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News Release

2021 Stars Over Iowa Winners Announced

DES MOINES, IOWA—The 2021 Stars Over Iowa Winners were announced at the 93rd Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference at Wells Fargo Arena on April 20, 2021. A Star Over Iowa was selected in each of the four different areas: Agricultural Placement, Agribusiness, Agriscience, and Agricultural Production.

The 2021 Star in Ag Placement Winner is Michael DeJong of the Montezuma FFA Chapter. His SAE at DeJong Manufacturing consists of fabricating metal parts through various processes for large agricultural companies. Over the last few years, DeJong has invested over 490 hours in his SAE. At DeJong's, he has worked in the laser, paint, insertion press, turret punching, and shipping departments. This program has allowed him to diversify himself in the agricultural metal fabrication industry. The skills he has learned and advanced through his SAE program will be critical to his future career as he wants to continue his work in the metal fabrication industry. In the FFA, Michael placed first individually, and as a team, in the Farm Business Management competition and was also the 2021 Ag Mechanical Design and Fabrication Proficiency State Champion. After graduation, DeJong will attend Iowa State University to double major in industrial engineering and business analytics. Michael is the son of Matt and Marinda DeJong. His chapter advisor is Rick Swenson. His high school principal is Tim Hoffman, and his superintendent is Nathan Wood.

Zachary Schoelerman of the Spencer FFA Chapter is the Star in Ag Production winner. His SAE projects include raising purebred Southdown sheep, and feeding cattle. Schoelerman started with 6 head of feeder steers and has marketed a total of 196 head over the course of his project, exceeding industry benchmarks for both average daily gain and feed efficiency. His Southdowns began with 10 foundational ewes, and has expanded to 72 ewes and replacements. Through online sales and social media, he has marketed sheep into 15 states. Zach is the state first place winner in Sheep Production Proficiency, and the 2020 Diversified Livestock Production State winner. After graduation Schoelerman plans to pursue a degree in veterinary medicine focusing on small ruminant reproduction. Zach is the son of Dr. Jim and Denice Schoelerman. His chapter advisor is Renee Nehring and former advisors are Jason Holt and Betsy Schoelerman. His activities director is Taylor Chapman.

Elliot Scheaffer of the Sheldon FFA Chapter is the 2021 Star in Agribusiness winner. His SAE includes finding trees that have fell down or unwanted trees and then processing them into the valuable product of firewood. Elliot markets the wood in the summer as fire wood for both camps fires and fireplaces as well as heating in wood stoves. He got started after a big ice storm downed a bunch of trees and there was a need to clear them. Elliot offered to remove the trees for people in exchange for the wood. His business has grown from when he started by adding equipment, to improve efficiency and productivity. Elliot has also expanded his business by marketing on Facebook. The biggest contributor of success to his business venture was a demand for the product he was providing and the availability of materials available to process into firewood. He currently serves as his FFA Chapter President. After graduation, Elliot plans to attend Northwest Iowa Community College for Engineering with a focus on machinery and welding. Elliot is the son of Abe and Amy Scheaffer. His chapter advisors are Mr. Fox and Mr. Bomgaars. His High School principal is Mrs. Sherrie Zeutenhorst and superintendent being Mr. Cory Myer.



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The Star in Agriscience Winner is Jasmyn Hoeger of the Beckman Catholic FFA Chapter at Dyersville. Her SAE focuses on research in the Animal Science field and specifically animal dehorning. Jasmyn's primary interest in Agriscience began when she saw issues on her family cattle farm concerning dehorning and skin condition treatments. Therefore, instead of criticizing them, she decided to discover a solution. Through her research, Hoeger has learned to be persistent, inquisitive, and adaptable in order to create a novel media and culturing method for horn producing cells. This research has given scientists a method of growing horn producing cells for their research as well as benefiting farmers, veterinarians, and cattle in the farming industry. Two significant FFA accomplishments of Jasmyn's are placing 3rd at the 2020 National FFA Agriscience Fair and being on the 2020 State Champion Vet Science CDE team. After graduation, Hoeger plans to attend the University of Iowa to major in Nursing to become a Neonatal Nurse Practitioner. Jasmyn is the daughter of Terry and Rochelle Hoeger. Her chapter advisor is Dawn Mausser. Her high school principal is Marcel Kielkucki, and her Superintendent is Kim Hermsen.

The Stars Over Iowa program is made possible with support from Beck's Hybrids through the Iowa FFA Foundation. The National FFA Foundation sponsors cash awards for the three overall star winners.

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About Iowa FFA Association

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 16,300 student members as part of 248 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, on Facebook, and Twitter.