



FFA's New Era

May 2025

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Meet the STARS

The State FFA Degree, the highest conferred by the South Dakota FFA, was presented to 324 members, with four STARS rising to the top. Finalists spend countless hours working on their outstanding projects and enhancing their potential for future careers by gaining hands-on experience and developing technical skills. Star finalists are chosen through an application and essay process, and the winners are selected following an interview.



State STAR Farmer - Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America. His advisor is Mr. Terry Rieckman



State STAR in Agriscience - Lauren Roling, McCook Central sponsored by Glacial Lakes Energy. Her advisor is Mr. Terry Rieckman



State STAR in Ag Placements - Dylan McGregor, McCook Central sponsored by The Dan and Karen Streff family. His advisor is Mr. Terry Rieckman



State STAR in Agribusiness - Skyler Plucker, Lennox-Sundstrom sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America. His advisor is Mrs. Kasey Trocke

Farmer finalists – Ireland McAreavey, Tri-Valley; Josie Nold, Brookings; Jason Zeeb, Bridgewater-Emery

Ag Placement finalists –Mason Jacobson, Howard; Ridge Roduner, Wessington Springs; Brody Stenger, Sioux Falls CTE

Agriscience finalists – Joseph Grady, Colten Stiefvater, Karlie Stiefvater, all of McCook Central

Agribusiness finalists – Isaac Boden, Beresford; Abbie Chase, McCook Central; Talen Hazel, Beresford

Scan with your phone camera to learn about their projects:



District STAR Greenhands are sophomores recognized for an outstanding start to their Supervised Agriculture Experience Project. These awards were sponsored by Central Farmers Cooperative.



- District 1: **Keaton Zubke, Florence**
- District 2: **Korbin Shumaker, Howard**
- District 3: **Clayton Pankratz, Parker**
- District 4: **Tucker Peterson, McCook Central**
- District 5: **Ray Sanders, Hot Springs**
- District 6: **Rylee Knock, Hitchcock-Tulare**
- District 7: **Kendall McAreavey-Tri Valley**
- District 8: **Ayla Bauer, Lemmon**



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Williams Family Receives "FFA Family of the Year" Award

The Mary and late Myron Williams family, of Wall, received the South Dakota FFA Foundation's 2025 "Family of the Year" award. The award honoring the family's active involvement in the South Dakota FFA/Agriculture Education program was presented April 4th at the State FFA Convention in Brookings. The Williams family includes Mary

and the late Myron Williams, their children and spouses, and grandchildren: Marty and Rhonda (Jaicee, Stran, Cooper Jo, Laketon and Madison), Monty and Bobbie (Pacey, Lincoln, Pine and Ridlee), and Misty (Williams) and Jeff Mattox (Haydon and Brynley).

Mary and the late Myron Williams were actively involved with the FFA for over fifty years and all three of their children, Marty, Monty and Misty, were officers at the local and district level. Their daughter Misty also served as the 1994-95 South Dakota State FFA Secretary. The family is now three generations strong in the FFA organization.

Myron attended Wall High School but since an FFA program had yet to be established he was unable to be a member. He later attended South Dakota State University and graduated with a degree in animal science business.

During the time Mary grew up, women had not yet actively been participating in FFA, but her brother served as a state officer from 1968-69 and her father was awarded an honorary state degree. "I recognized what an important program FFA was and is and when my children went to school in Wall...they fortunately had an ag program in place," Mary said. "[We were] supportive of every activity and helped get kids to different contests."

Mary has served as a judge at the local, regional, and state level for CDE contests whenever needed and serves as a member of the Elevate Rapid City Ag Committee. Her husband Myron was also a strong leader in multiple organizations including his work as Pennington Farm Bureau director and agriculture advocate with travels taking him as far as Washington, D.C. to spread the message. Together the couple was actively involved in South Dakota Farm Bureau (SDFB)



and the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association (SDCA). "He walked the talk," Mary said.

In 1992 and 1994 Myron and Mary respectively were awarded the honorary chapter FFA degree in Wall. Three years later they were given the honorary state FFA degree together in recognition for their continued support of statewide FFA while their daughter was a state FFA officer.

Their children, Marty, Monty and Misty, all received State FFA Degrees as high school seniors in '92, '94, and '96. Monty and Marty's supervised agricultural experiences are still in operation today as they are the current owners of Williams Ranch.

Misty became active in Nebraska as an FFA supporter while working for Prime Pursuit which focuses on supplying Walmart with consistently choice beef.

"Bottom line, they all stayed in agriculture," Mary said. "That was definitely a goal my husband and I had forever. If they wanted to come back to agriculture, we would work with leadership programs for young people that we could bring them back to agriculture."

Even their spouses have been involved with FFA, Monty's wife Bobbi (Amdahl) was a member of the Woonsocket FFA chapter and received her State Degree and was the Star Greenhand of her chapter. Marty's wife Rhonda (McDonnell) was a member and officer in Wall and was active while in high school.

This family started a third generation of FFA members including Marty and Rhonda's children Laketon, Cooper, Jaicee, (former Wall FFA members), and Madison (teacher at Wall and FFA supporter). Currently, grandchildren Haydon and Brnley are beginning their FFA journey in Nebraska as a freshman and eighth grader.

FFA Chapters Take Action

The **National Chapter Award** is the highest honor a chapter can receive and recognizes chapters that actively implement the mission and strategies of the FFA. Chapters recognized have developed an active Program of Activities and conducted activities

The **Overall National Chapter Award** recognizes chapters that excel in all three divisions – Growing Leaders, Building Communities and Strengthening Agriculture. Awards are sponsored by Reinke Gray Wealth Management and Wyatt & Zana DeJong. Top three teams include:

- 1st Brookings**
- 2nd Bridgewater-Emery**
- 3rd Howard**



In the **Growing Leaders** division, Building Communities, and Strengthening Ag: Growing Leaders awards are sponsored by Sandra Nelson:

- 1st Arlington**
- 2nd Bridgewater-Emery**
- 3rd Howard**

In the **Building Communities** division, chapters conduct activities to preserve natural resources and improve the welfare and well-being of the community. Building Community awards are sponsored by Sandra Nelson:

- 1st Brookings**
- 2nd Howard**
- 3rd Harrisburg**

In the **Strengthening Agriculture** division, chapters conduct activities to develop and maintain positive relations with community leaders, promote agriculture, enhance safety, and increase agricultural education and membership. Strengthening Agriculture awards are sponsored by Wyatt & Zana DeJong:

- 1st Bridgewater-Emery**
- 2nd Beresford**
- 3rd Tea Area**

Superior Chapters have met the minimum requirements in all areas: Arlington, Beresford, Bridgewater-Emery, Brookings, Gregory County, Garretson, Harrisburg, Howard, McCook Central, Tea Area, and Viborg Hurley

70 1/2 or Older?

You can **give from your IRA directly to the South Dakota FFA Foundation** without paying income taxes (commonly called an IRA charitable rollover, qualified charitable distribution, or QCD).

Why Consider This Gift?

You **pay no income taxes on the gift**. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.

The gift doesn't count as income, reducing your annual income level. This may help lower your Medicare premiums and decrease the amount of Social Security subject to tax.

Feel good! Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.

A Tax-Saving Way to Help FFA

Hoot Hoot Hooray! Dan Tonak Wins Golden Owl Award

As the need grows for more ag educators across the nation, the ag teachers who go above and beyond in educating America's youth and future leaders are more important than ever. Thanks to Nationwide, South Dakota FFA recognized eight exceptional ag teachers for their positive impact in the classroom and communities they serve. Of the finalists,

Dan Tonak, Willow Lake, was named South Dakota's 2024-2025 Ag Educator of the Year, receiving the coveted Golden Owl Award trophy and a \$3,000 Nationwide-funded donation.



