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## **News Release**

# 2017 Iowa FFA Proficiency Award Results

ANKENY, Iowa--100% of all FFA members have proficiencies as part of the agricultural program and the FFA. These proficiencies range in the areas of Agricultural Communications to Home and/or Community Development and from Diversified Agricultural Production to Swine Production. Proficiency Award winners have excelled in their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Programs. These awards encourage members to develop specialized skills that will apply toward a future career.

State winners will advance to the National FFA competition where they will compete against winners from the other State FFA Associations. The four national finalists that are selected from each area will be recognized at the National FFA Convention and Expo in October.

The Iowa FFA Proficiency Awards program is possible with support from the many partners of the Iowa FFA Foundation. The specific partner for each area is identified in our summary of results.

Listed below are the results from the 2017 Iowa Proficiency Awards program.

# # #

## **About Iowa FFA Association**

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 14,700 student members as part of 232 local FFA chapters across Iowa. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. The Iowa FFA Association was organized by delegates from 23 schools at Iowa State College on May 17, 1929 and is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The Iowa Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to local agricultural education programs. For more, visit the Iowa FFA Association online at [IowaFFA.com](http://IowaFFA.com), on Facebook, and Twitter.

## Iowa FFA Association - 2

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Communications - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Josie Young

FFA Chapter: Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter, Delhi

Description: Young is currently serving as the Delaware County Fair Queen where she actively promotes agriculture across various counties. Through speaking with her local cooperatives and businesses, shadowing employers, and promoting the fair, Young has increased her knowledge of marketing and promotion. Young plans to attend Iowa State University to major in Agricultural Communications or Veterinary Medicine.

The second place winner is Devin Miller of the Central Lyon FFA Chapter at Rock Rapids.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Communications Proficiency Award is Iowa Farmer Today.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Education - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Skylar Bloom

FFA Chapter: DeWitt Central FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Agricultural Education is Skylar Bloom of the DeWitt Central FFA Chapter. Bloom has developed four social media outlets for her chapter, including the DeWitt Central FFA website. Bloom learned web design and development skills and trained other chapter members to run the social media. Bloom is still exploring options for college.

The second place winner is Sadie Gravel of the Cascade FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Education Proficiency Award is the Department of Agricultural Education and Studies at Iowa State University.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication-  
Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Colby Larson

FFA Chapter: North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter, West Union

Description: Colby Larson of the North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter at West Union is the winner in the area of Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication. Over the past four years, Larson has invested his time at Mobile Track Solutions where he built machinery fabricated and designed by the local business. Larson has developed a diverse skillset from power tools and various equipment to repairing and manufacturing strategies. On graduation from high school, Larson plans to attend Wyotech in Wyoming to pursue the long term goal of owning his own mechanic shop.

Levi Metzger from the West Lyon FFA Chapter at Inwood received second.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication Proficiency Award is CF Industries.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Cody Kirby

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: In the area of Ag Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Entrepreneurship, the winner is Cody Kirby of the Cascade FFA Chapter. In October of 2015, Kirby purchased an unusable tractor for \$3,200. Through his research into the operation of motors and investment of over \$20,000, Kirby restored the tractor to a value of \$40,000. Of 103 tractors exhibited at the 2016 Iowa State Fair, Kirby's placed second overall. After graduation, Kirby plans to continue his career in mechanics.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is Van Wall.

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### Iowa FFA Association - 3

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance - Placement**

State Winner: Colton Selvey

FFA Chapter: Albia FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Ag Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Placement is Colton Selvey of Albia. Selvey has over 3,700 hours logged while working for Coltrain Implement. He has performed mechanical and diagnostic skills with machinery. Selvey is currently enrolled in the diesel mechanics program at Indian Hills Community College.

The second place winner is Ryley Reiken of the AGWSR FFA Chapter at Ackley.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance-Placement Proficiency Award is Kuhn North America, Inc.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Processing – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Luke Ward

FFA Chapter: North Linn FFA Chapter

Description: Luke Ward of the North Linn FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Agricultural Processing. Luke's project included Maple Syrup production. He put in 804 unpaid hours over a three-year period. Through his project, Luke discovered the benefit of being an out-of-the-box thinker and learned how to manage his own operation. His future plans include attending Iowa State University to major in Mechanical Engineering and later obtaining his master's degree in Mechanical Engineering and Business Administration.

