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for immediate release

**Members Prepare to Shine at the National FFA Convention**

**FFA Members Prepare for National Convention**

The 2024 National FFA Convention and Expo is just around the corner, October 22-26, 2024, in Indianapolis, IN. Champion South Dakota FFA members and teams from this past year’s State Convention and State Leadership Event are preparing to represent their chapters and our state. Many have already begun their competitive events with online elements that happened throughout September. The hands - on components will take place in person at convention. Tune in to RFD-TV or FFA.org live stream to watch convention in real time and celebrate our members.

Four South Dakota FFA members were selected to perform in the National FFA Band & Chorus. They will practice and perform with about 80 other FFA members from across the nation during convention:

**National Band –** Emersen Lee, Lennox-Sundstrom FFA; Cody Wiik, Milbank FFA; and Alexis Meyer, Milbank FFA

**National Chorus -** Gabriel Mattson, Deuel FFA

**National Proficiency Awards** honor FFA members who, through supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs), have developed specialized skills that they can apply to future careers. Four finalists are selected in each proficiency area to interview at nationals. South Dakotas National Proficiency Finalists are:

**Poultry Production -** Elden Blume, Redfield

**Service Learning -** Abbie Chase, McCook Central

**Wildlife Production and Management -** Hailey Kizer, Howard

**The National FFA Agriscience Fair** is for FFA members interested in the science and technology of agriculture. Students compete in one of six categories with junior high, 9-10th grade, and 11-12th grade divisions. Ten projects in each division are selected to advance and present their project for competition at the national level. South Dakota has twelve projects competing at the national level:

**Animal Systems Category –**

* Steele Anglin & William Winter, Tri-Valley, Division 2
* Colton Stiefvater & Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central Division 6

**Environmental Services/Natural Resource Systems Category –**

* Harlee Nielson & Mikael Nielson, Hitchcock-Tulare, Division 6

**Food Products and Processing Systems** –

* Zoe Dissing & McKenzie Mack, Tri-Valley, Division 6

**Plant Systems** **Category** –

* Isaac Chase & Caleb Hoffman, McCook Central, Division 2
* Tanner Eide, Gettysburg, Division 5

**Power, Structural and Technical Systems Category** –

* Joseph Vanemmerik, McCook Central, Division 1
* Beau Hieronimus & Bentley McMillen, Tri-Valley, Division 2
* Gage Egger & Ty Oyen, Tri-Valley, Division 4
* Lexi Nichols & Sydney Neel, West Central, Division 6

**Social Systems Category –**

* Bobbi Eide, Gettysburg, Division 3
* Lauren Roling & Alyssa Roling, McCook Central, Division 6

**State Champion Leadership and Career Development** members and teams are polishing their skills to shine at nationals. Many began with online elements throughout September and will have hands-on components in-person at convention:

**Agriculture Communications:** Gregory County FFA; Ava Kerner, Aubree Miller, Ella Sperl, Avery Zeisler

**Agricultural Issues Forum:** Beresford FFA; Kayla Jensen, Ethan Hauck, Carley Crist, Lucas Anderson, Emma Andrews, Grace Norling, Kylie Mockler

**Agricultural Sales:** Tri-Valley FFA; Tyler Groenewold, Espn Althoff, Ryken Hieronimus, Brea Janes

**Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems:** Howard FFA; Zachary Connor, Thomas Connor, Mason Jacobson, Gabe Miller

**Agronomy:** Harrisburg FFA; Owen Murphy, Kendrick Droppers, Christopher Moore, Isabella Smithback

**Conduct of Chapter Meetings:** McCook Central FFA; Brooke Heumiller, Tucker Peterson, Gavin Kipp, Parker Randall, Luke Horstman, Julianne Grady, Ella DeKnikker

**Creed Speaking:** Freeman FFA; Noah McGee

**Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Management:** Bridgewater-Emery FFA; Quinton Berg, Landon Berg, Cash Martinez, Alaina Golder

**Dairy Cattle Handler**: Sutton Plucker, Lennox Sundstrom

**Employment Skills:** Parkston FFA; Grace Lindeman

**Environmental and Natural Resources:** Brookings FFA; Joseph Fitzpatrick, Andrew Dammen, Blake Herrig, Shane Harming

**Extemporaneous Public Speaking:** Mitchell FFA; Lainee Frost

**Farm and Agribusiness Management:** Brookings FFA; Gabriel Stern, Clayton Nelson, Levi Murray, Kennedy Nemitz

**Floriculture:** Wessington Springs FFA; Carissa Scheel, Mercedes Jones, Anna Arhart, Alyssa Grohs

**Food Science and Technology:** Milbank FFA; Raul Berrones Pedraza, Sunne DeBoer, Samuel Shelstad, Grace Weston

**Horse Evaluation:** Rapid City Stevens FFA; Elliot Hendrix, Kaiva Coleman, Ethan Hendrix, Patty Trask

**Livestock Evaluation:** Highmore FFA; Peyton Beare, Kenidey Effling, Jady LeDoux, April Fallis

**Marketing Plan:** McCook Central FFA; Joseph Grady, Addison Ecklein, Lauren Roling

**Meats Evaluation and Technology:** Elkton FFA; Brooklyn Boersma, Brienna Boersma, Maddisyn Thompson, Dailynn Schomp

**Milk Quality and Products:** Milbank FFA; Joseph French, Morgean French, Veronica Fonder, Jacob Erickson

**Nursery Landscape:** Gettysburg FFA; Tanner Eide, Bobbi Eide, Jerand Chase, Trace Genzler

**Parliamentary Procedure:** Willow Lake FFA; Ginny Warkenthien, Emma Peterson, Shay Michalski, Nora Terhark, Andrew Peterson, Sami Brenden

**Poultry Evaluation**: Redfield FFA; Elden Blume, Evan Jaton, Benson Beckler, Kevin Weller

**Prepared Public Speaking:** Beresford FFA; Elena Andrews

**Veterinary Science:** Brookings FFA; Josie Nold, Jordyn Tibbs, Cassie Fenske, Desirae Johnson