One of Mr. Tonak's students shared, "He is the heart and soul of our FFA chapter and ag-ed program, genuinely caring about us, encouraging us to push our boundaries, compete at higher levels, and represent our community with pride, which has been instrumental in our personal growth. Always the first to arrive and the last to leave, sacrificing personal time—whether it's early mornings, late evenings, or weekends—to make sure we have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to excel in every challenge that comes our way. In class we get top-notch materials and creative lessons, ensuring we're well-prepared – whether it's guiding hands-on projects, encouraging us to participate in competitions, or helping us set career goals, Mr. Tonak is a mentor and inspiring role model, always there to lend a hand or offer advice. His passion for agriculture makes me and my peers see the true value in hard work, teamwork,

and strong leadership. His impact on today's youth goes far beyond traditional classroom learning by inspiring us to become leaders, problem-solvers, and critical thinkers. It's clear to me that his commitment to agricultural education is unparalleled; not just teaching about agriculture, imparting lifelong lessons about responsibility, character, and leadership, with influence extending into our communities, as students carry lessons learned in the ag class into various careers in agriculture and beyond."

Reflecting on his classroom leadership, Tonak shared, "My career is defined by doing the best I can each day to educate students with knowledge about agriculture, instill in them the importance of responsibility, and inspire them to do their best in all things. Two principles I've held myself to during my career are to teach the importance of responsibility and that hard work can pay off with accomplishments that far exceed what a student may think they are capable of."

District Winners:

District 1: Sara Colombe, Milbank; District 2: Dan Tonak, Willow Lake; District 3: Nathan Knutson, Viborg-Hurley; District 4: Susan Roudabush, Ethan; District 5: Austin Bishop, Belle Fourche; District 6: Sarah McClure, Gettysburg; District 7: Josh Christiansen, Harrisburg; District 8: Reed Johnson, Philip



Considered teaching?

As a teacher, learn and grow with your students! If you enjoyed Agriculture Education classes and the FFA experience, why not share with others? Be a teacher! Consider Agriculture Education at SDSU. Contact Dr. Laura Hasselquist at 605.688.6418 or Laura.Hasselquist@sdstate.edu



Purchase "Leading a Legacy, Youth, Agriculture and Leadership" book - \$10 + \$4 shipping & handling
Contact Clark Hansen: 605.691.5711(c) 605.692.6698(h)
clhanson@brookings.net

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Cultivating Curiosity: Members Research Big Questions

Two hundred and seventy-five FFA members showcased their research in the SD FFA Agriscience Fair on April 16th in Hartford. Students use scientific principles and emerging technologies to solve problems related to agriculture, food and natural resources in six categories (Animal Systems; Environmental and Natural Resource Systems; Food Products & Processing Systems; Plant Systems; Power, Structural & Technology Systems; Social Systems). Students compete individually or on teams:

- I – Individuals, grades 7-8 II – Teams, grades 7-8
- III – Individuals, grades 9-10 IV – Teams, grades 9-10
- V – Individuals, grades 11-12 VI – Teams, grades 11-12



The Chilson Sweepstakes award, presented to an 11th or 12th grader who demonstrates exceptional achievement in agriscience in any category, was awarded to **Madison Lauck, McCook Central**. Based on innovative thinking, multiple years

involvement in agriscience, extensive research into agriscience-related challenges, a strong agriscience application, and an interview highlighting the student's understanding of his/her project and key takeaways.

Animal Systems



Division 1, sponsored by Dakota Hills Veterinary Clinic, Eichacker Simmentals, and Salem Veterinary Service:

- 1st – Aaliyah Lennon, Belle Fourche
- 2nd – Rosalie Bergeson, McCook Central
- 3rd – Jake Cody, Tri-Valley



Division 2, sponsored by Dakota Hills Veterinary Clinic, Eichacker Simmentals, and Salem Veterinary Service:

- 1st – Addisyn Schock and Alexis Schock, McCook Central

- 2nd – Alexander Gordon and Cody Hanisch, Montrose



Division 3, sponsored by Fall River Feedyard and the Franken Family:

- 1st – Keaton Zubke, Florence
- 2nd – Charlie Cody, Tri-Valley
- 3rd – Elizabeth Vogel, Dell Rapids



Division 4, sponsored by Fall River Feedyard and the Franken Family:

- 1st – Jocelyn Wagner and Rylee Knock, Hitchcock-Tulare
- 2nd – Laruen Klitzke and

- Sophia Sandine, McCook Central
- 3rd – Teagan Lupkes and Stella Siemonsma, West Central



Division 5, sponsored by Dakota Hills Veterinary Clinic, First Bank & Trust, De-Tye Vet Supply Inc, and First Dakota National Bank:

- 1st – Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central
- 2nd – Atlee Olson, Belle Fourche



Division 6, sponsored by Dakota Hills Veterinary Clinic, First Bank & Trust, De-Tye Vet Supply Inc, and First Dakota National Bank:

- 1st – Antone Kremppes and Jason Wimmer, McCook Central
- 2nd – Austin Michaels and Hunter Wagner, West Central

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Environmental Service/Natural Resource Systems



Division 1, sponsored by Ducks Unlimited:

- 1st – Adeline Miles, McCook Central
- 2nd – Peyton Knox, Doland
- 3rd – Claire Rowley, Montrose

Division 2, sponsored by Ducks Unlimited:

- 1st – Stella Oyen and Joseph VanEmmerick, McCook Central
- 2nd – Lane Kayser and Landon Stahl, Bridgewater-Emery
- 3rd – Zachary Sechser and Bennett Graff, Montrose



Division 3, sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America, Pennington County Conservation District, and Wilbur-Ellis:

- 1st – Joseph Kayser, Bridgewater-Emery
- 2nd – Olivia Knox, Doland
- 3rd – Grace Rick, West Central



Division 4, sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America, Pennington County Conservation District, and Wilbur-Ellis:

- 1st – Brodie Boomsma



and Bryxx Bawek, Doland

- 2nd – Brooke Johnson and Brinley Hansen, Tri-Valley
- 3rd – Sawyer Foster and Bailey Peterson, Tri-Valley



Division 5, sponsored by ProAg Engineering, Inc.:

- 1st – Emma Schneider, Doland
- 2nd – Katrina Thon, Bridgewater-Emery

- 3rd – Dylan Waltman, Garretson

Cultivating Curiosity (cont.)



Division 6, sponsored by ProAg Engineering, Inc.:
1st – Levi Top and Brecken Weir, Garretson
2nd – Teresa Melius and Alyssa Brick, Northwestern Area
3rd – Jakob Gnadt and Cole Schleuter, Garretson

son

Food Products and Processing Systems



Division 1, sponsored by Brian & Codi Mills, SD Retailers Association (Jaime Hybertson pictured), and Titan International:
1st – Taeya Sonnier, McCook Central
2nd – Iliana Krutsinger, McCook Central
3rd – Macie Jones, Tri-Valley



Division 2, sponsored by Brian & Codi Mills, SD Retailers Association (Jaime Hybertson pictured), and Titan International:
1st – Alli Foreman and Chanel Mohrhauser, Tri-Valley

2nd – Kenzie Thompson and Savannah Hagemann, Montrose
3rd – Derek Durfee and Landon Alley, McCook Central



Division 3, sponsored by Doland FFA Alumni and SD Retailers Association (Jaime Hybertson pictured):
1st – Chesnie Heim, Northwestern Area
2nd – Ana Byer, Florence
3rd – Chesnie Anderson, Sisseton