Lucas Spaans from the Rock Valley FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Processing Proficiency Award is the Iowa Corn Growers Association.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Sales - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Keaton Minnick

FFA Chapter: Central Trail, Leon

Description: In the area of Agricultural Sales Entrepreneurship the winner is Keaton Minnick of the Central Trail FFA Chapter at Leon. Minnick has created over 100 custom woodworking projects since 2013. He owns Minnick Red Cedar Works and has \$129,000 in total gross revenues, increasing every year. Minnick is still exploring his options for college.

The second place winner in the area of Agricultural Sales Entrepreneurship is Emma Vacek from the Midland FFA Chapter at Wyoming.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Sales Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is Winfield United.

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Sales – Placement**

State Winner: Emily Campbell

FFA Chapter: Audubon FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Agricultural Sales Placement is Emily Campbell of the Audubon FFA Chapter. Campbell has worked 311 hours with Williams Welding, Inc. where she completes a variety of tasks including: bookkeeping, accounting, and inventory activities. Her employment began when the company was looking for someone to design a sales catalog. Campbell's catalog has already helped to increase sales by 50% for the next calendar year. Campbell plans on attending Iowa State University after graduation.

McKenzie White from the Charles City FFA Chapter received second.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Sales Placement Proficiency Award is Dakin Ag Equipment.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 4

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**Proficiency Area: Agricultural Services**

State Winner: Ray Kurt

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Agricultural Services is Ray Kurt of the Cascade FFA Chapter. Kurt has a bale wrapping service where he has wrapped over 7,000 bales this past year. He recruits clients, performs maintenance, keeps financial records, and develops strategies for marketing and implements them for the business. He promotes safety and manages the business. In college, Kurt plans to major in Agriculture Business.

The second place winner in the area of Agricultural Services is Bethany Stock from the Little Switzerland FFA Chapter at Waukon.

The sponsor of the Agricultural Services Proficiency Award is Landus Cooperative.

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**Proficiency Area: Agriscience Research - Animal Systems**

State Winner: Renee Redmond

School: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: Renee Redmond of the Cascade FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Agriscience Research - Animal Systems. Redmond's operation focuses on the breeding of swine to ensure the highest quality outcome of her livestock. From 2015 to 2016, her investment of over 440 hours resulted in an increase of rate of gain in her swine from 2 pounds to 2.5 pounds per day, among many other improvements. Upon graduation, Redmond plans to apply the skills she's learned from her SAE in the field of environmental law or related field in agriculture.

The sponsor of the Agriscience Research - Plant Systems Proficiency Award is the Animal Health International.

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**Proficiency Area: Beef Production - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Cole Fishwild

FFA Chapter: Midland FFA Chapter, Wyoming

Description: The winner in the area of Beef Production Entrepreneurship is Cole Fishwild of the Midland FFA Chapter at Wyoming. Fishwild has one bull, 60 breeding cows/heifers, 17 feeders, and 2 fat steers. Upon graduation, he plans to attend Kirkwood Community College where he will focus on crop and beef production.

Blair Bennis from the Maquoketa FFA Chapter received second.

The sponsor of the Beef Production-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is Iowa Cattlemen's Foundation.

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**Proficiency Area: Beef Production - Placement**

State Winner: Gracie Danner

FFA Chapter: West Liberty FFA Chapter

Description: Gracie Danner of the West Liberty FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Beef Production Placement. Danner began her involvement in the beef industry on her family's operation in 2013. Since then, Danner has been involved with all aspects of the family production from breeding and genetics to marketing and management of the livestock. Danner looks to apply the valuable skills she's learned from her SAE by continuing her passion as a production assistant, focusing on the care and management of breeding stock.

Lucas Schumacher from the AGWSR FFA Chapter at Ackley is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Beef Production-Placement Proficiency Award is Iowa Cattlemen's Foundation.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 5

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**Proficiency Area: Dairy Production - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Nathan Arthur

FFA Chapter: Sumner Fredericksburg FFA Chapter

Description: In the area of Dairy Production Entrepreneurship the winner is Nathan Arthur of the Sumner Fredericksburg FFA Chapter. From the age of 9, Arthur has developed his independent operation from a single heifer to over 30 head of high quality livestock. His superior cattle have been ranked highly from Holstein USA Inc. and his show cattle have received numerous awards. After graduating from Iowa State University, Arthur plans to continue his career in dairy cattle genetics as an AI technician while operating the family's dairy farm.

