

For Immediate Release

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Council Awards Excellence in Agriculture Education

Des Moines, Iowa – April 26, 2018– The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education awarded Central DeWitt High School in DeWitt, Iowa with the 2018 Excellence in Agriculture Education award. The award was presented at the Iowa FFA Leadership Conference held in Ames, Iowa April 22-24, 2018.

The purpose of the award is to identify what makes a highly successful agriculture education program in schools and recognize those who model that success. Amy Grantz is the agriculture teacher at Central DeWitt High School and FFA advisor. The program was nominated for the award by a student in the agriculture education program, Heather Cernek.

“Our program makes students aware of unique careers in agriculture through multiple interactive workshops held many times throughout the year during FFA conventions and leadership conferences,” wrote Cernek. “Guest speakers from local agricultural companies such as River Valley visit our classroom periodically to speak about past career experiences.”

The council also recognized five other schools for excellence in agriculture education.

- **Advisory Committee Award:** Hampton-Durmont CAL CSD in Latimer, Iowa - agriculture teacher, Sarah DeBour. The Hampton-Dumont advisory committee is comprised of 15 members representing many aspects of the industry including small producers, large producers, agriculture business and industry, banking, administration, and students. They meet two times a year reviewing the local curriculum and supporting the integration of the Curriculum for Agriculture Science Education (CASE) through STEM scale-up grants.
- **Program Promotion and Marketing Award:** Central DeWitt High School in DeWitt, Iowa– agriculture teacher, Amy Grantz. During National FFA Week this year, FFA flags lined the downtown and a banner hung over the main road in DeWitt, Iowa. The chapter utilizes its website, a chapter newsletter, and social media regularly to inform the public of the chapter’s activities. Articles are sent to the local newspaper and local businesses display ‘proud to support’ signs in their windows. Other public events like a petting zoo and pumpkin fest help promote the chapter’s activities.
- **Agriculture Career Awareness Award:** Pleasantville High School in Pleasantville, Iowa – agriculture teacher, Monty Collins. The Pleasantville Ag Ed program holds a school-wide career fair every other year inviting the entire high school is invited to attend and learn about a wide variety of careers. Business representatives visit the classroom as guest speakers and provide job shadowing opportunities. Cattle, swine, and crop projects are completely managed by the students purchasing materials, keeping records, planting, harvesting and marketing.
- **Integration of Science Award:** Midland Community School District in Wyoming, Iowa – agriculture teacher, Jamie Christiansen. Midland offers a full strand of CASE: Curriculum for Agriculture Science Education. Through these agriscience courses students participate in labs and hands on experiences that allow for

experimentation and inquiry. These courses increase student comfort with science concepts.

- **Adult Education Award:** Southeast Polk High School in Pleasant Hill, Iowa – agriculture teacher, Matt Eddy. The students run the Animal Learning Center during Iowa State Fair. The animal science class is directly involved with the care of the cows that give birth during the fair, this includes chores and veterinarian appointments throughout the year. The main purpose is to provide an educational experience about animals in agriculture that a majority of people do not typically get to observe. Students answer questions from fairgoers and share the importance and impact of agriculture with a focus on the animal industry.

Agriculture education is offered in 235 high schools across Iowa. Agriculture education employs a three-component model to deliver teaching through classroom instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs, and leadership development through FFA. Students who take an agriculture education class are eligible to join FFA. There are more than 15,300 FFA members in Iowa.

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About the Iowa Council on Agricultural Education

The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education will review, develop, and recommend standards for secondary and postsecondary agricultural education. Established in 1988 by legislative act of the 72nd Iowa General Assembly, the Council is appointed by the Governor annually and made up of nine voting members. The Council members represent all areas of agriculture and diverse geographical areas. The Council includes representation from secondary schools, postsecondary schools, and a teacher educator. Ex officio members include representatives from Iowa FFA, Iowa FFA Alumni, the Postsecondary Agriculture Student Organization of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and members of the Iowa general assembly.

About the Iowa FFA Association

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 15,300 student members as part of 235 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 lowaFFA.com, on [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).