Division 4, sponsored by Doland FFA Alumni and SD Retailers Association (Jaime Hybertson pictured):
1st – Leah Feterl and Khloie Klinkhammer, McCook Central
2nd – Lily Hilton and Carissa Weber, Bridge-

water-Emery
3rd – Blake Tuschen and Darryn Beck, West Central



Division 5, sponsored by Jim Chilson (pictured), Grain Millers, Inc, McCook Central FFA, and Carl & Kari Sanders:
1st – Avery Alley, McCook Central
2nd – Kenasyn Johnson, West Central
3rd – Reganne Miles, Doland



Division 6, sponsored by Jim Chilson (pictured), Grain Millers Inc., McCook Central FFA, and Carl & Kari Sanders:
1st – Karlee Klinkhammer and Kaylee Klinkhammer, McCook Central

2nd – Taylor Borgen and Ayla Kramer, West Central
3rd – Kamryn Schaaf and Seth Lind, West Central

Plant Systems



Division 1, sponsored by Bayer, Next Level Ag, LLC, SD Corn Utilization Council, and Dan & Sheri Kahnke:
1st – Emerri Gottlob, McCook Central
2nd – Mya Zantow, Leola
3rd – Levi Horstman, McCook Central



Division 2, sponsored by sponsored by Bayer, Next Level Ag, LLC, SD Corn Utilization Council, and Dan & Sheri Kahnke:
1st – Levi Weber and Nicholas Paweltzki, Bridgewater-Emery

2nd – Jorja Weber and Olivia Havard, McCook Central
3rd – Paisley Dutcher and Addisyn Moothart, Tri-Valley



Division 3, sponsored by Central Farmers Cooperative and FRE-MAR, LLC, and the First National Bank in Sioux Falls:
1st – Ty Boekelheide, Northwestern Area
2nd – Brecken Halvorson, Northwestern Area
3rd – Kendall McAreavey, Tri-Valley



Division 4, sponsored by Central Farmers Cooperative and FRE-MAR, LLC, and the First National Bank in Sioux Falls:
1st – Jersey Lucas and Erika Caspers, Tri-Valley
2nd – Joslyn Stahl and

Caydence Finch, West Central
3rd – Gunnar Strunk and Bradyn Pieper, West Central



Division 5, sponsored by SD Soybean Research and Promotion Council (Bruce Haines & Valerie Willson pictured), and Dan & Sheri Kahnke:
1st – Noah Felderman, Doland

2nd – Grace Stacken, Bridgewater-Emery
3rd – Renee Uberty, McCook Central

Cultivating Curiosity (cont.)



Division 6, sponsored by SD Soybean Research and Promotion Council (Bruce Haines & Valerie Willson pictured), and Dan & Sheri Kahnke:
 1st – Dawson Lantgen and James Kahnke,

Florence
 2nd – Eva Healy and Hannah Haase, West Central
 3rd – Rylee Hartung and Allison Brost, West Central

Power, Structural, and Technical Systems



Division 1, sponsored by Meyerink Farm Service:
 1st – Nicholas Richards, McCook Central
 2nd – Aaron Kinzley, McCook Central
 3rd – Landan Mack, Tri-Valley



Division 2, sponsored by Meyerink Farm Service:
 1st – Logan Glanzer and Creighten Werning, Bridgewater-Emery
 2nd – Isaac Rotert and Tyler Adler, McCook Central
 3rd – Connor Karsky and Mauer Jones, Wessington Springs



Division 3, sponsored by Butler Machinery and CTE Global, Inc:
 1st – Adrian Flisrand, Florence
 2nd – Austin Nash, Northwestern Area
 3rd – Ella Weber, Montrose



Division 4, sponsored by Butler Machinery and CTE Global, Inc:
 1st – Tucker Peterson and Luke Horstman, McCook Central
 2nd – Ty Haskell and Jack Remily, Doland
 3rd – Mackenzie Neel

and Payton DeMent, West Central



Division 5, sponsored by Dacotah Bank (Mark O'Hara pictured), Summit Contracting, RDO Equipment, and Gullickson Family Livestock:
 1st – Mason Kieffer, Harrisburg
 2nd – Reece Gerlach,

West Central
 3rd – Vincent Walker, West Central



Division 6, sponsored by Dacotah Bank (Mark O'Hara pictured), Summit Contracting, RDO Equipment, and Gullickson Family Livestock:
 1st – Espn Althoff and Riley Easton, Tri-Valley

2nd – Hailey Goebel and Lyric Riepma, West Central
 3rd – Tyler Erickson and Colin Shellum, Garretson

Social Science



Division 1, sponsored by Chad Wosje:
 1st – Shane Schultz, McCook Central
 2nd – Baron Coffey, McCook Central



Division 2, sponsored by Chad Wosje:
 1st – Connor Magee and Connor Twedt, Montrose
 2nd – Micah Waldner and Kean Benecke, McCook Central
 3rd – Arabella Mortinsen and Lanie Brandt, McCook Central



Division 3, sponsored by Prairie Grain Partners, LLC. and SD Biotech Association:
 1st – Jazmine Oliver, Canton
 2nd – Elle Goehring, Parkston
 3rd – Kiera Bartmann, Montrose



Division 4, sponsored by Prairie Grain Partners, LLC. and SD Biotech Association:
 1st – Ted Petersen and Gunnar Alfson, West Central
 2nd – Ashtyn Nilson and Cambree Ideker, West Central
 3rd – Hailey Fortney and Evangeline Gerlach, West Central



Division 5, sponsored by FMNE Insurance (Chad Hank pictured), Pioneer-Corteva and BankWest:
 1st – Madison Lauck, McCook Central
 2nd – Alexa Pulse, McCook Central
 3rd – Kasy Kalb, West Central



Division 6, sponsored by FMNE Insurance (Chad Hank pictured), Pioneer-Corteva and BankWest:
 1st – Lauren Roling and Alyssa Roling, McCook Central

Dare to Be Great: The Call of the Triple Crown Award

A past State FFA officer who experienced firsthand the power of being involved in FFA had a vision to create an award that will in return make a difference for FFA members. Marvin Wastell, the 1959-60 State FFA President worked with a committee including members of the SD FFA Foundation and SD FFA Association to establish the new award for members to strive for. The Triple Crown Awards was unveiled on stage at the 2025 State FFA Convention.

The Triple Crown Award represents the elite standard of achievement in FFA, challenging members to rise, lead, and leave a lasting impact on their peers, their communities, and the agriculture industry. It symbolizes an unwavering commitment to premier leadership, personal growth, and career success in agriculture. It is awarded to those who have excelled in leadership development events, earned the prestigious State Star Award and dedicated themselves to serve as a State FFA Officer. This award is more than an accolade; it is a testament of dedication, resilience, and the power of leadership to inspire and uplift others. Recipients leave a lasting impact on their peers, their communities and the agricultural industry.

The Triple Crown Award is not an annual award, but one of great prestige that must be earned. During their FFA career, **a member must be selected as a State Star winner, serve as a State Officer, and win a Leadership Development Event (individual or team) to earn the Triple Crown Award.**

Three achievements, one legacy—SD FFA's pinnacle of excellence.

Triple Crown winners will receive \$5,000 cash, a trophy, and their name on this traveling trophy presented at state convention that will be on display at State FFA Events. FFA

advisor of a Triple Crown winner will receive \$2,000 and a plaque. The award is supported as a permanent legacy and challenges current and future generations of students.



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SD CORN

Members Shine in FFA Career Development Events

FFA is preparing students to fill the pipeline of employees needed for the agriculture industry by exposing them to critical agricultural career skills through Career Development Events (CDEs). This year, 2,300 South Dakota FFA members competed at the State FFA Convention in 15 Career Development Events. Congratulations to all:

Agricultural Business Management

Sponsored by Rufus and Patty DeZeeuw and the team travel scholarship is sponsored by Rufus & Patty DeZeeuw, FarmHouse Fraternity-SDSU, Leisinger Farm, and Kyle & Jody Peterson. Kyle & Jody Peterson also sponsored an iPad for the 1st place individual.



