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**For Immediate Release –**

**SD Ag Educator Serves National FFA Committee Four Decades**

October 9, 2023 (Bath, SD) - After 42 years of service, Dr. Lon Moeller, Professor Emeritus, South Dakota State University (SDSU), Brookings, will end his commitment to the National FFA Farm and Agribusiness Management Career Development Event (CDE) Committee with the 2023 National FFA Convention in November. Each year approximately 180 FFA members, representing the first-place teams from 40-45 states compete in the event that consists of a three-hour exam.

For Moeller, the opportunity to work with other professionals dedicated to Agricultural Education has greatly enriched his life. “Comradery and working with other professionals dedicated to excellence” are two benefits that he identifies as most significant for him personally. Moeller believes that for FFA members, “being able to manage one’s financial situation is a vital lifetime skill in any profession. This CDE allows students to be able to evaluate the multiple economic aspects that contribute to success.”

**Leadership Positions:** Moeller began assuming multiple long-term roles at the national convention in 1981, as an SDSU Agricultural Education professor, regularly bringing agricultural education majors to the convention as volunteers. Moeller recognized that “almost none of my students were aware of all that goes on behind the scenes to make the convention successful.” He believes this experience gives future teachers a big-picture view of their chosen career and the opportunities they will have to enrich their students’ lives. These future teachers took photos of teams participating in all the national level CDEs. When the photos were completed, Moeller and the SDSU students assisted with the Farm and Agribusiness CDE, serving as test monitors and scorers.

Moeller’s ex-officio status changed in 2008 when he became a committee member, accepting multiple leadership roles, including serving six years as the National CDE Superintendent. As the Scoring Lead for the written exam, Moeller developed a scoring regimen that included a two-step process to review question scoring and limit errors. Current CDE Superintendent Del Lecy noted, “When the CDE moved into the electronic scorecard era, Moeller met the challenge head-on, and developed a process and a modified scorecard to ensure a smooth conversion that would work best for the FFA members participating in the event.”

Lecy added, “As the Exam Development Lead, Moeller used his knowledge of the CDE and organizational skills to develop a consistent look to the exam. He led discussions where each individual question was evaluated by the committee to ensure clarity and concision.” Moeller also included his wife Mary in the process to edit for correct grammar and sentence structure.

**Impact:** Former Jackrabbit and Agricultural Education alumni Brett Monson, has recently stepped up and joined the National FFA Farm and Agribusiness Management CDE Committee. He says, “Having been fortunate enough to be one of Moeller’s students at SDSU, I can attest to the profound impact he has had on countless lives including my own. His unwavering commitment to Ag Education and expertise in ag-business management have not only shaped former students like myself, but been instrumental in the success of the committee. His deep understanding of the agricultural industry, coupled with his strategic problem-solving abilities, attention to detail, and commitment of countless hours every year made him an invaluable asset. His mentorship, guidance, and ability to nurture passion have set a shining example for agricultural teachers, highlighting their invaluable contributions as FFA committee members. Moeller's commitment to fostering the next generation of leaders has had a lasting impact on the lives of many FFA members nationally. Through his leadership, he instilled the values of hard work, collaboration, and problem solving, preparing them to become agents of positive change in the agricultural industry and local communities.”

**Ag Teachers serving on FFA CDE committees:**

Monson adds, “Ag teachers bring a unique skill set to the role of committee members for planning a national test. Their experience in teaching agricultural subjects allows them to effectively distill complex concepts into digestible information that high school students can understand. Their expertise in breaking down intricate topics and presenting them in a relatable manner ensures that the test content remains accessible and aligned with the knowledge and abilities of FFA members.”