

Over 130 High School Students Participate in Tri-County Land Judging Competition

The 2015 Tri-County High School Land Judging Contest was held on Thursday, October 15th at Five Star Dairy in Dunn County. Approximately 130 students from Boyceville, Colfax, Durand, Elmwood, Menomonie, and Mondovi High Schools participated in the event.

The students examined four soil pits to determine the texture, structure, depth, slope and drainage of the soil. Students were also tasked with determining soil fertility and nutrient management requirements. Using that information, they then identified soil erosion and land use limitations and capabilities of the soil and recommended the farm management and conservation practices. New this year was a soil health learning station led by John Sippl, District Conservationist with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, where students learned about soil biology.

Scoring was based on the sum of the four top scoring individuals from each school. This year the top school in the event was Colfax, led by Agriscience Instructor John Nelson. They scored a total of 1,171 points. Dakota Homann had the top individual score of 309. Ross Taylor, Jared Taylor, and Taylor Meyer, with scores ranging from 278 to 298, completed Colfax's top four.

The Boyceville Team, directed by Agriscience Instructor Glenn Knudtson, placed second in the contest with a score of 1,104. Kevin Clark was the top individual scorer with 288 points. Jake Lake, Nick Martin, and Sam Hellmann were the other top-scoring individuals.

Third place honors went to the Menomonie Team, under the direction of Agriscience Instructor Jean D'Angelo, with a score of 1,060. Kendra Larson was the top individual with a score of 275. Ellie Fritz, Josee Bignell, and Blake Paulson were the other top-scoring members of the Menomonie Team.

The Durand Team, under the direction of Agriscience Instructor, Mike Retzloff, placed fourth with a team total of 1,004. Leading scorer was Logan Polzer, with a score of 289. Other top-scoring members for the team were Makenze Schuh, Lucas Wayne and Marija Seker with individual scores ranging from 230-248.

Under the direction of Agriscience Instructor Darin Gray, the Mondovi Team received fifth place with a score of 765.

Garrett Kees received top score for the team with 228 points. Other top-scorers were Bryce Johnson, Hayley Gifford and Ben Larson.

From Elmwood, and competing under the direction of Agriscience Instructor Jeff Pickerign, was Joy Schwebach who finished with a score of 281 points.

The Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division organized the event with assistance from Dunn and Pepin County Land and Water Conservation and USDA-NRCS staff. Special thanks goes to River Country Co-op and Lee and Jim Jenson (Five Star Dairy) who sponsored snacks and beverages for competitors. Tim Miland, Area Resource Soil Scientist with the USDA-NRCS, was the official judge.