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News Release

Sigourney FFA Wins 2026 Iowa FFA Soils Career Development Event

The Sigourney FFA Chapter from Sigourney was named the Champion Team in the annual Iowa FFA Soils Evaluation Career Development Event held at Iowa State University on October 8, 2026. Members of the first place team included: Rex Flynn, Dayne Chittick, Cooper Moore, and Ella Bruns. Their agriculture education instructor and FFA advisor is Mr. Jerry Driscoll. The AGWSR FFA Chapter from Ackley was named the Reserve Champion Team. Members of the second place team included: Haley Smith, Austin Smith, Hadley Bright, and Everett Gronewold. Their agriculture education instructor and FFA advisor is Mr. James Abbas. Dayne Chittick, Sigourney FFA, Sigourney, was named the High Individual Overall in the competition. The top five teams will represent Iowa at the National Land Judging Event in May in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. East Union FFA, Afton; Montezuma FFA, Montezuma; and Pilot Creek FFA, Pocahontas will join the top two teams in Oklahoma.

FFA teams including from 30 chapters, including 119 individuals participated in this year's Career Development Event designed to provide the student an opportunity to display their agricultural knowledge and skills in the area of Soils Evaluation. The Soils Evaluation Career Development Event included the evaluation of four soil pits, plus a written exam about soils in Iowa. The score card used to judge the soil pits is divided into five parts: Surface Features, Soil Features – The Profile, Land Capability Classification and Productivity Potential, Evaluation of Management Practices, and Sustainability of Soils for Non-Agricultural Uses.

The Iowa FFA Soils Evaluation Career Development Event was made possible with support from Heartland Co-op through the Iowa FFA Foundation. The Iowa State University Department of Agronomy, Draintech, and the Badger Family. Stephanie Zumbach and Glen Ritchie hosted the event. The Iowa State University Soils Judging Team as pit monitors. Amber Anderson of Iowa State University coordinated the event. The official judges were Rich Pope, Lee Burras and Amber Anderson.

Listed below are the top teams and individuals in the various parts of the career development event.

Top 10 Teams

- 1 Sigourney FFA, Sigourney
- 2 AGWSR FFA, Ackley
- 3 East Union FFA, Afton
- 4 Montezuma FFA, Montezuma
- 5 Pilot Creek FFA, Pocahontas
- 6 Sioux Center FFA, Sioux Center
- 7 South O'Brien FFA
- 8 Keota FFA
- 9 Central Community FFA, Elkader
- 10 Audubon FFA, Audubon

Top 10 Individuals

Dayne Chittick, Sigourney FFA, Sigourney
Luke Benson, Montezuma FFA, Montezuma
Rex Flynn, Sigourney FFA, Sigourney
Caitlyn Bilstad, Manson-Northwest Webster FFA, Manson
Haley Smith, AGWSR FFA, Ackley
Brennan Mcguire, Keota FFA
Cooper Moore, Sigourney FFA, Sigourney
Garrett Pirkel, Grinnell FFA
Jacob Meyer, Montezuma FFA, Montezuma
Nicholas Bernhard, Turkey Valley at Jackson Junction

Specialty Areas -- Top Team/ Top Individual:

General Knowledge Examination

Team: Sigourney FFA, Sigourney

Individual: Melanie Kilborn, Nodaway Valley FFA, Greenfield

Pit Evaluation

Team: Sigourney FFA, Sigourney

Individual: Luke Benson, Montezuma FFA, Montezuma

Below is a list of chapters participating by medal group.

Gold Teams (9)

Score Range (485 to 436)

Sigourney FFA, Sigourney

AGWSR FFA, Ackley

East Union FFA, Afton

Montezuma FFA, Montezuma

Pilot Creek FFA, Pocahontas

Sioux Center FFA, Sioux Center

South O'Brien FFA

Keota FFA

Central Community FFA, Elkader

Bronze Teams (10)

Score Range (397 to 352)

Manson-Northwest Webster FFA, Manson

Pleasantville FFA, Pleasantville

Lynnvile-Sully FFA

Central Plains FFA, Gowrie

Nevada FFA, Nevada

Independence FFA, Independence

Cascade FFA

Turkey Valley at Jackson Junction

New Hampton FFA, New Hampton

Central Trail FFA, Leon

Silver Teams (11)

Score Range (426 to 407)

Audubon FFA, Audubon

Grinnell FFA

Nodaway Valley FFA, Greenfield

Algona FFA, Algona

English Valleys FFA, North English

Brokaw FFA, Clarinda

Hawkeye FFA, West Bend

Davis County FFA, Bloomfield

Stanton FFA

Forest City FFA, Forest City

Adel DeSoto Minburn FFA

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About Iowa FFA Association

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 20,900 student members as part of 277 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 and on social media.