

PRESS RELEASE

**December 20, 2023**

For Immediate Release

marnie.swartzendruber@agroliquid.com

For more information, contact:

**Marnie Swartzendruber**

517-640-6175

### FFA Students Shine in FFA Crop Management Challenge

ST JOHNS, MI - The FFA Crop Management Challenge is an annual competition held on the AgroExpo grounds in St Johns, Michigan, for FFA students to test their agronomy skills. Contestants compete with other chapters to make sound agronomic and environmental decisions in a demonstration plot of corn or soybeans. The students make all decisions from selecting the tillage practice to what inputs they use to help crop fertility.

The competition helps FFA students get hands-on experience and make management decisions. They gain knowledge on the process growers make when deciding which products to use on their crops, and they learn how to manage insects and diseases while maintaining acceptable profit margins.

“The competition gives students the opportunity to research, hypothesize, make the recommendations, and then find out what those recommendations yield in a world where the climate the determines a majority of the outcome,” said Troy Bancroft, AgroLiquid Chairman of the Board.

Contestants in the challenge are judged on yield, economics, and presentation responses to the judges’ questions.

“At the end of this competition, the students explain the ‘whys’ to the decisions they made,” said Marnie Swartzendruber, AgroExpo Show Coordinator. “This shows the depth of their understanding, which is what we’re hoping they take away from this competition.”

Ten FFA Chapters from Michigan participated in this year’s contest, which was the fifth annual. First-place winners will receive a plaque, traveling trophy and \$1,000; second-place winners will receive a plaque and \$500; and third-place winners will receive a plaque and \$250.

Our 2023 winners are:

#### Corn

1. Camden-Frontier – Blake Bever, Kenton Clark, Brayden Bever, Carter VanAkin. Advisor Sarah Davis.
2. Coopersville – Autumn Langeland, Ethen Burgtorf. Advisor Samantha Ludlam.
3. Fowlerville – Jennifer Irani, Makenna Archibald, Ava Neiryneck, Jacki Lusby, Grace Lapczynski. Advisor Curtis Refior.

#### Soybean

1. Ionia – Theresa Schmitz, Nathan Halfmann, Austin Schafer. Advisor Jason Griffith.
2. Ithaca – Carlson Eckelbarger, Nicole Hollabaugh, Pazlee Donovan, Tanner Lamey. Advisor Leslie Siefka.
3. Coleman – Hannah Admire. Advisor Eric Fischer.

Other competing FFA teams included chapters from Stockbridge (corn, soybean) and Ovid-Elsie (corn).

FFA and the competition covers more than just growing crops and making decisions, because it's also a foundation for learning in real-life agricultural situations.

"FFA definitely has the agricultural and agriscience portion, but it also has the leadership component that trains students to make the best decisions possible and encourage others to come alongside them in what they believe," said Bancroft. "AgroExpo and AgroLiquid do their best to encourage students to participate in hands-on experiences, as we believe in the future of ag - and like the creed of the FFA, we support that not only in words, but in deeds."

The FFA Crop Management Challenge would also like to recognize the organizations that sponsored the contest: AgroLiquid, Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, Dekalb/ASGROW, Kubota, Midwest Laboratories, Michigan Soybean Committee, Pioneer, Stine, Bush Hog, Pivot Bio, Gold Coast Sales, Lynnman Construction, MWC, Corteva, Ag Pro Farm Service LLC, Eagle Valley Ag Risk Advisors, LLC, Feldpausch Precision Services, Fraleigh Law Firm, Golden Harvest, Michigan Foundation for Agriculture, and Precision Planting.

The students will receive their awards at the 2024 Michigan State FFA convention held February 28-March 1, 2024.

For more information, visit [theagroexpo.com/ffa](https://theagroexpo.com/ffa).