1st place team: Ethan; Advisor Susan Roudabush. Team members: Coltyn Raymond, Madisyn Raymond, William Kreth
2nd: Willow Lake
3rd: Elkton



Top Individuals:
1. Brooklyn Boersma, Elkton
2. Coltyn Raymond, Ethan
3. Madisyn Raymond, Ethan

Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems

Sponsored by the CHS Foundation (pictured) and the team travel scholarship is sponsored by CHS Foundation, Grossenbrow Implement, and the Ketelhut Family.



1st place team: Brookings; Advisors Josh Johnson and Michelle Dykstra. Team members: Landin Tucker, Gabriel Stern, Tane Friedrich, Miles Gerlach
2nd: Sunshine Bible Academy
3rd: Harrisburg



Top Individuals:
1. Jackson Schlimmer, Sioux Valley
2. Cody Wiik, Milbank
3. Landin Tucker, Brookings

Agronomy

Sponsored by Kurt (pictured) & Kathy Stiefvater and the team travel scholarship is sponsored by SD Agribusiness Association, Croplan by WinField United, De & Mike Johnson in Memory of Walt Johnson, Hoegemeyer Hybrids, and Steven Zemlicka in Honor of Stan & Carol Gage.



1st place team: McCook Central; Advisor Terry Rieckman. Team members: Kaylee Klinkhammer, Avery Alley, Karlie Stiefvater, Karlee Klinkhammer
2nd: Wessington Springs
3rd: Hot Springs



Top Individuals:
1. Robert Hine, Wessington Springs
2. Kaylee Klinkhammer, McCook Central
3. Briella Wetlaufer, Howard

Dairy Cattle Evaluation

Sponsored by SD Division of the Midwest Dairy Association and the team travel scholarship is sponsored by the Richard Lauck Family, Ash Grove Dairy, Sharp's Inc. and Victory Farms.



1st Place Team: Beresford; Advisor Bridget Twedt. Team members: Elena Andrews, Grace Norling, Allie Westra, Capri Mullinix
2nd: Sioux Valley
3rd: McCook Central

Members Shine in FFA Career Development Events (cont.)



Top Individuals:
 1. Elena Andrews, Beresford
 2. Brityn Davies, Lake Preston
 3. Ava Couser, Brookings

Floriculture

Sponsored by Dr. David Graper, Wendy Mortenson Agency, and Gettysburg FFA and the team travel scholarship is sponsored by Dr. David Graper and Dan & Sheri Kahnke. Supplies for the event were sponsored by North American Wholesale Florists and the SD Florist Association.



Top Individuals:
 1. Hunter Reede, Milbank (not pictured)
 2. Katelyn Wingert, Harrisburg
 3. Jazlyn Olson, Belle Fourche (not pictured)

Horse Evaluation

Sponsored by K Bar J Leather of Newell. The travel scholarship is sponsored by K Bar J Leather, Rodney Yost Horsemanship, and Wendy Mortenson Agency.



1st Place Team: Brookings; Advisors Josh Johnson and Michelle Dykstra. Team members: Kenzie Steinhauer, Mikalyn Kelly, Madeline Enderson, Katie Marshall
 2nd: Freeman
 3rd: Parkston



1st Place Team: Brookings; Advisors Josh Johnson and Michelle Dykstra. Team members: Josie Nold, Aubrey Underwood, Ava Benson, Madelyn Myers
 2nd: Parkston
 3rd: Bon Homme



Top Individuals:
 1. Brylee Wallman, Miller
 2. Ema Dissing, Tri-Valley
 3. Whisper Apple, Garretson

Food Science and Technology

Sponsored by Valley Queen Cheese and the team travel scholarships are sponsored by Dan and Sheri Kahnke, Prairie Farms Cheese Division, Aurora Cooperative, Hunter Eide, and Agropur Inc-Cheese and Whey Products.



Top Individuals:
 1. Josie Nold, Brookings
 2. Bailey Schwagel, Milbank
 3. Kenley Henke, Parkston

Meats Evaluation:

Sponsored by Smithfield Foods and the travel scholarship is sponsored by Smithfield Foods, Tri Valley Alumni (Heidi Zwinger pictured), and The Meathouse.



1st Place Team: Harrisburg; Advisors Tara Fastert, Josh Christiansen, and Molly Roemen. Team members: Katelyn Wingert, Hannah Fryee, Leia Rombough, Isabelle Carlson



1st Place Team: Brookings; Advisors Josh Johnson and Michelle Dykstra. Team members: Connor May, Kade Nelson, Ella Feucht, Carter Stadler
 2nd: Tri-Valley
 3rd: Hitchcock Tulare

Members Shine in FFA Career Development Events (cont.)



Top Individuals:
 1. Connor May, Brookings
 2. Kade Nelson, Brookings
 3. Kendall Mcar-bavey, Tri-Valley

Livestock Evaluation:

Sponsored by SD Pork Producers Council. The travel scholarship is

sponsored by Dakotaland Feeds, Drs. Travis and Meagan Hoffman, Kimball Livestock Exchange LLC, and Beef Logic.



Top Individuals:
 1. Madison Lauck, McCook Central
 2. Lizzie Gustafson, Langford
 3. Joseph Grady, McCook Central

Natural Resources

Sponsored by the SD Grassland Coalition. The travel

scholarship is sponsored by Jeff VanderWilt, John Lentz, and the SD Grassland Coalition.



1st Place Team: Winner; Advisor Tracy Childress. Team members: Roper Moore, Evan Littau, Austin Vanderwerff, Rustin Schroeder
 2nd: Beresford
 3rd: Tri-Valley



1st Place Team: Tri-Valley; Advisor Tanner Peterson. Team members: Chase Jones, Carson Sanders, Bracken Sharpe, Gavin Crosby
 2nd: Harrisburg
 3rd: Brookings



Top Individuals (Abby Riemenschneider, SDPPC pictured):
 1. Chance Blume, Chamberlain
 2. Creighton Werning, Bridgewater-Emery
 3. Aidan Grupe, Watertown Area

Milk Quality & Products:

Sponsored by Agropur Inc - Cheese and Whey Products. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Bel Brands USA, The Justin Maass Family, and Heidi (pictured) and Mark Zwinger.



Top Individuals:
 1. Paul Werner, Brookings
 2. Chase Jones, Tri-Valley
 3. Carter Oyener, Harrisburg

Nursery Landscape:

Sponsored by Midwest STIHL.

The travel scholarship is sponsored by SODAK Gardens, Northern Plains Landscaping, and the Wendy Mortenson Agency.



1st Place Team: McCook Central; Advisor Terry Rieckman. Team members: Madison Lauck, Joseph Grady, Julianne Grady, Lauren Roling
 2nd: Willow Lake
 3rd: Langford FFA



1st Place Team: McCook Central; Advisor Terry Rieckman. Team members: Gavin Kipp, Brooke Heumiller, Ella Deknikker, Addison Ecklein
 2nd: Parkston
 3rd: Montrose

Members Shine in FFA Career Development Events (cont.)



Top Individuals:
 1. Gavin Kipp, McCook Central
 2. Brooke Heumiller, McCook Central
 3. Ella Deknikker, McCook Central

2nd: Miller
 3rd: Howard



Top Individuals:
 1. Hope Baysinger, Mitchell
 2. Emma Fritzsche, Miller
 3. Delaney Zoss, Mitchell

Poultry:

Sponsored by South Dakota Poultry Industries Association. The travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Poultry Industries Association, Salem Veterinary Service, and Dakota Layers LLP.



1st Place Team: Sunshine Bible Academy; Advisor Jason Burma. Team members: James Burma, Katie Kruse, Natasha Appel, Daraby Boersma
 2nd: Hot Springs
 3rd: Parker

Ranges Plant ID:

Sponsored by the SDSU Range Science Club.



