

National FFA Convention Issue



Pontiac FFA Chapter Named Model of Excellence



The Pontiac FFA Chapter was named the 2013 Model of Excellence at the 86th National FFA Convention & Expo in Louisville, Kentucky.

All chapters that receive national three–star ratings are eligible to compete for the National Model of Excellence Award. Pontiac FFA Chapter received a plaque in an onstage ceremony during the convention’s second general session on Thursday, Oct. 31. Top chapters were also selected from the middle school, student and community development divisions.

Members of the Pontiac FFA focused on recruitment and retention this year. They made presentations at seven junior highs and answered questions about joining the agricultural education program. As a result 88 new members have signed up to take the introduction to agriculture class next fall. They are also reaching out to grade school and high school students with their program P.A.I. L. – Promoting Agriculture in Literature. This year they reached 1,069 students, helping them with reading skills and agricultural literacy.

The Models of Excellence awards are sponsored by John Deere. It is one of the many ways FFA members accomplish the FFA mission and succeed in making a difference in their communities and the lives of others.

Tyler Loschen Named American Star Farmer



Tyler Loschen's father is a former agriculture teacher and his mother was his agriculture teacher and FFA advisor in high school. So naturally, he believes that he was predestined to be a part of FFA.

The Illinois FFA member always had a strong desire to farm, developed no doubt from early days of playing with farm toys as a young child to spending summertime weeks with two sets of grandparents that farmed as a youth. But since his parents didn't farm, he knew that if he wanted to follow his dream, he'd have to carve his own path.

As a middle-school student, he studied livestock and became very involved in livestock judging. After joining FFA his freshman year, Loschen began a supervised agriculture experience in corn and soybean production. He eventually achieved one of his long-term goals by buying 40 acres of farmland.

Since, he has bought a combine, tractor, planter and other equipment needed to produce and harvest crops. He has made tough financial and management decisions along the way as he grows his farm's profitability and works to minimize financial risk.

"I feel very fortunate that my experiences in FFA have laid the foundation for my future," Loschen said. "I've faced the late, wet fall of 2009 and the drought of 2012. I've experienced the challenges of high feed prices and herd health issues and I have persevered. It is the result of these challenges that drive my passion for production agriculture while providing food for an ever-growing population."

Saturday at the 86th National FFA Convention & Expo in Louisville, Ky., Loschen was named 2013 American Star Farmer.

"It's been a really humbling and gratifying experience to tell my story here in Louisville," he said. "I've sort of built my operation from the ground up. The fact that FFA has allowed me to tell my story has been a gratifying experience."

Loschen, 21, a member of the Tri-Point High School FFA chapter in Cullom, Ill., has earned a host of state and national FFA awards, including Star Farmer of Illinois, national proficiency awards in diversified agriculture and diversified crop production and chapter Greenhand and Workhorse awards. He served as president, vice president and Greenhand president of his local FFA chapter.

He is the son of Gary and Diana Loschen, who is his FFA chapter advisor.

National FFA Organization Honors Frank M. Dry's Commitment to Agricultural Education

Frank M. Dry, who retired as Associate Executive Secretary with the Illinois FFA Association in December 2012, has been awarded a VIP citation by the National FFA Organization recognizing his significant contributions and dedication to FFA and agricultural education.

Mr. Dry has sat in on more than 1,500 American FFA Degree interviews and helped nearly 1,500 Illinois FFA members earn their American Farmer Degree. He coordinated nearly 30 Illinois FFA Foundation fund-raising campaigns that earned more than \$9.1 million combined.

He was also honored for serving as an assistant for the National FFA Extemporaneous Public Speaking CDE for 19 years, a facilitator of the National FFA Star Selection Committee for 10 years, a member of the National FFA Foundation's Board of Directors and a member of the Budget and Audit committees of NASAE for more than 10 years.

Mr. Dry taught agricultural education for 15 years and completed three years of service in the U.S. Army.

The 2012-13 Illinois FFA state officer team nominated Mr. Dry for the award.

"The VIP citation recognizes the dedicated individuals who contribute to the FFA mission of student success through their hard work and cooperation," said National FFA Organization CEO Dwight Armstrong. "Without such strong and outstanding commitment, FFA would not be able to help build strong character in its members, who in turn build strong families, communities and industries."



Amy Loschen Wins Swine Production SAE Area

Amy Loschen started her swine project with two gilts, and over the years she continued to expand her project that earned her the national winner honor in the area of swine production — entrepreneurship.

Although Loschen was hoping to be named the national winner at the convention, she still was surprised when her name was announced.

“That is one of those feelings you’ll never forget,” the Tri-Point FFA member said.

Loschen raises Duroc, Hampshire, Yorkshire and crossbred pigs.

