



What It Takes

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Premier FFA Chapter in Minnesota Announced

New state officer installation concludes the 95th Minnesota FFA Convention

MINNEAPOLIS – (April 23, 2024) The last session of the 95th Minnesota FFA Convention included the announcement of the state’s top chapter. Premier FFA Chapter, a prestigious award given annually to an outstanding chapter within Minnesota, was presented at the final session today.

The new slate of state officers to lead the organization in the coming year was also introduced, beginning a year of leading the organization’s activities surrounding agriculture, food and natural resource education.

Premier Chapters announced

The top three Premier FFA Chapters in Minnesota were recognized. Over the past year, these chapters have been dedicated to furthering their education, working on various projects and carrying out community service initiatives. The top three chapters were:

- First place: Sleepy Eye
- Second place: Rockford Middle.
- Third place: Rockford High.

The winning chapter, Sleepy Eye, has programs reaching out to both seniors and elementary students.

New state officer team selected

The Minnesota FFA State Officer Team is selected from a dynamic pool of candidates who go through a rigorous interview process with the nominating committee. The committee includes one student representative from each region balancing the different perspectives and experiences of Minnesota FFA members. Adult representatives of Team AgEd, which supervises the state’s agriculture, food and natural resource efforts and the FFA, are also included. The committee has two past FFA state officers as co-chairs.

The committee selected the following 2024-2025 Minnesota state officer team:

- Emma Braford, vice-president.
- Natalie Clemenson, reporter.
- Kaiya Grossman, secretary.
- Victoria Gunderson, sentinel.
- Lauren Stoel, president.
- Cole Sundeen, treasurer.

Among the team's responsibilities in the upcoming year are the planning and implementation of FFA events across the state and the 2025 Minnesota FFA Convention.

New regional presidents announced

The eight regions within Minnesota are locally led by an esteemed group of regional FFA members. The regional officer team is responsible for hosting leadership conferences, Career and Leadership Development Events, and other FFA events within their region. The presidents of these regions were recognized this afternoon.

The new regional presidents include:

- Region I: Alexis Bailie, Fosston.
- Region II: Kelcie Kuschel, Sebeka.
- Region III: Alana Bromenschenkel, ROCORI.
- Region IV: Briana Thoeny, Ogilvie.
- Region V: Dessa Terning, Dassel-Cokato.
- Region VI: Keely Runge, St. James.
- Region VII: Hailey Chambers, Medford.
- Region VIII: Cameron Addington, Cannon Falls.

Proficiency winners awarded

Supervised Agricultural Experience state winners in the Agribusiness category were recognized during this session. Projects range from research, to education, to sales. The winners were:

- Ag Communications, sponsored by The Farmer - Aubree Paplow, Springfield.
- Ag Education, sponsored by the Jim Ertl Endowment Fund - Elaine Sauder, Pine Island.
- Ag Processing, sponsored by the CHS Foundation - Katelyn Ruppert, Tracy Area.
- Ag Sales Entrepreneurship, sponsored by Bremer Bank - Allison Van Nurden, New London-Spicer.
- Ag Sales Placement, sponsored by Peterson Farms Seed - Grace Bayerl, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted.
- Ag Services, sponsored by Rosen's Diversified - Owen Schauer, Glencoe-Silver Lake.

- Food Service, sponsored by McDonald's of Minnesota and western Wisconsin - Lauren Elstad, Rockford High.

Students awarded for CDEs/LDEs

Several thousand FFA members students who competed and placed in 25 Career and Leadership Development Events during the convention were recognized. The winners were announced for each event, with many moving on to compete at national convention. They are:

- Agricultural Mechanics, sponsored by Midwest Machinery Co., John Deere dealers and Kibble Equipment, and St. Paul Pipefitters Union Local 455: Team - Alexandria; Individual - Benjamin Capistran, Crookston.
- Dairy Evaluation, sponsored by AMPI: Team - Lake City; Individual - Emily Mellgren, Lake City.
- Dairy Handlers, sponsored by Midwest Dairy Association: Individual - Kami Hoemberg, Parkers Prairie.
- Floriculture, sponsored by Bachman's: Team - Willmar; Individual - Wyatt Glessing, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted.
- Forestry, sponsored by the University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources: Team - Park Rapids; Individual - Harmony Trygstad, Park Rapids.
- Horse Evaluation, sponsored by Nutrena-Roy Johnson: Team - Martin County West; Individual - Kaia Seevers, Rockford.
- Livestock Evaluation, sponsored by Central Livestock Association: Team - Pipestone Area; Individual - Will DeBates, Pipestone Area.
- Milk Quality and Products, sponsored by the South Dakota State University Department of Dairy and Food Science: Team - Maple River; Savannah Graza, Maple River.
- Nursery Landscape, sponsored by Bailey Nurseries: Team - Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted; Individual - Brielle Brown, Maple River.
- Poultry, sponsored by the Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council: Team - Sleepy Eye; Individual - Olivia Brunell, Sebeka.
- Soils, sponsored by CF Industries: Team - Maple River; Individual - Wyatt Feucht, Sleepy Eye.
- Employment Skills, sponsored by National Grid Renewables: Individual - Ava Schoenfeld, Russell Tyler Ruthton.
- Extemporaneous Speaking, sponsored by Minnesota Farm Bureau: Individual - Dmitriy Mangal, Highland Park.
- Talent, sponsored by Ruth Meirick: Individual - Cyan Ruen, Lanesboro.
- Conduct of Chapter Meetings, sponsored by Dr. Curtis Youngs: Team - Litchfield.
- Parliamentary Procedure, sponsored by Kevin and Nancy Dahlman: Team - Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted.
- Spanish Creed Speaking, sponsored by the Minnesota Foundation for Student Organizations: Individual - Nayra M Zamudio Bravo, Humboldt.
- Creed Speaking, sponsored by the Paul Hansen family: Individual - Grady Taylor, Randolph.
- Prepared Public Speaking, sponsored by Robin E. and Lori Ann Kinney: Individual - Cameron Addington, Cannon Falls.

Final retiring address given

Retiring 2023-2024 Minnesota FFA Sentinel Mackenzie Kuschel, from the Sebeka chapter, gave the last of six retiring addresses. She spoke on impact and legacy in her address titled “A Legacy Worth Branding.”

Kuschel said, “A strong legacy isn't something that happens overnight. It takes time and hard work, and I know that each of us have what it takes to achieve a brand of our own.”

The Minnesota FFA Convention is offered in partnership by the Minnesota FFA Association, the Minnesota FFA Foundation and the Minnesota FFA Alumni and Supporters. Throughout the convention, content is available on the Minnesota FFA website, the Minnesota FFA YouTube Channel, and on the organization’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. Find the link on the Minnesota FFA website.

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Editor’s Note: CDE and LDE results are not final.

Convention photos can be found at mnffa.org under convection resources.

About Minnesota FFA

FFA is a national organization developing students’ potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through AFNR education with more than 800,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Minnesota FFA Association represents nearly 15,000 members and over 210 high school chapters across the state. AFNR education engages students through hands-on learning in the classroom, work-based learning opportunities known as Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects and FFA activities.

About Minnesota FFA Foundation

The Minnesota FFA Foundation will be hosting additional events to support the nearly 15,000 FFA members across Minnesota. The Minnesota FFA Foundation is incredibly honored to support the Minnesota FFA and thanks its donors and sponsors who make this possible. It is the mission of the Minnesota FFA Foundation to secure strategic partnerships and financial resources that promote and enhance premier leadership, personal growth and career success for Minnesota youth in AFNR education. To learn more about supporting Minnesota FFA through the Minnesota FFA Foundation at mnffaoundation.org.

About Minnesota FFA Alumni and Supporters

The Minnesota FFA Alumni and Supporters works to support the nearly 15,000 FFA members, through 73 Alumni and Supporters Chapters across the state. Adult membership is open to anyone interested in supporting and promoting agriculture, agricultural education and FFA at the local, state and national level. One need not have worn the blue jacket to be a member of the FFA Alumni and Supporters, whose mission

is to work to secure the promise of Agriculture Education and FFA by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success. Learn more about the Minnesota FFA Alumni and Supporters at MNFFAAlumni.org.

Learn more about the experiences of FFA members and supporters by visiting MnFFA.org and FFA.org.