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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Minnesota FFA Association Announces Proficiency Award Winners**

SAINT PAUL–FFA member \_\_(name)\_\_ from \_\_(chapter)\_\_ took home top honors in the \_\_(proficiency area name)\_\_ proficiency award at the State FFA Convention, April 28-30. The \_\_(proficiency area name)\_\_ proficiency is sponsored by \_\_(sponsor name)\_\_.

Winners of the Minnesota FFA Association proficiency award areas were announced Monday at the 90th Minnesota FFA Convention at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. Proficiency awards are one of many awards given at the state FFA convention. Proficiency award areas allow FFA members to apply skills learned through agricultural education classes to projects that are either categorized as entrepreneurship or placement. The winners from each category have earned the opportunity to represent Minnesota at the 92nd National Convention and Expo Oct. 30-Nov. 2 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

(Quote from student and description of project).

There are nearly 50 proficiency award areas covering career interests in everything from dairy science to forestry. For more information on proficiency awards, visit www.ffa.org/participate/awards/proficiencies.

The National FFA Organization is the largest national youth leadership organization with over 660,000 student members, representing more than 8,600 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The 90th Minnesota FFA Convention was held April 28-30 in St. Paul and gathered nearly 4,000 FFA members, advisors and guests from across the state.

**About Minnesota FFA**

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. More than 25,000 students in Minnesota are enrolled in agricultural education classes. Students who have taken three or more classes in career and technical education, including agricultural education have a graduation rate of 91.7 percent. Visit www.mnffa.org for more information, view taped general sessions of the Minnesota FFA Convention at mnffafoundation.org/livestreaming or check out highlights from convention on social media.

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The Proficiency Awards were announced during the third general session.

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| **Proficiency Award Area** | **Top Individuals** | **Chapter** | **Sponsor** |
| Agricultural Communications | **Cassidy Hoffman** | **Sleepy Eye** | The Farmer |
| Agricultural Education | **Carolyn Pavlish** | **Mahnomen** | The Jim Ertl Fund |
| Agricultural Mechanics Fabrication and Design | **Emily Stemper** | **Foley** | John Deere Company |
| Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Entrepreneurship | **Brennan Kluender** | **United South Central** | Charles and Barb Melberg |
| Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Placement | **Brittany Schultz** | **Atwater Cosmos Grove City** | MN SD Equipment Dealers Association |
| Agricultural Processing | **Madison Heide** | **Detroit Lakes** | CHS Foundation |
| Agricultural Sales Entrepreneurship | **Beth Hanson** | **Medford** | Minnesota FFA Foundation |
| Agricultural Sales Placement | **Meghan Beckendorf** | **Renville County West** | McDonald’s Twin Cities Co-op |
| Agricultural Services | **Tyson Meidl** | **Springfield** | Rosen’s Diversified |
| Agriscience Research- Animal Systems | **Ben Clark** | **Kerkhoven Murdock Sunburg** | Hormel Foods |
| Agriscience Research- Integrated Systems | **Daniel Williamson** | **Atwater Cosmos Grove City** | Minnesota Grain and Feed Association |
| Agriscience Research Plant Systems | **Lauren Krieger** | **Kerkhoven Murdock Sunburg** | MN Soybean Research & Promotion Council |
| Beef Production Entrepreneurship | **Camren Saxton** | **Fairmont** | Greg, Karen and Nick Gosen |
| Beef Production Placement | **Dylan Lunning** | **Leroy Ostrander** | Minnesota FFA Foundation |
| Dairy Production Entrepreneurship | **Jenna Caughey** | **Brainerd** | MInnesota Select Sires Co-op |
| Dairy Production Placement | **Rebeckah Schroeder** | **Caledonia** | Midwest Dairy Association |
| Diversified Agricultural Production | **Tyler Jax** | **Southland** | Minnesota Crop Improvement Association |
| Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship | **Carson Kahler** | **Martin County West** | CF Industries |
| Diversified Crop Production Placement | **Trent Stevermer** | **United South Central** | Land O’Lakes |
| Diversified Horticulture | **Alija Ros** | **Tracy** | Compeer Financial Services |
| Diversified Livestock Production | **Adrienne Lipinski** | **Eden Valley Watkins** | Minnesota Veterinary Medical Foundation |
| Environmental Science & Natural Resources Management | **Ellie Lindow** | **Lake City** | Great River Energy |
| Equine Science Entrepreneurship | **Kyerra Carter** | **Hancock** | Zinpro Corporation |
| Equine Science Placement | **Jonni Biren** | **Russel Tyler Ruthton** | Central Farm Service |
| Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production | **Brayden Schultz** | **United South Central** | Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council |
| Forage Production | **Lisa Kolseth** | **Thief River Falls** | DuPont Pioneer |
| Fruit Production | **Ekaterina Ivanov** | **Fertile Beltrami** | MinnTex |
| Goat Production | **Payton Guenther** | **Chatfield** | Minnesota Veterinary Medical Foundation |
| Grain Production Entrepreneurship | **Carson Kahler** | **Martin County West** | Minnesota Corn Growers Association |
| Grain Production Placement | **Marc Collins** | **Kerkhoven Murdock Sunburg** | DuPont Pioneer |
| Home and/or Community Development | **Justin Nord** | **Norman County West** | AgriBank |
| Landscape Management | **Tara Schultz** | **Grand Rapids** | Wells Fargo |
| Nursery Operations | **Talitha Horkey** | **Westbrook Walnut Grove** | Ziegler Cat |
| Outdoor Recreation | **Paige Stuber** | **AFSA** | Johnson Outdoors |
| Poultry Production | **Kaitlyn Lorang** | **Cedar Mountain** | Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council |
| Sheep Production | **Wyatt Jensen** | **Edgerton** | James & Nancy Youngs |
| Small Animal Production and Care | **Amanda Kelling** | **Pine Island** | Minnesota Veterinary Medical Foundation |
| Specialty Animal Production | **Ashley Teubert** | **Glencoe Silver Lake** | Ralco |
| Swine Production Entrepreneurship | **Creighton Sauer** | **Lewiston Altura** | Christensen Farms |
| Swine Production Placement | **Jacob Stevermer** | **United South Central** | Christensen Farms |
| Turf Grass Management | **Adam Stenzel** | **United South Central** | Northland Ford Dealers |
| Vegetable Production | **Jennifer Wear** | **Sibley East** | AgCountry Farm Credit Services |
| Veterinary Science | **Auna Koenigs** | **Southland** | Minnesota Veterinary Medical Foundation |
| Wildlife Management | **Conner Lemmon** | **Milaca** | George & Mary Peichel |