Cole Kruse from the Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter at Delhi is the runner up in this area.

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**Proficiency Area: Dairy Production - Placement**

State Winner: Amanda Engelken

FFA Chapter: Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter, Delhi

Description: The winner in the area of Dairy Production Placement is Amanda Engelken of the Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter at Delhi. Engelken has helped Delta Acres Dairy increase production per cow and total profit. She has also been involved in the breeding program and has implemented numerous veterinary medicine practices. Upon graduation, she plans to attend Northeast Iowa Community College and then transfer to Iowa State University to study Dairy Science.

Rachel Grober from the New Hampton FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Dairy Production-Placement Proficiency Award is Foremost Farms USA.

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**Proficiency Area: Diversified Agricultural Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Joshua Carlson

FFA Chapter: Central Plains FFA Chapter, Gowrie

Description: Josh Carlson of the Central Plains FFA Chapter at Gowrie is the winner in the area of Diversified Ag Production Placement. Carlson has increased from 10 acres to 192 acres of corn, and 148 acres of soybeans. He also raises 30 head of beef cattle. Through his SAE, Carlson has learned how to interpret soil maps, properly apply pesticides, vaccinate cattle, and operate equipment. Carlson plans to join the family farming operation upon high school graduation.

Isaiah Miller from the Maquoketa FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Diversified Agricultural Production Proficiency Award is Hertz Farm Management.

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**Proficiency Area: Diversified Crop Production - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Kylie Knepper

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship is Kylie Knepper of the Cascade FFA Chapter. She has produced and marketed pumpkins, gourds, and Indian Corn. Knepper developed skills related to tillage, pest management, and marketing. Each year, she has improved production efficiencies, and expanded marketing efforts through flyers and road signs. Kylie is still looking at her options for after high school.

Cale Pellett from the Atlantic FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Diversified Crop Production-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is GrainBridge.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 6

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**Proficiency Area: Diversified Crop Production - Placement**

**State Winner:** Joshua Haerther

**FFA Chapter:** Benton Community FFA Chapter, Van Horne

**Description:** In the area of Diversified Crop Production Placement, the winner is Joshua Haerther of the Benton Community FFA Chapter at Van Horne. Josh contributed 4,870 hours over the last 4 years working on his family farm where he earned \$38,462. He has developed skills in grain marketing and operation of equipment. Josh is currently a freshman at Kirkwood Community College in the Diesel Ag Technology program.

Jared Little from the Montezuma FFA Chapter at Montezuma is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Diversified Crop Production-Placement Proficiency Award is Legend Seed.

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**Proficiency Area: Diversified Horticulture – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

**State Winner:** Drew Samuelson

**FFA Chapter:** Manson Northwest Webster FFA Chapter

**Description:** The winner in the area of Diversified Horticulture is Drew Samuelson of the Manson Northwest Webster FFA Chapter. Samuelson manages and operates a mowing and landscaping business that has produced a net income of over \$21,000 in the last three years. He has expanded his business from three lawns in his first year to 17 lawns. After graduation from high school, Samuelson plans to attend college to prepare him for a career as a mechanic.

The second place winner is Hailey Daufeldt of the West Liberty FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Diversified Horticulture Proficiency Award is the Mid-Prairie FFA Chapter.

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**Proficiency Area: Diversified Livestock Production**

**State Winner:** Dana Edleman

**FFA Chapter:** Ballard FFA Chapter, Huxley

**Description:** Dana Edleman of the Ballard FFA Chapter at Huxley is the winner in the area of Diversified Livestock Production, sponsored by the Kent Nutrition Group. Dana runs an entrepreneurship raising swine and sheep. She uses a niche market selling processed pork. She has learned to always work hard and be confident in her abilities. Upon graduating from high school, Dana plans on obtaining a degree in Agricultural Business.

The second place winner is Rebecca Martin of the DeWitt Central FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Diversified Livestock Production Proficiency Award is Kent Nutrition Group.