“Tyler and I decided to have a swine operation as a partnership,” said the FFA member about her brother. “I started by owning 25 percent of the swine herd, and now I own 50 percent.”

In addition to showing her pigs, Loschen also sells show pigs to other junior exhibitors.

“We retain quality females for replacements in our herd, and we try to maintain from 12 to 15 females,” said the daughter of Gary and Diana Loschen. “Those not sold as show pigs or kept as replacements are sold to Tyson on a yield and grade basis.”



Source: AgriNews



CONGRATS AMY!

Section 7 Chapter Visits & LTS 2013

During the week of October 13, the Illinois Association FFA Section 7 Officer team and the State Treasurer, Joe Heavner visited every FFA chapter in Section 7. The officers visited Somonauk-Leland-Sandwich, Earlville, Minooka, Mendota, Streator, Ottawa, Seneca, Serena, Newark, and Woodland FFA Chapters.

At each of the visits, Joe talked to the Agriculture classes about not being afraid to go after your goals and step out of their comfort zone. Combing a leadership activity with a keynote address about going above and beyond kept the students' interest.

The section officers had the opportunity to check out the other FFA chapters and see their facilities during chapter visits. The chapter visits was a successful week in planning the potential of many FFA members through Section 7.

On October 15, 2013, the Section 7 Officers held the Annual Leadership Training School. The night started off with a keynote by the State Treasurer, Joe Heavner. The FFA members then moved to leadership workshops that were conducted by the Agriculture students at Illinois State University and Perry Harlow. To end the night, the Section Officers hosted the annual Ag Olympics. At the end of the games, the Serena FFA took home the traveling Ag Olympics trophy. Dinner was provided by Serena FFA Alumni. Thank you to everyone who made that night possible.



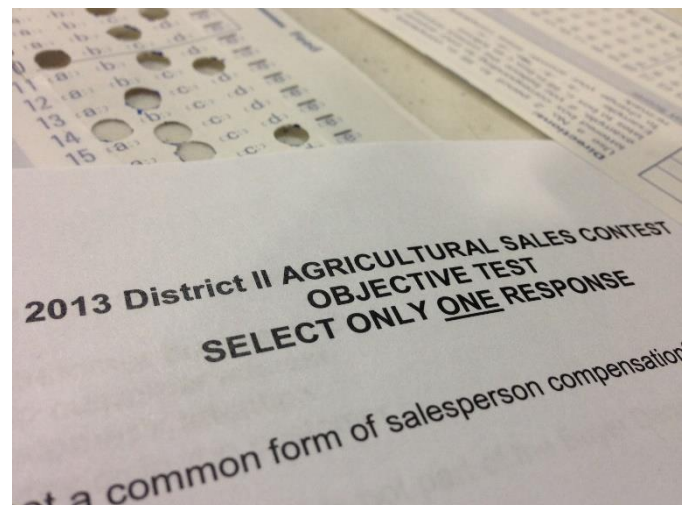
ELITE Conference

150 career and technical education students attended the 2013 Elite Conference at the Illinois Farm Bureau state headquarters in Bloomington, Illinois on November 19th, 2013. This conference is for high school juniors and senior interested in becoming teachers in the areas of Agricultural Education Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Science Technology, Business, Marketing & Computer Education, and Technology & Engineering Education. The students had the opportunities to talk to colleges and universities across the state of Illinois that offered career and technical education programs. Additionally, the students participated in a mini teaching activity, asked questions of veteran teachers, and attended a CTE content specific session. For more information about the ELITE Conference, please talk to your agriculture teacher.



District II Ag Sales Results

Chapter	Placing
Prairie Central	1
Iroquois West	2
Seneca	3
Somonauk-Leland-Sandwich	4
Mendota	5
Clifton Central	6
Cissna Park	7
Watseka	8
Peotone	9
Streator	10



Attention all Chapter Reporters!

Chapter Reporters: I encourage you to send me your articles on what is happening in your chapter. I will make a page in this newsletter for the Chapter Chatter. This is basically a place for your chapters to submit their news and you can also see what other chapters are doing to get some ideas for your chapter. This will be a benefit for you to have a place to submit news. I will also place your articles on our webpage under the "Section Chitchat" tab.



Contact Us!

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We are on the Web!

Illinois Section 7 FFA is on the web! We have a website created for your use to read articles, see upcoming events, and get to know your officers. As your chapter reporter, I try to keep this site updated often and post articles of interest and pictures. My main goal in doing this is to keep everyone updated with what is going on in Section 7. Find us at ilsection7ffa.weebly.com.

We also have a Facebook & Twitter page. I encourage all of your current chapter members along with alumni and past members to like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. I post all of the photos from events there along with the articles on the events.



www.facebook.com/section7ffa



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