



What It Takes

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**Minnesota Students Win FFA Career and Leadership Development Events**

*Winners qualify for national competition, Agriscience and Proficiency awards announced*

MINNEAPOLIS – (April 23, 2024) The final day of the Minnesota State FFA Convention began by recognizing the winning participants of Career Development Events, Leadership Development Events and Supervised Agricultural Experiences, and the work students have put in over the past school year.

**Students recognized for CDE/LDE achievements**

Students from across the state competed this week in various Career and Leadership Development Events, capitalizing on many hours of practice and qualifying at the regional contests. The winners recognized for each event and in many cases moving on to compete at national convention are as follows:

- Ag Communications, sponsored by Steve and Carolyn Koziolk, Mary Buschette and Mike Balak: Team - Highland Park; Individual - Grant Slininger, Rockford High School.
- Ag Sales, sponsored by Crystal Farms: Team - Glencoe-Silver Lake; Individual - Anna Sievert, Glencoe-Silver Lake.
- Companion Animal Science, sponsored by the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Foundation: Team - Park Rapids; Individual - Grace Kingsley, Fillmore Central.
- Crops, sponsored by the Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council: Team - Maple River; Individual - Natalie Wenner, Maple River.
- Farm Business Management, sponsored by the John Deere Company: Team - Russell Tyler Ruthton; Individual - Kody Wassman, Mountain Lake.
- Fish and Wildlife, sponsored by the Minnesota FFA Foundation: Team - Eden Valley-Watkins; Individual - Nick Griffith, Worthington.
- Food Science and Technology, sponsored by Minnesota Farmers Union and Midwest Dairy Association: Team - Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted; Individual - Morgan Marketon, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted.
- Meat Evaluation and Technology, sponsored by Blondies Butcher Shop: Team - Russell Tyler Ruthton; Individual - Sara Dwire, Russel Tyler Ruthton.
- Ag Issues, sponsored by Syngenta: Team - Glencoe-Silver Lake.

- Best Informed Greenhand, sponsored by Dr. Curt Youngs: Team - Ulen-Hitterdal; Individual - Greta Alajoki, Menahga.
- Discussion Meet, sponsored by Minnesota Farm Bureau: Individual - Henry Lemke, Eden Valley-Watkins.
- Marketing Plan, sponsored by Red River Farm Network: Team - Buffalo.

### **Tyler Ratka gives retiring address**

Tyler Ratka, 2023-2024 Minnesota FFA Vice-President from the ROCORI chapter, gave his retiring address titled "Find Your People."

"Find the comfort in your community and the strength in your differences," said Ratka.

### **Agriscience Fair awards presented**

The top three projects from the Agriscience Fair in the area of Power, Structural and Technical Systems, and Environmental Service and Natural Resource Systems were recognized. These projects may examine energy outputs from alternative fuel sources or might study the effects of various cropping practices on wildlife.

Power, Structural and Technical Division One, which recognizes individual researchers in grades seven and eight, included:

- First place, Devin Rudningen, Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg.
- Second place, Gabriel Camara, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.

Division Three winners, recognizing individual researchers in grades nine or 10, were:

- First place, Zane Putzler, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Second place, Ramla Mohamed, Humboldt.

Division Five winners, recognizing individual researchers in grades 11 or 12, were:

- First place, Tristan Kabanuk, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Second place, Svea Modrow, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Third place, Abraham Lund, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.

Division Six winners, recognizing pairs of researchers in grades 11 or 12, were:

- First place, Maung Thoo and Eh Ger Dah, Humboldt.

Environmental Service and Natural Resource Systems winners in Division One, recognizing individual researchers in grade seven and eight, included:

- First place, Kinsley Keeling, Winona.
- Second place, Isaiah Hatfield, Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg.
- Third place, Angela Collins, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.

Division Three winners, recognizing individual researchers in grades nine or 10, were:

- First place, Clover Deese, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Second place, Olivia Lange, Russell Tyler Ruthton.
- Third place, Josiah Scholens, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.

Division Five winners, recognizing individual researchers in grades 11 or 12, were:

- First place, Tobias Twist, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Second place, Kyliana Bergerson, Academy of Sciences and Agriculture.
- Third place, Ashley Tapia, Humboldt.

Division Six winners, recognizing pairs of researchers in grades 11 or 12, were:

- First place, Ella Anderson and Dairamary Schultz, Academy for Sciences and Agriculture.
- Second place, Tin Than Dar Oo and Neenah Mork, Humboldt.

### **Proficiency awards given**

Supervised Agricultural Experience state winners in the categories of Power, Structural and Technical Systems and Environmental Natural Resources Systems were recognized. Projects range from research, to forest management, to mechanical entrepreneurship.

Power, Structural and Technical System Proficiency winners:

- Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication, sponsored by the John Deere Company - Andy Wandersee, Rockford High.
- Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Entrepreneurship, sponsored by NAPA - Tiffany Siltala, Sebeka.
- Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Placement, sponsored by Lynnes Welding Training - Ben Lewandowski, Foley.

Environmental Natural Resources System Proficiency winners:

- Environmental Natural Resources, sponsored by Johnson Outdoors - JJ Hoppe, Maple River.
- Forest Management and Products, sponsored by Vermeer Sales and Service - Samuel Connelly, Grand Rapids.
- Outdoor Recreation, sponsored by Northland Ford Dealers - Owen Beardsley, Faribault.
- Wildlife Management, sponsored by George and Mary Peichel - Noah Ziegler, Maple River.

### **Chapter awards earned**

Chapters were recognized in two areas. The winners were:

- Land of Service: Glencoe-Silver Lake
- Ag Literacy Challenge: Forest Lake.

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, on the organization's Facebook, Twitter

and Instagram pages and on the convention app. Find the link on the Minnesota FFA website.

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**Editor's Note:** CDE and LDE results are not final until one week after the conclusion of convention.

### **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](http://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](http://MNFFAAlumni.org).

Learn more about the experiences of FFA members and supporters by visiting [MnFFA.org](http://MnFFA.org) and [FFA.org](http://FFA.org).