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**Proficiency Area: Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

**State Winner:** Jonathan McNees

**FFA Chapter:** Brokaw FFA Chapter, Clarinda

**Description:** The winner in the area of Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management is Jonathan McNees of the Brokaw FFA Chapter at Clarinda. McNees works as a job manager for his father's excavation business. In addition to consulting with clients, McNees also maintains, inspects, and operates heavy machinery. With his experience, he has learned techniques that deliver results to farmers while preserving natural resources for continued soil fertility. Upon high school graduation, McNees plans to pursue certification as a diesel mechanic.

The second place winner is Anthony Weber of the Cascade FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management Proficiency Award is the MinnTex Citrus.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 7

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**Proficiency Area: Equine Science - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Jacee DeVries

FFA Chapter: West Lyon FFA, Inwood

Description: The winner in the area of Equine Science Entrepreneurship is Jacee DeVries of the West Lyon Chapter at Inwood. DeVries has worked with her horses to compete in rodeo events, such as team roping, breakaway, barrel racing, and pole bending. She has also learned many skills such as proper health care, nutrition, and horsemanship. Upon graduation from high school, Jacee plans on attending a four-year school to major in animal science and later go on to vet school at Iowa State University.

Hannah Schmitt from the South Winneshiek FFA Chapter is the runner-up in this area.

The sponsor of the Equine Science-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is the Iowa State University Block and Bridle Club.

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**Proficiency Area: Equine Science - Placement**

State Winner: Abby Rubel

School: Maquoketa FFA Chapter

Description: Abby Rubel of the Maquoketa FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Equine Science Placement. Abby has invested over 2,299 hours building and managing an equestrian business. Over the course of four years, Abby earned \$22,390. Through her SAE project, Rubel has learned how to care for animals, run a successful business, and associate medical terminology to human health that will help prepare her for a future in the medical field.

The second place winner is Natalie Palmersheim of the Edgewood-Colesburg FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Equine Science-Placement Proficiency Award is Iowa Horse Council.

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**Proficiency Area: Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Cassi Westhoff

FFA Chapter: Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter, Delhi

Description: Cassi Westhoff of the Maquoketa Valley FFA chapter at Delhi is the first place winner in the area of Fiber/Oil Crop Production. Working 1,270 unpaid hours in her SAE which includes crop scouting an 80-acre soybean field for her grandfather, Cassi has learned the importance of crop development and marketing of finished crop. Cassi is still exploring her options for after high school.

Kevin Steinkamp from the East Sac FFA Chapter at Lake View received second.

The sponsor of the Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production Proficiency Award is the Iowa Soybean Association & the Soybean Checkoff.

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**Proficiency Area: Food Science and Technology - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Michael Gehl

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: Michael Gehl of the Cascade FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Food Science and Technology. Gehl has over 400 hours working at Fillmore Bar and Grill where he has worked with food preparation to inspire the taste and nutrition of the food he prepares. His experience on the meat judging team has assisted him with his SAE program. In the future, Gehl plans to continue his career in the food industry.

The sponsor of the Food Science and Technology Proficiency Award is Hy-Vee, Inc.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 8

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**Proficiency Area: Forage Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Benjamin Carlson

FFA Chapter: Central Plains FFA Chapter, Southeast Valley

Description: Ben Carlson of the Central Plains FFA Chapter at Gowrie is the winner in the area of Forage Production. Carlson's project consists of 10 acres of alfalfa and 3.5 acres of brome grass. He has developed skills in communication and has learned how to develop a fertilizer plan with the proper application.

Christopher Knutson from the South Winneshiek FFA Chapter at Calmar is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Forage Production Proficiency Award is Caterpillar Dealers of Iowa.

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**Proficiency Area: Forest Management and Products - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Garrett Lauer

FFA Chapter: North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter, West Union

Description: In the area of Forest Management & Products the winner is Garrett Lauer of the North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter at West Union. Lauer works with his family in their tree cutting and removal business. He has personally invested over 700 hours of unpaid work operating wood chippers, chainsaws, and stump grinders, as well as machine maintenance. Lauer plans to attend college and then return to the family's operation.

Connor Conlin from the Cascade FFA Chapter at received second.

The sponsor of the Forest Management and Products Proficiency Award MinnTex Citrus, Inc. Minnesota.

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**Proficiency Area: Fruit Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Riley Takes

School: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: Riley Takes of the Cascade FFA Chapter is the first place winner in the area of Fruit Production. Riley has invested almost 200 hours managing and operating her family fruit operation. She raises blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, grapes, apples, pears, peaches, and cherries. Riley's future plan is to continue her education in accounting.

