Feb. 1, 2019

**Aggies compete at Sioux Empire contest**  
By NCTA News

CURTIS, Neb. _ Livestock judging teams from Curtis kicked off their spring travel schedule with a season opener last week in South Dakota.

The Aggie judges from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture competed at the Sioux Empire Livestock Judging Contest at the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

On the route from the NCTA campus to Sioux Falls, the team stopped by Ruth Simmentals at Rising City to evaluate livestock, said Douglas Smith, livestock judging coach.

“The students have put in a lot of time and represented NCTA well at this contest. They are eager to get prepared for the upcoming contests,” Smith said.
Collegiate teams began their contest day January 26 at 6:30 a.m. at the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

Aggie students from sophomore (NCTA Black) and freshman (NCTA Red) programs did well for their first official contest of the spring semester, Smith said.

“There are great learning opportunities for these young people who are supported well from all industries in the state,” he said.

“More importantly, NCTA is creating a network that will enhance their careers as they move forward in education and career pathways.”

Peyton McCord of Cairo placed 33rd overall, with Rachel Miller of Basehor, Kansas placing 23rd individual in the sheep and goats judging, and Grant Romshek of Shelby was 29th in swine evaluation.

The Black Team results included: 12th overall, 11th in sheep and goats, 13th in beef, 13th in swine and 14th in oral reasons.

For the NCTA Red Team, Garrett Lapp of Adamsville, Ohio, tied for 12th place and Emily Riley of Norton, Kansas was 28th, both in beef cattle evaluation.

Other team placings were 13th overall, 11th in swine, 12th in beef, 15th in oral reasons, and 17th in sheep and goats evaluation.

Aggie judging students evaluate animals throughout the week in their campus classes, having access to large animal livestock (and horses) at the NCTA farm and campus facilities, including the indoor arena of the Livestock Teaching Center.

They returned to campus ahead of their January 7th start date for the spring semester to “work out” at farms, livestock facilities and feedlots around the Curtis area.

Coach Smith is assisted by two third-year students who competed the past two seasons on the Aggie team. They are Dean Fleer of Pierce and Nathan Lashley of Curtis.

Smith said he appreciates the great support of producers and students’ families. The Wilke Family of Columbus and Fleer Family of Pierce fed the team meals Friday noon and Saturday evening.

Upcoming contests for the NCTA Aggies will be:
   February 9 - Heart City Bull Bash in Valentine
   February 10 - Iowa Beef Expo in Des Moines
   February 23 – Nebraska Cattlemen’s Classic in Kearney

NCTA team members are: Tiffany Dickau, Elwood; Maisie Kennicutt, Wallace; Garrett Lapp, Adamsville, Ohio; Colbey Luebbe, Seward; Remy Mansour, Petaluma, California; Peyton McCord, Cairo; Rachel Miller, Basehor, Kansas; Will Moeller, Grand Island; Seth Racicky, Mason City; Emily Riley, Norton, Kansas; Grant Romshek, Shelby; Camden Wilke, Columbus; Dean Fleer, Pierce, and Nathan Lashley, Curtis, assistant coaches.

See this article online: https://go.unl.edu/7vzu

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