

ILLUMINATE

Minnesota FFA Association Convention

May 19 – 21, 2020



NEWS RELEASE

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Minnesota FFA Star Agribusiness Winner Hails from Sherburn

Martin County West's Emily Matejka wins organization's highest honor

VIRTUAL – (May 21, 2020) Emily Matejka of the Martin County West FFA Chapter was named 2020 Minnesota FFA Star in Agribusiness in the final day of the organization's virtual convention.

Matejka is the daughter of Roger and Rita Matejka of Sherburn. Her FFA chapter is led by agricultural teachers and advisors Stephanie Wohlhuter, and Jessica and Jeremy Daberkow. The Minnesota FFA Foundation's sponsor for the State Star recognition program is Compeer Financial Services.

The award winner's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) is linked to her employment at Moore and ACE Hardware in Trimont, where she is a sales associate. In that role, she assists customers, answers product questions, completes special orders and provides store maintenance such as inventory, cleaning and stocking shelves. She also raises pumpkins on the home farm and sells them to the hardware store.

"This job was my first, and I am so proud that I have been able to work there. I pride myself in doing a good job at whatever work I do, and it satisfies me to know that any paycheck I receive is hard earned," said Matejka. "My knowledge of the hardware business has grown tremendously, and I have also gained extensive knowledge on the products and how to properly use them in everyday life."

In addition to her SAE work, Matejka has served as the Martin County West FFA Chapter president, secretary and historian. She was the 2019 Region vice president and competed in Crops and Small Animal FFA Career Development Events. Her other activities include 4-H, National Honor Society, track, cross country and golf. She was active in Relay for Life and is a member of First Lutheran Church.

Matejka plans to attend South Dakota State University to study agricultural education, communications and leadership with a supporting major or minor in animal science. Her career goals include continuing to be an agricultural advocate.

In an SAE program, students apply what they are learning in the classroom. A student designs a program to gain hands-on experience and develop skills in agricultural career areas which interest them. Students are supervised by agricultural education teachers in cooperation with parents, employers and other adults who assist them in the development and achievement of their educational and career goals.

Each year, 16 state finalists — four in each category — vie for the association's top awards: Star Farmer, Star in Agribusiness, Star in Production Placement and Star in Agriscience. These awards honor students who have developed outstanding agricultural skills through their SAE and earned the FFA State Degree

Three other finalists vied for the Star Agri Business distinction: James Minten of the Perham FFA, Colby Gunderson of the Deer River FFA and Valerie Messner of the Hancock FFA.

Links to watch the virtual award ceremonies can be found on the Convention App at <https://event.crowdcompass.com/mnffa2020> on desktop, or by searching Minnesota FFA on the Crowd Compass Attendee Hub app on mobile devices.

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Editor's Note: A photo is available by emailing snewellopitz@gmail.com.

About Minnesota FFA

FFA is a national organization developing students' potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education with more than 7000,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Minnesota FFA Association represents nearly 11,000 members and nearly 200 high school chapters across the state. Agricultural education engages students through hands-on learning in the classroom, work-based learning opportunities known as Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects and FFA activities.

You can learn more about the experiences of FFA members and supporters by visiting www.mnffa.org and www.ffa.org.