Elizabeth Vogel from the Iowa Falls-Alden FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Fruit Production Proficiency Award is 4 Seasons Fundraising.

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**Proficiency Area: Goat Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Karie Klingensmith

School: West Lyon FFA Chapter, Inwood

Description: Karie Klingensmith of the West Lyon FFA Chapter at Inwood is the winner in the area of Goat Production. Karie purchased 7 Nubian goats in 2015 and currently owns 22 Toggenburg goats. Through her SAE, Karie has rented goats to 15 different rodeos. Karie has learned to vaccinate her goats and balance feed rations. After high school, Karie plans to attend the University of Iowa to complete the pharmacy program and one day get a doctorate in pharmacy.

The second place winner is Matilyn Wheeler of the Creston FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Goat Production Proficiency Award is the Iowa Meat Goat Association.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 9

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**Proficiency Area: Grain Production - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Brad Holdgrafer

FFA Chapter: Northeast FFA Chapter, Goose Lake

Description: Our winner in the area of Grain Production Entrepreneurship is Brad Holdgrafer of the Northeast FFA Chapter at Goose Lake. In January of 2014, Holdgrafer began his SAE in a crop share partnership. What began as 64 acres of corn on a 50/50 crop share has grown into 143 acres. Holdgrafer has looked to contracting his corn for increased profit on his crop. Upon graduation from Iowa State University with a degree in Agricultural Studies, Holdgrafer looks to return to his family's diversified farm.

Regan Pleggenkuhle from the North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter at West Union received second.

The sponsor of the Grain Production-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is Iowa Crop Improvement Association.

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**Proficiency Area: Grain Production - Placement**

State Winner: Tyler McDermott

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: In the area of Grain Production Placement the winner is Tyler McDermott of the Cascade FFA Chapter. McDermott is the crop manager of Donovan Farms, where he manages 400 acres of corn, 150 acres of soybeans and 50 acres of oats. He performs equipment maintenance, machine operation, and assists with marketing decisions. Upon graduation, McDermott plans to attend Ellsworth Community College and major in precision Agriculture and Farm Management.

The second place winner is Quinn Mogler of the West Lyon FFA Chapter at Inwood.

The sponsor of the Grain Production-Placement Proficiency Award is Heartland Cooperative.

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**Proficiency Area: Home and/or Community Development - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Tyler Geiger

FFA Chapter: Montezuma FFA Chapter

Description: The winner in the area of Home and Community Development, sponsored by Monsanto, is Tyler Geiger of Montezuma. Geiger has invested over 720 unpaid hours organizing and planning his hometown's annual celebration. As chairperson, his responsibilities have included lining up entertainment and sponsors, and managing financial statements and deposits. Through his SAE, he has gained skills in communication, organization and financial responsibilities. Upon graduation, Geiger plans to apply education and experience to be a co-owner of the family insurance business.

Chris McMichael from the West Liberty FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Home and/or Community Development Proficiency Award is Monsanto.

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**Proficiency Area: Landscape Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Jacob Joerger

FFA Chapter: Wapsie Valley FFA Chapter, Fairbank

Description: Jacob Joerger of the Wapsie Valley FFA Chapter at Fairbank is the winner in the area of Landscape Management. Over the last two years, Jacob has worked 790 hours earning \$7,866 while working for Davis Lawn Service and Ground Control Lawn and Landscape. He has learned to classify plants, apply principles and practices of landscape management and develop a fertilizer program. After high school, Jacob plans to pursue a career in the landscape industry.

The second place winner is Brian Bleakney of the Newton FFA Chapter

The sponsor of the Landscape Management Proficiency Award is the North Linn FFA Chapter.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 10

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**Proficiency Area: Nursery Operations - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Darin Knobloch

FFA Chapter: West Lyon FFA Chapter, Inwood

Description: In the area of Nursery Operations the winner is Darin Knobloch of the West Lyon FFA Chapter at Inwood. Knobloch has worked over 2600 hours in the family nursery operation. Each year, Knobloch has expanded his responsibility of the business, growing his independence and knowledge within the industry, and plans to continue his family's operation in the future. Knobloch plans to attend college and major in horticulture and business management.

The sponsor of the Nursery Operations Proficiency Award is Milton J. Luckstead.