1st Place Team: Sturgis; Advisor Stran Holben. Team Members: Jackson Cammack, Ellie Storm, Aydan Rhodes, Garrett Rohloff
 2nd: Lemmon
 3rd: Kadoka



Top Individuals:
 1. Lizzie Rapp, Hot Springs
 2. Saige Lessman, Parker (not pictured)
 3. James Burma, Sunshine Bible Academy



Top Individuals:
 1. Jackson Cammack, Sturgis
 2. Ellie Storm, Sturgis
 3. Jessica Wahlert, Hot Springs

Vet Science:

Sponsored by Susan A. Stoterau DVM, and Alice Harty DVM. The travel scholarship is sponsored by SD Veterinary Medical Association, Salem Veterinary Service, Susan A. Stoterau DVM and Alice Harty DVM.



1st Place Team: Mitchell; Advisor Karen Roudabush. Team members: Hope Baysinger, Delaney Zoss, Emree Fergen, Ashlyn Roudabush



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Esteemed Supporters Honored at Convention

The South Dakota FFA Honorary State Degrees and Distinguished Service Awards were presented on April 4th, during convention. These awards recognize outstanding contributions in support of the South Dakota FFA, acknowledging that ag leaders and industry are key in developing our future agriculture and community leaders. Congratulations to all recipients and thank you for your dedication to our youth..

The Distinguished Service Award is presented to businesses who have taken action to advocate for agriculture education on the state and local level to ensure our members have the best experience within our organization. The 2025 Distinguished Service Award recipients:

- Tallis Johnson - Builders Electric
- Ben Ringling - Southeast Tech
- Not pictured: Reading Bus Lines, Andrew Holland - Yield Pro Ag, Gracepoint Wesleyan Church, Chris Howard, Amy Howard, and Genetie Hendrix



The Honorary State FFA Degree recognizes individuals who are helping to advance agricultural education and the FFA and who have rendered outstanding service to the organization with their time, talents and treasures. The following individuals received the Honorary State FFA Degree:

- Meagan Ekberg on behalf of Kendra Storm
- Anne Jo Erdmann
- Austin Herrboldt
- Jenae Hansen-Gross
- Dusty Leisinger
- Morgan Ackerman
- Lorena Pedraza Lozano
- Danielle Duxbury
- Karley Ann Hall
- Ellie Storm on behalf of Patrick Storm
- Not pictured: Lorena Pedraza Lozano, Luis Berrones Cantu, Ty Hendrix, Billy Weegar, Becky Weegar, Brian Kizer, and Heather Kizer



South Dakota FFA Welcomes Canistota Chapter

We're excited to announce that South Dakota FFA continues to grow! In 2025, we proudly welcomed one new chapter into our statewide organization—bringing us to a total of 112 FFA chapters dedicated to promoting premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

The newest addition to the FFA family is the Canistota FFA Chapter, led by advisor Mr. Isaac Aasgaard. The chapter was officially recognized and presented with its charter on stage during the fourth general session of the 97th South Dakota FFA State Convention.

We are thrilled to see FFA's mission expanding into new communities and look forward to all the great things the Canistota FFA Chapter will accomplish. Welcome to the blue and gold family!



Living to Serve - members package 55,728 meals

The blue corduroy jacket is a familiar symbol of the FFA, worn as part of official dress during most FFA activities. At the South Dakota FFA convention in Brookings, as part of a SD FFA Living to Serve Day, members removed their jackets and rolled up their sleeves to help stop hunger.

Working with industry and Meals of Hope, this South Dakota FFA Foundation hands-on project combats hunger. SD FFA members measured, poured, sealed, and boxed 55,728 hearty Chicken flavored Rice & Vegetable Soup meals in assembly line fashion. Members left the event knowing that just a few minutes of their time would make a significant difference in the life of a person less fortunate than themselves.

All meals were donated to Feeding South Dakota based in Sioux Falls and the Feeding Brookings food pantry, to be distributed. Sandy Osterday, SD FFA Foundation board president and event chairman shared, "We are proud to have a part in providing quality food to SD families in need and grateful for our sponsors who believe in our mission of Living to Serve."

The South Dakota FFA Foundation received event funding from Global Harvest Foods, Beck's Hybrids, Farmhouse Fraternity – SDSU and Corteva Agriscience's, Pioneer seed team, who also provided area staff for hands-on help during the event.



Sutera Retires from Ag-Ed

Successful agriculture education programs and FFA chapters are only possible because of our amazing agriculture instructors. These dedicated individuals put in countless hours above and beyond the school day to educate, inspire, and motivate the future workforce of SD. Saying "thank you" is not enough when one retires, but we want to express our gratitude.

Mr. Don Sutera taught Ag-Ed in numerous schools: 1991-92 Webster, 1993-2000 Artesian Letcher, 2000-10 Sioux Valley, 2010-11 MTI, 2011-12 Deuel, and 2012-2025 Sioux Valley

Mr. Sutera has inspired hundreds of students, served as a mentor to many teachers throughout the state, and led SD agriculture education. Thank you for your dedication, determination, leadership, strength, and service for 32 years each of serving "Here by the Owl".

His expertise will be greatly missed. We wish him the best on his next life adventure.



Seniors Commit to Growing the Next Generation in Ag-Ed

It is imperative that we encourage our students to enter the classroom. It is estimated that hundreds of agriculture education teaching positions will go unfilled across the United States this year, simply because of a shortage of teachers.

To recognize those willing to step up to the challenge, South Dakota Agriculture Educators hosted a Teach Ag Signing Day event, where high school seniors signed letters of intent declaring Agriculture Education as their major.

Madilynn Von Eye - Kimball High School

Shayda Ness - Kimball High School

Elena Andrews - Beresford High School

"It is great to see three students from South Dakota planning to pursue a degree in Agricultural Education!" says Josh Christiansen, Teach Ag Signing Day coordinator. "The need for AFNR teachers in SD and around the US is abundantly apparent and we are glad to recognize these young people who are stepping up to share their passion and help to meet this need."



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Fueling the Future of Agriculture

The South Dakota FFA Foundation is dedicated to fueling the future, providing scholarships for students who will be our future leaders, thanks to our donors:



The Ernie Wingen Scholarship, provided by the SD FFA Foundation's Ernie Wingen Memorial Endowment is for students studying agriculture. This \$2000 scholarship went to **Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central**.



The Fred and Joan DeRouche Family Scholarship is provided by the SD FFA Foundation's Fred and Joan DeRouche Family Endowment for students studying animal science. This \$2000 scholarship went to **Ginny Warkenthien, Willow Lake**.



The Jeff Hoffman Memorial Scholarship is funded by Jeff's family in honor of his devotion to youth in agriculture education and based off an essay. The \$1000 recipient, pictured with Jerry, Sydney & Deanna Hoffman is **Patty Timmons, Rapid City Stevens**.



The Gary Grey Agricultural Education Scholarship is for seniors pursuing Agricultural Education degrees. Sponsored by Kelvin and Carol Grey, Ellery Grey and Nickolas Grey, in honor of Kelvin's brother and Ellery and Nickolas's dad, Gary

who was the State FFA Advisor for 14 years. Recipients, pictured with Carol and Kelvin Grey, are: **Madilynn VonEye, Kimball; Elena Andrews, Beresford; Shayna Ness, Kimball; Taya Kristine, Belle Fourche**.



The Kendal Thompson Memorial Scholarship is funded by DPI Global for students pursuing degrees in agriculture. Kendal was an FFA advisor who moved into the agricultural industry but never lost his heart for agriculture education and FFA. He was visionary and passionate – helping start the 1st SD FFA Leadership

Camp, renovate the SD FFA Ag Adventure Center at the State Fair and fund the Leadership and Program Manager Endowment. In his honor, \$1000 scholarship are to students studying at a 2-year school and a 4-year school of higher education. Scholarships were presented by Kendal's son Dan Thompson, to **Ashley Schriever, Philip and Caden Phelps, Arlington**.

