**For Immediate Release**

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**Photos of STAR finalists available to download at:** [**https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/174509S-3c4g2iEpybV5R7C4JcHrVrrTz?usp=sharing**](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/174509S-3c4g2iEpybV5R7C4JcHrVrrTz?usp=sharing)

**SD FFA Stars Named**

(BROOKINGS, S.D.) – The State FFA Degree, the highest degree conferred by the South Dakota FFA, was presented to 321 agricultural education students at the 2024 South Dakota FFA Convention. Certain students rise to the top as stars. These individuals spend countless hours working on their projects and enhancing their potential for future jobs by gaining hands-on experience and developing technical skills. Star finalists were selected based on their supervised agricultural experience program records. As the best of the best, finalists were interviewed by industry experts. The State Star Farmer, Star in Agribusiness, Star in Agricultural Placement and Star in Agriscience were announced at convention and received cash awards. Congratulations to the SD FFA Stars!

**State Star Farmer – Ryan Blagg, McCook Central;** sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America. His advisors are Mr. Terry Rieckman and Mrs. Tracy Chase

**State Star in Agribusiness –Elden Blume, Redfield;** sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America. His advisor is Mr. Bradley Cihak.

**State Star in Agricultural Placement Natalie Haase, Parker;** sponsored by the Dan Streff Family. Her advisor is Mrs. Kelly Dunkelberger.

**State Star in Agriscience –Kelsey Vockrodt, West Central;** sponsored by Glacial Lakes Energy, LLC. Kelsey’s advisor is Mrs. Linda Petersen.

Finalists and winners in all 4 areas are as follows (photos):

**Star Farmer finalists** – Sponsor Farm Credit Services of America; Ryan Blagg, McCook Central; Faith Genzlinger, Howard; Colden Kramer, Philip; Shelby Pankratz, Parker.

**Star in Agribusiness finalists** – sponsor, Farm Credit Services of America; Elden Blume, Redfield; Ryan Blagg, McCook Central; Abigail Kolousek, Wessington Springs; Cash Lehrman, Bridgewater Emery.

**Star in Agricultural Placement finalists** – sponsored by The Dan and Karen Streff family: Natalie Haase, Parker; Ryan Blagg, McCook Central; Elliot Hendrix, Rapid City Stevens; Hailey Kizer, Howard.

**Star in Agriscience finalists** – sponsor Glacial Lakes Energy, LLC; Kelsey Vockrodt, West Central; Abby Wagner, McCook Central; Paul Kaffar, McCook Central; Tyler Groenewold, Tri-Valley.

District Star Greenhands are sophomores, recognized as top in their FFA districts for an outstanding start to their Supervised Agriculture Experience Project. These awards were sponsored by Central Farmers Cooperative.

**District Star Greenhands are:** Noah Felderman, Doland - District 1; Lacie Weber, ORR - District 2; Riley Pankratz, Parker- District 3; Cash Martinez, Bridgewater Emery - District 4; Atlee Olson, Belle Fourche - District 5; Max Klein, Wessington Springs - District 6; Dawson Dorr, Montrose - District 7 and Katelyn Gebhart, Lemmon – District 8.

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