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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Pete Ricketts, Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NDA CONGRATULATES ELITE SHOWMAN COMPETITORS

GRAND ISLAND – Agriculture and livestock competitions are always fan favorites at the Nebraska State Fair. The grandest competition of all took place over Labor Day weekend as 4-H and FFA champions from all over the state participated in the annual Nebraska Elite Showman Competition. This was the 12th year for the event which is coordinated by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and the Nebraska Rural Radio Association in cooperation with the Nebraska State Fair.

“Participating in the Nebraska Elite Showman Competition is a great honor for 4-H and FFA members to demonstrate their showmanship, interview and leadership skills,” said NDA Director Greg Ibach. “I’m pleased that NDA and our partners are able to coordinate and sponsor events like these to recognize the hard work, dedication and passion that young Nebraskans have for agriculture.”

Elite Showmen competitors must be between 14-18 years of age and enrolled in 4-H or FFA. Counties are able to select only one 4-H or FFA member to represent them to compete at the State Fair. Agricultural business and organizations generously contribute to the contest in order for the winners to receive monetary prizes along with their statewide recognition.

“Programs such as the Elite Showman Competition encourage youth in our state to grow and learn about agriculture from judges and other showmen,” Ibach said. “That spirit of competition is important in agriculture as it is in life to make people stronger and drive them to achieve their goals.”

In this year’s Nebraska Elite Showman Competition, 37 counties were represented.

Competitors are scored on beef, swine and sheep showmanship, as well as interview skills and knowledge via a written test. Along with first, second and third place overall winners, winners are selected for each division. The top overall Elite Showman receives \$2,000, the second place finisher receives \$1,000 and the third place overall winner receives \$500. Division winners are awarded \$300 each. All other competitors receive a \$50 prize.

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The 2017 overall winners were:

1st place overall: Fina Choat from Boone County

2nd place overall: Blake Guenther from Cuming County

3rd place overall: Jennifer Tidwell from Douglas/Sarpy County

The 2017 Elite Showman division winners were:

Swine Showmanship: Lindsi Loos from Sherman County

Sheep Showmanship: Fina Choat from Boone County

Beef Showmanship: Megan Muller from Dixon County

Written Test: Fina Choat from Boone County

Interview: Felicia Knoerzer from Gosper County

Other participants included: Madalynn Welsch (Franklin); Kade Bose (Harlan); John Alfs (Fillmore); Abigail Lutjelusche (Colfax); Kelsay Schlichtman (Jefferson); TaraLee Hudson (Thayer); Chase DeVries (Adams); Cameron Lashley (Red Willow); Blake Bruns (Lincoln); Brock Uhlir (Howard); Abbey Vales (Saline); Courtney Philips (Phelps); Hannah Robertson (Perkins); Blake Wert (Hamilton); Whitney Steckel; (Loup); Karleigh Kleinknecht (Dawson); James Wetovick (Nance); Sophia Lenter (Gage); Caitlyn Walbrecht (Lancaster); Jency Starr (McPherson); Taylor Gregory (Dodge); Cara Wolverton (Seward); Kylie Kempf (Wayne); Shelby Wachter (Washington); Riley Eisenhauer (Frontier); Creighton Hirschfeld (York); Payton Flower (Scotts Bluff); Saige Skalsky (Keith); Mykala Tincher (Buffalo); Grant Romshek (Butler); Ty Groth (Platte).

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MEDIA: Photographs of the Elite Showman Competition and the winners can be found on the NDA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Nebraska.Department.Agriculture