The Wade Lang Memorial Scholarship is in memory of Wade Lang, 1991-92 South Dakota State FFA Treasurer, and sponsored by the rest of his State Officer team. This \$1000 memorial scholarship was presented by team members Corey Schrag, Shawn Stoley, and Gretchen Sharp, and Wade's mother, Ida May Platte, to **Josie Nold, Brookings**.



The Wosje Agricultural Business Scholarship is sponsored by Chad Wosje, SDSU and Sioux Valley FFA Alumni. The \$750 scholarship was presented by Chad Wosje to **Elena Andrews, Beresford**.



Mary Hansen Memorial Scholarships, provided by the SD FFA Foundation's Mary Hansen Memorial Endowment, are for State Degree recipients from Minnehaha & Lincoln counties. Recipients of the \$1000 scholarships are: **Ethan Bovill, Alcester-Hudson; Brody Stenger, Sioux Falls CTE; Ireland McAreavey, Tri-Valley; Tyler Strasser, Lennox-Sundstrom**.



Blue & Gold Scholarships are offered by the SD FFA Association to graduating seniors active in FFA. Recipients of the \$750 scholarships are: **Katrina**



Thon, Bridgewater-Emerly; Kate Meyer, Sisseton; Lauren Roling, McCook Central; Skyler Plucker, Lennox-Sundstrom.

The Marsh Agricultural Scholarships are for students studying agriculture and are sponsored by Doug and Claire Marsh. These \$500 scholarships went to: **Blaise McGregor, Webster & Dallas Stoltenberg, Northwestern Area**.



The District 2 Scholarship is sponsored by past State FFA Officer Ashley Wiesen and her husband Jordan, for a District 2 FFA member with exemplary leadership traits. The \$500 scholarship was presented by Ashley Wiesen to **Samantha Brenden, Willow Lake**.



The SD Nursery and Landscape Association Scholarship is for a student pursuing a horticulture degree. The \$500 scholarship went to **Mackenzie Steinhauer, Brookings**.



The 605 Sires+Donors Scholarship is for a student studying in South Dakota with interest in cattle reproduction or animal science. The \$1000 scholarship was presented by Corey Schrag to **Delany Zoss, Mitchell**.



The South Dakota School of Mines Scholarship is for a student pursuing a degree at South Dakota School of Mines, with preference given to students who participated in the SD FFA Agriscience Fair. This \$1000 scholarship went to **James Bame, Madison Central**.

Fueling the Future of Agriculture (cont.)



South Dakota Corn Utilization Council – 4 Star Partner Scholarship \$500 recipients, pictured with Amanda Bechen from SD Corn Utilization **Brielle Wettlaufer, Howard; Madisyn Raymond, Ethan; Dallas Stoltenberg, Northwestern Area; Lukas VanderMay, Philip.**



Twin Cities Region Northland Ford – Distinguished Star Partner Scholarships \$500 to: **Madison Lauck, McCook Central; Kylie Mockler, Beresford; Emery Pearson, Tri-Valley; Adrianna Ratigan, Northwestern Area.**



Bayer – 4 Star Partner Scholarships \$500 to: **Braxton Jongeling, Estelline; Kayla Jensen, Beresford; Ava Sieverding, McCook Central; Connor May, Brookings.**



CHS Foundation – 4 Star Partner Scholarships \$500 recipients, pictured with Jen nifer Johnson, CHS Foundation are: **Wyatt Lesmeister, Belle Fourche; Brooklyn Rische, Redfield; Taya Kristine, Belle Fourche; Jason Zeeb, Bridgewater-Emery.**



Farmers Mutual of Nebraska – 4 Star Partner Scholarships \$500 to: **Claire Hofer, Freeman; Joseph Grady, McCook Central; Gage Anderson, Lemmon; Abbie Chase, McCook Central.**



Star Partner Scholarships – Funded through the South Dakota FFA Foundation Star partner program, these \$500 scholarships are sponsored by Bayer, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, CHS Foundation, SD Corn Utilization Council, Farm Credit Services of America,

First National Bank in Sioux Falls, and Agtegra. Recipients are: **Josie Johnson, Buffalo Christian; Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central; Madilynn VonEye, Kimball; Lydia Main, Belle Fourche; Mikalyn Kelly, Brookings; William Kreth, Ethan; Preston Singrey, Arlington.**



Minnehaha County Farm Bureau Scholarships are for graduating seniors majoring in agriculture at a South Dakota postsecondary school. \$1000 recipients, pictured with Mark Salvador: **Avery Zeisler, Gregory**

County; Bryce Larson, Sanborn Central Woonsocket; Emily Walz, Parkston.

Post-Secondary Continuing Education Scholarships are

funded by SD FFA Star partners: Twin City Region Northland Ford, CHS Foundation, SD Corn Utilization Council, Bayer, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, Agtegra, Farm Credit Services of America, First National Bank of Sioux Falls, BankWest, Butler Machinery, Dacotah Bank, First Bank & Trust, First Dakota National Bank, C & B Equipment, RDO Equipment, Prairie Grain Partners, Pioneer-Corteva, Titan International, and Wilbur Ellis. They are for Ag Education student teachers, agriculture education majors, and those studying any agriculture major:



Agriculture Education Scholarships: **Meta Tewes; Jackson, MN; Kaylee Steele; Lewiston MN; Karley Mills; Storm Lake, IA; Katelyn Zeug; Lucan, MN; Clare Rennie; Blooming**

Prairie, MN; Elizabeth Sattler; Emerson, NE; Elizabeth Will; Estelline, SD; Elizabeth Will; Estelline, SD; Not pictured: Abigail Otto; Riata Bultje; Hadlee Peterson; Allison Britton; Sidney Peterson; Katelyn Maloney.



Post-Secondary Ag Scholarships, for students currently studying agriculture at a SD postsecondary school went to: **Raesa Zelinsky; Brookings, SD;**

Kelsey Vockrodt; Hartford, SD; Elliot Hendrix; Piedmont, SD; Megan Stiefvater; Salem, SD; Jordan VanDeStroet; Fairview, SD; not pictured: Tyler Groenwold, Humboldt, SD.



WLC Scholarships, sponsored by the CHS Foundation, aid members attending the FFA Washington Leadership Conference in Washington DC. These \$1000 scholarships went to: **Cash Martinez, Bridgewater-Emery; Sage Voegele, Parker;**

Kaylee Klinkhammer, McCook Central; Ava Kerner, Gregory County.

