Titan Machinery, Dakota Grain Connection, Christensen Farms, LG Seeds, Olsen Custom Farms, Leisinger Farms, and Wilbur-Ellis.

*The South Dakota FFA Association is a statewide organization of 6,142 agricultural education students in 110 chapters in every corner of South Dakota. It is part of the National FFA Organization, a national youth organization of 945,988 student members preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture with 9,163 chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Our mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Visit* [*www.sdaged.org*](http://www.sdaged.org) *for more information.*

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