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**Proficiency Area: Organic Agriculture**

State Winner: Nicholas Welter

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA

Description: Nicholas Welter of Cascade is the winner of the Organic Agricultural Award. Welter worked on the family seed company where he gained knowledge of organic handling of seed along with owning a small cow herd. One of the most important skills he learned was the importance of reading bag labels. After graduation, Welter plans to attend Iowa State University.

Brady Hageman from the South Winneshiek FFA Chapter at Calmar is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Organic Agriculture Award is J. Ward Organics LLC.

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**Proficiency Area: Outdoor Recreation - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Emma Graves

FFA Chapter: Central Plains FFA Chapter, Gowrie

Description: The winner in the area of Outdoor Recreation is Emma Graves of the Central Plains FFA Chapter at Gowrie. Graves invested 1183 hours performing minor tasks at Hidden Acres Camp and Conference Center. Her leadership has helped ensure a pleasant and safe experience for upwards of 800 guests on a given weekend. After graduation, Graves plans on attending Ellsworth Community College to major in Equine Management.

Tara Van Otterloo from the Boyden-Hull FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Outdoor Recreation Proficiency Award is Iowa Trappers Association.

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**Proficiency Area: Poultry Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Ethan Fetzer

FFA Chapter: West Branch FFA Chapter

Description: In the area of Poultry Production the winner is Ethan Fetzer of the West Branch FFA Chapter. Fetzer manages his flock consisting of 70 laying hens, 150 pullets, and 50 ducks. Fetzer has focused on environmental and housing factors to improve his animals' quality of life and increase production. Expanding his poultry business into pullets and ducks has allowed Fetzer to grow his customer base and remain profitable. Upon graduation, Fetzer plans to study beef production and animal nutrition at Iowa State University.

Brett Schoenherr from the Midland FFA Chapter at Wyoming received second.

The sponsor of the Poultry Production Proficiency Award is the Iowa Poultry Association.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 11

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**Proficiency Area: Sheep Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Justin Swanton

FFA Chapter: Northeast FFA Chapter, Goose Lake

Description: The winner in the area of Sheep Production is Justin Swanton of the Northeast FFA Chapter at Goose Lake. Swanton operates a breeding flock of 20 ewes. He feeds and sells approximately 25 lambs. He has added to his operation by improving genetic quality, increasing feed efficiency, helping to lower cost, as well as increasing profit margin. Swanton is pursuing a degree in Animal Science at Iowa State University.

Shelby Karr from the Benton Community FFA Chapter at Van Horne is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Sheep Production Proficiency Award is the Iowa Club Lamb Association.

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**Proficiency Area: Small Animal Production and Care – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Alyssa Staudt

FFA Chapter: Rockford FFA Chapter

Description: Alyssa Staudt of the Rockford FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Small Animal Production and Care. Alyssa raises Gordon Setters and owns 1 sire and 1 dam. She breeds the dogs and ships the puppies to customers in all 48 continental states. The puppies sell for around \$700 each. Through her SAE, Alyssa has learned how to care for and market about 10 puppies at a time. After graduation, Alyssa hopes to pursue a degree in Veterinary Medicine.

The second place winner is Thomas Lehmann of the Maquoketa Valley FFA Chapter at Delhi.

The sponsor of the Small Animal Production and Care Proficiency Award is Diamond Animal Health.

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**Proficiency Area: Specialty Animal Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Mitchell Rawson

FFA Chapter: North Linn FFA Chapter, Troy Mills

Description: In the area of Specialty Animal Production the winner is Mitchell Rawson of the North-Linn FFA Chapter at Troy Mills. Rawson has invested over 400 hours serving as an aquaculture assistant manager. He performs water quality tests, operates large filters and cares for over 200 Freshwater Prawn and 3 American alligators. Through his SAE project, Rawson has learned how to prevent and treat diseases, as well as providing other basic needs for his animals. After high school, Rawson plans on attending Iowa State University to study agricultural precision farming systems.

The second place winner is Cody McCreedy of the Atlantic FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Specialty Animal Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement Proficiency Award is Sonny Deke.