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From Passion to Proficiency: FFA members Stand Out

South Dakota FFA members are achieving amazing things, gaining experience in career-specific skills through their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects. Proficiency awards in 40+ areas recognize the mastery and diversity of our member's abilities. The top three individuals in each area are:



Agricultural Communications

Sponsor - Tri-State Neighbor

1. Hayden Hofer, Bridgewater-Emery
2. Cash Lehman, Bridgewater-Emery
3. Mallory Gant, Platte-Geddes

Sponsor - M&M Cattle Services and SD Aviation Association

1. Isabella Jimenez, McCook Central
2. Ethan Koopman, Tri-Valley
3. Noah Severson, Howard



Agricultural Education

Sponsor - Dr. Lon (pictured) and Mary Moeller

1. Lacie Weber, Howard
2. Elena Andrews, Beresford
3. Bobbi Eide, Gettysburg



Agricultural Services

Sponsor - On Target Agency and Loehr Horse Care

1. Josie Johnson, Buffalo Christian
2. Mikalyn Kelly, Brookings
3. James Kahnke, Florence



Agricultural Mechanics Design & Fabrication

Sponsor - Cammack Ranch Supply

1. Keagan Kettwig, Parker
2. Gabriel Stern, Brookings
3. Holden Wollmann, Bridgewater-Emery



AgriScience Research - Animal Systems

Sponsor - CHS Foundation (Jen Johnson pictured)

1. Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central
2. Atlee Olson, Belle Fourche
3. Kelsey Vockrodt, West Central



Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Titan Machinery, C&B Equipment, Grossenburg Implement, and Sitework Specialist

1. Mason Jacobson, Howard
2. Reece Gerlach, West Central
3. Brady Braaten, Tri-Valley



AgriScience Research - Integrated Systems

Sponsor - Terry Jaspers and Valley Queen Cheese

1. Paul Kaffar, McCook Central
2. Zoe Dissing, Tri-Valley
3. Addison Ecklein, McCook Central



Agricultural Processing

Sponsor - SD Soybean Processors LLC and SDSU Dairy and Food Science Department (Londa VanderWal Nwadike pictured)

1. Austin Severson, Howard
2. Abbie Chase, McCook Central
3. Dylan Wollman, Bridgewater-Emery



AgriScience Research - Plant Systems

Sponsor - SoDak Labs, Inc. (Christy Sternhagen pictured)

1. Alexa Pulse, McCook Central



Agricultural Sales (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Legend Seeds, Inc.

1. Ava Sieverding, McCook Central



Beef Production (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Stewart Charolais, Vedvei Charolais, Renovo Seed, and SD Shorthorn Association

1. Ireland McAreavey, Tri-Valley
2. Cash Lehrman, Bridgewater-Emery
3. Caden Phelps, Arlington



Agricultural Sales (Placement)

Sponsor - SD Cattlemen's Association and the Blair Brothers



Beef Production (Placement)

Sponsor - SD Cattlemen's Association and the Blair Brothers

1. Ryan Blagg, McCook Central
2. Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central
3. Dylan McGregor, McCook Central

From Passion to Proficiency (cont.)



Dairy Production (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Associated Milk Producers, Inc (Brian Saarie pictured)

1. Skyler Plucker Lennox-Sundstrom
2. Brityn Davies, Lake Preston
3. Lauren Klitzke, McCook Central



Dairy Production (Placement)

Sponsor - Associated Milk Producers, Inc. (Brian Saarie pictured)

1. Blaze Klitzke, McCook Central
2. Paige Haase, Parker
3. Aiden Healy, West Central



Diversified Agricultural Production

Sponsor - Sioux Nation Ag, Kevin and Amber Blagg, and Blane and Liz Osterday

1. Cash Lehman, Bridgewater Emery
2. Elana Andrews, Beresford
3. Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central



Diversified Crop Production (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Agtegra Cooperative

1. Ridge Roduner, Wessington Springs
2. Jason Zeeb, Bridgewater-Emery
3. Thomas Halverson, Howard



Diversified Horticulture

Sponsor - SD Soil Health Coalition (Cindy Zenk pictured)

1. Kaylee Klinkhammer, McCook Central
2. Kenasyn Johnson, West Central



Diversified Livestock Production

Sponsor - McFleeg Inc.

1. Kylie Mockler, Beresford
2. Caden Phelps, Arlington
3. Delaney Zoss, Mitchell



Environmental Science & Natural Resources Management

Sponsor - SD Association of Conservation Districts (Matt Eichacker pictured) and Site

Work Specialists, Inc.

2. Luke Horstman, McCook Central



Equine Science (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - Amani Reiners – Tim Anderson and Kim Niven of Milbank

1. Taten Twedt, Beresford
2. Josie Nold, Brookings

3. Elle Goehring, Parkston



Equine Science (Placement)

Sponsor - Scott Cammack, Dawn Nagel (pictured), Susan Stoterau (pictured), and Webster FFA

1. Shayda Ness, Kimball
2. Taya Wettlaufer, Howard
3. Cash Martinez, Bridgewater-Emery



Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production

Sponsor - SD Soybean Research and Promotion Council (Jerry Schmitz pictured).

Central

1. Briella Wettlaufer, Howard
2. Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central

3. Ridge Roduner, Wessington Springs



Forage Production

Sponsor - Kuecker Seed Farm, Inc. of Webster (Amy Kuecker pictured).

1. Jason Zeeb, Bridgewater-Emery
2. Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central



Forest Management and Products

Sponsor - the SD FFA Foundation

1. Lawden Haak, Howard
2. Daraby Boesma, SBA

From Passion to Proficiency (cont.)



Fruit Production

Sponsor - myfruitsale.com (Lynn Stoneking pictured)

1. Isabella Smithback, Harrisburg
2. Luke Larson, Wessington Springs

3. Renee Uberty, McCook Central



Goat Production

Sponsor - Hamilton Farms of Hitchcock

1. Carley Crist, Beresford
2. Cash Martinez, Bridgewater-Emery

3. Ryan Blagg, McCook Central



Grain Production

Sponsor - Dakota Mill and Grain Inc. and the SD Wheat Commission

1. Karlie Stiefvater, McCook Central
2. Jason Zeeb, Bridgewater-Emery

Emery



3. Lauren Roling, McCook Central

Home and Community Development

Sponsor - the Beal Family

1. Katrina Thon, Bridgewater-Emery

2. Vivian Keospell, McCook Central



3. Breana Zapp, McCook Central

Landscape Management

Sponsor - FarmHouse Fraternity-SDSU

1. Avery Alley, McCook Central
2. Nolan Mentele, Howard

3. Daraby Boesma, SBA

Nursery Operations

Sponsor - Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers

1. Macie Weber, Bridgewater-Emery



Outdoor Recreation

Sponsor - Jack's Campers of Mitchell, Central Dakota Guide Service, and SD Walleye Charters

1. Connor May, Brookings
2. Lacie Weber, Howard

3. Robert Hine, Wessington Springs



Poultry Production

Sponsor - Josh Johnson (pictured) and the SD Poultry Industries Association

1. Rachel Brown, Bridgewater-Emery

2. Josie Nold, Brookings



3. Katrina Thon, Bridgewater-Emery

Service-Learning

Sponsor - Dr. Laura Hasselquist & Toby Uecker

1. Lauren Roling, McCook Central

2. Katrina Thon, Bridgewater-Emery



Sheep Production

Sponsor - Newell Ram Sale and Rufus & Patty DeZeeuw

1. Josie Nold, Brookings
2. Melanie Calmus, Howard
3. Carissa Scheel, Wessington Springs



Small Animal Production and Care

Sponsor - Salem Veterinary Service (Mike Stiefvater pictured), SD Veterinary Medical Association, and Robert & Sandy Rennolet

1. Alyssa Roling, McCook Central

2. Katrina Thon, Bridgewater-Emery

3. Taylor Hawley, Brandon Valley

Specialty Animal Production

Sponsor - Wendy Mortenson Agency

1. Abbie Chase, McCook Central

2. Joseph Kayser, Bridgewater-Emery



From Passion to Proficiency (cont.)