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**Proficiency Area: Specialty Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Austin Sanders

FFA Chapter: Cascade FFA Chapter

Description: Austin Sanders, of the Cascade FFA Chapter, is the winner in the area of Specialty Crop Production, sponsored by the DeWitt Central FFA Alumni. Sanders has invested over 1,350 hours managing and operating his SAE in gourds, seed oats, and Indian corn production. He assists with all parts of the operation from planting to cultivating, harvesting, and marketing the products of his toil. Upon graduation, Sanders plans to pursue a four-year degree in Mechanical Engineering and continue the family farm.

The sponsor of the Specialty Crop Production Proficiency Award is the DeWitt Central FFA Alumni.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 12

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**Proficiency Area: Swine Production - Entrepreneurship**

State Winner: Conner Hemesath

FFA Chapter: South Winneshiek, Calmar

Description: Conner Hemesath of South Winneshiek at Calmar is the winner in the area of Swine Production Entrepreneurship. Conner owns and manages 80 head of purebred and crossbred gilts. He has grown his operation over the past four years to include a 300 head double-L-nursery. Conner plans to attend one year at North Iowa Area Community College then further his education at Iowa State University.

Koby Boysen from the Wapello FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Swine Production-Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award is Iowa Pork Producers Association.

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**Proficiency Area: Swine Production - Placement**

State Winner: Kerrick Knoblock

FFA Chapter: West Lyon, Inwood

Description: Kerrick Knoblock of the West Lyon FFA Chapter at Inwood is the winner in the area of Swine Production Placement. Over the last three years, Knoblock has managed and overseen all aspects of his family's swine production. From vaccinating pigs in the nursery to moving over 700 pigs to another building in the wake of a major windstorm, Knoblock has built a strong skillset to handle a variety of situations. After graduation, Knoblock plans to continue his career on the family farm.

Evan Gibbs from the Cascade FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Swine Production-Placement Proficiency Award is Hog Slat – Midwest Division.

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**Proficiency Area: Turf Grass Management – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Mary Cheney

FFA Chapter: English Valleys FFA Chapter at North English

Description: In the area of Turf Grass Management the winner is Mary Cheney of the English Valleys FFA Chapter at North English. Over her four years of progress, Cheney has profited over \$2,000 by mowing several lawns and cemeteries. Her investment of just over \$1,400 has allowed Cheney to expand her business, grow her skill set in bookkeeping, establish professional goals, and practice time management.

Michael Young from the AGWSR FFA Chapter at Ackley received second in this area.

The sponsor of the Turf Grass Management Proficiency Award is Iowa Turfgrass Institute.

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**Proficiency Area: Vegetable Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Tatum Kahler

FFA Chapter: The winner in the area of Vegetable Production is Tatum Kahler of the North Fayette Valley FFA Chapter at West Union. Kahler has complete management of a pumpkin patch. She has grown her business by the use of social media marketing and having a variety of pumpkins. After graduation, Kahler plans to attend Iowa State University.

Miranda Dreesen from the George-Little Rock FFA Chapter is the runner up in this area.

The sponsor of the Vegetable Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement Proficiency Award is 4 Seasons Fundraising.

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## Iowa FFA Association - 13

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**Proficiency Area: Veterinary Science – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Courtney Becker

FFA Chapter: Maquoketa FFA Chapter

Description: Courtney Becker of the Maquoketa FFA Chapter is the winner in the area of Veterinary Science. Becker has invested over 1,200 hours working at her father's Veterinary Clinic. Becker has assisted with numerous responsibilities involving both small and large animal procedures. She plans to take the skills she's gained from her SAE project and apply them to a future career in medicine.

The second place winner is Zach Briggs of the Albia FFA Chapter.

The sponsor of the Veterinary Science - Entrepreneurship/Placement Proficiency Award is the Iowa State University Pre-Vet Club.

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**Proficiency Area: Wildlife Production and Management – Entrepreneurship/Placement**

State Winner: Luke Bandy

School: West Delaware FFA Chapter, Manchester

Description: In the area of Wildlife Production & Management the winner is Luke Bandy of the West Delaware FFA Chapter of Manchester. Bandy runs his own trapping business of over 100 traps for everything from raccoon and muskrat to mink and otter. Additionally, he works for his dad's Trophies Unlimited taxidermy business. Bandy plans to continue his career in taxidermy after graduation.

Ben Quade from the Manson Northwest Webster FFA Chapter at Manson received second.

The sponsor of the Wildlife Production and Management Proficiency Award is the Iowa Division Izaak Walton League.