Swine Production (Entrepreneurship)

Sponsor - SD Pork Producers Council (Abbey Riemschneider pictured)

1. Dawson Plagmann, Bridgewater-Emery
2. Addison Fedeler, Howard
3. Caden Phelps, Arlington



Swine Production (Placement)

Sponsor - GroMaster (Marvin Wastell pictured), Kevin & Sandy Ortberg, Wally & Kathy Knock

1. Elena Andrews, Beresford
2. Melanie Calmus, Howard
3. Chase Jones, Tri-Valley



Turf Grass Management

Sponsor - Renovo Seed

1. Gracie Pedersen, Tri-Valley
2. Karlee Klinkhammer, McCook Central
3. Isaac Boden, Beresford



Vegetable Production

Sponsor - Clark and Lyla Hanson in memory of Bill & Stella Hanson

1. Bobbi Eide, Gettysburg
2. Ava Couser, Brookings
3. Parker Burke, Bridgewater-Emery



Veterinary Science

Sponsor - Salem Veterinary Service (Mike Stiefvater pictured)

1. Hope Baysinger, Mitchell
2. Karmen Iverson, Chester
3. Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central



Wildlife Production and Management

Sponsor - Craig (pictured) and Maure Weinkauff

1. Joseph Grady, McCook Central
2. Korbin Shumaker, Howard
3. Kennedy Nemitz, Brookings

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Past State Officers Reunite with FFA

We are blessed to have past state officers continue to support the SD FFA long after their year of service, with time, talent, and treasure. We honored officers of anniversary teams and those who served more than 35 years ago able to attend this year's convention, all who continue to impact South Dakota FFA. Thank you to all the past state officers for attending convention!



65-year anniversary team

1959-60 -President Marvin Wastell reconnected with old friend 2014-15 President Becky Harstad

(93-93, Gretchen Sharp & Shawn Stoley (91-92)

35-year anniversary team: (89-90) Gerri Eide

1995-96 – Suzie Johnson



25-year anniversary team: 1999-2000 – Roxanne Knock

20-year anniversary team: 2004-05 – Jason Frerichs, Becky Harstad, Alex Kahnke, Etta Knuth, Crissa Fruechte, Nick Fosheim

• 2006-07 – Dani Hering

15-year anniversary team: 2009-10 – Brady Duxbury & Jacob Englin

10-year anniversary team: 2014-15 – Kaden Eisenbraun & Nicole Roth



60-year anniversary team:

1964-65 – Bill Blair & Kent Frerichs

• 1965-66 – Lee Rist



50-year anniversary team: (1974-75) Chuck Sutton, Richard Stabner, Dave Daniel, and Jerry Schmitz

• 1971-72 – Terrill Sorensen & Mark Christensen

• 1980-81 – David Spieker

45-year anniversary team:
1979-80 – Kevin Solberg



5-year anniversary team: 2019-20 – Sadie Frye, Nathan Linke, Tori Rasmussen, Sami Wiesman, Shelby Linke, & Blake Pulse



1990's team members: Back: Craig Winqvist (95-96) Chad Wosje (93-94); Front: **30-year anniversary team:** (1994-95) Lisa Minor, Susan Stoterau & Dawn Nagel, Laura Nordlund

50

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The FFA Family: Members-Teachers-Volunteers-Sponsors

- **State Convention was livestreamed** - Miss attending? Check out the archived sessions: <https://bit.ly/SDConvention>
- **Teachers** are our foundation, who make things happen locally. Thank you to all teachers for their service and dedication to our foundation. **Your impact is legendary & immeasurable. Your leadership will be missed.**
- **Thank you!** Our members recognize that without dedicated volunteers and sponsors, SD FFA members would not be able to find their way, and build their individual legacies – use your phone camera to scan this QR code to listen to their heartfelt thank you video:
- We've made supporting "the members in Blue Corduroy" easy!
 - Through **Thrivent programs**, we are eligible to receive grant dollars, fee-free donations, and support from Thrivent Action Team service projects.
 - **Donate online** - one time or monthly www.sdffaoundation.org
 - **Give "tax smart"** – donate stock, real estate, livestock or grain, or make a charitable gift distribution from your IRA
 - **Leave a legacy** – after your family is taken care of, **consider a legacy gift** to safeguard SD FFA's future. Protect your estate from taxes:
 - Name the SD FFA Foundation as beneficiary to your **retirement plan assets**
 - Give a percentage of your estate in your **will**
 - Designate the SD FFA Foundation as the beneficiary of your **life insurance policy**
- Legacy gifts keep member costs low for events and activities, and make jackets, chapter grants, and scholarships available for FFA members, **providing long-term support for the SD FFA** and allow us to make plans into the future and ensure that we can continue to create the next generation of leaders who will change the world. Contact gerri@sdffaoundation.org for more information.



2025-26 State Officers Elected

President **Tyler Strasser, Lennox-Sundstrom**

Vice President **Josie Nold, Brookings**

Secretary **Kate Meyer, Sisseton**

Treasurer **Elena Andrews, Beresford**

Reporter **Ireland McAreavey, Tri-Valley**

Sentinel **Skyler Plucker, Lennox-Sundstrom**



The officer team will travel, representing the 6,437 SD FFA members, sharing their passion for agricul-

ture, leadership, and service. South Dakota FFA officers present workshops and conferences across the state and challenge FFA members to serve their communities and the agriculture industry. They advocate for the agriculture industry at various events including South Dakota FFA State Fair at the Ag Adventure Center as well as serve as delegates to the National FFA Convention this fall. Congratulation and best wishes as you serve the state association throughout the year!

Join Us for an Exciting Summer of Leadership and Fun!

This summer, South Dakota FFA members are invited to take part in one of the most memorable and impactful experiences of the year—FFA Leadership Camp! Organized and led by the South Dakota FFA State Officers, these retreats are designed to inspire, challenge, and connect student leaders from across the state.

While the official theme for Summer 2025 has yet to be revealed, one thing is certain, campers can look forward to dynamic leadership activities, team-building adventures, and the chance to create lasting friendships in a beautiful camp setting.

There are two opportunities to attend: East River FFA Retreat held June 17-20 at Swan Lake Christian Camp near Viborg and West River FFA Retreat held July 22-25 at Storm Mountain Camp near Rapid City.

Whether you're a first-time camper or a seasoned FFA leader, these retreats offer a unique chance to grow, lead, and have a whole lot of fun. Be on the lookout for more details, including theme announcements and registration info. We can't wait to see you there!





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*2024-25 state officers
wrap up convention*

Planting Potential: Chilson Gift Powers FFA Innovation

The South Dakota FFA Foundation is proud to establish the Chilson Agriscience Sweepstakes Endowment, with a legacy gift from Jim Chilson. The endowment will fund a South Dakota FFA Agriscience Sweepstakes award, presented annually to an 11th or 12th grade FFA member who demonstrates exceptional achievement in agriscience, and may recognize multiple recipients when funds allow. Selection is based on innovative thinking, sustained involvement in agriscience over multiple years, extensive research into agriscience-related challenges, a strong agriscience application, and an interview highlighting the student's understanding of his/her project and key takeaways.

Jim established the endowment because he values the growth FFA provides youth, developing leadership and agricultural skills. With an Animal Science degree and Plant Science minor himself, he was alternatively certified to teach agriculture education, because of a shortage of ag teachers. He served as an agriculture teacher from 1975-1990 in Roslyn, 1990-2018 in Florence, and again in Florence in 2022-23. He was instrumental in launching the SD FFA Agriscience Student Competition in 1988, which evolved into the Agriscience Fair. All three of his children, Annie, Megan and Josh conducted Agriscience projects as FFA members, and took them to the state and National levels. Jim was recognized as a National FFA Agriscience Teacher of the Year Finalist in 1990 and 1996. He enjoys judging agriscience projects each year, meeting students and hearing about their projects, and encouraging them to think big. After funding agriscience awards annually, Jim made a planned gift to create the Agriscience Sweepstakes Award and endow it in perpetuity.

Jim Chilson shares, "Science is the basic foundation of agriculture and I had great experiences in high school with the regional science fair, which spilled over into my teaching. When FFA created the Agriscience competition, that got me fired up! It easily became part of my curriculum, and was a great way to help students find success. This endowment means I will continue to support agriscience indefinitely."

Anyone wishing to establish an endowment with the SD FFA Foundation or donate to support SD FFA members may contact the South Dakota FFA Foundation at 605-765-4865 or gerri@sdfoundation.org.

