

Lebanon County 4-H and FFA Livestock Judging Teams Excel

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Market Staff

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Two Lebanon County youth livestock judging teams secured their spots in the county's agricultural record books by winning both the Pennsylvania 4-H and FFA state livestock judging contests.

Capturing first place in the Pennsylvania FFA Livestock Judging Career Development Event (CDE) in June were Cedar Crest FFA chapter members — Billie Jo Atkins, Gretchen Artz, Nate Artz, and Carl Eisenhauer, Jr. They are also members of 4-H clubs.

Competing as the Lebanon County 4-H team were Travis Adam, Kyle Fleener, Tim Schaeffer and Nate Tice. They are all members of county 4-H clubs and came together as a team coached by a veteran in livestock judging, Brian Kreider, who is a Penn State graduate in animal science and a Lebanon County crop and beef farmer.

By winning their state events, both teams earned their way to the national events.

The Cedar Crest FFA team members traveled to the National FFA Convention Oct. 24-27 in



Lebanon County 4-H livestock judging team which placed first in state competition and third overall at the national event: Seated, from left: Travis Adam, Fredericksburg; Kyle Fleener, Robesonia; Tim Schaeffer, Myerstown; and Nate Tice, Lebanon. Standing: Brian Kreider, team coach, Lebanon County beef and crop farmer.

Louisville, where they did relatively well competing as individuals and qualified as a Bronze Emblem Team. Billie Jo Atkins was a Silver Emblem Individual award winner and Gretchen Artz, Nate Artz, and Carl Eisenhauer, each received a Bronze Emblem Individual award.

Culminating the Lebanon County 4-H team's year was placing third overall at the 78th National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest, Nov. 12-13, during the North American International Livestock Exposition. The 4-H

national event also took place in Louisville.

At the national event, 32 teams from across the United States competed as individuals in the four classes: sheep, swine, cattle, and oral (reasons). Their individual scores were tallied for a team total. Illinois was the first place overall winner with 2226 points, followed by Texas second with 2198 points; Pennsylvania, third with 2191 points; Ohio, fourth with 2159 points; and Indiana, fifth with 2156 points.

Travis Adam was second in

team and accompanied them to many events. Considering practice took place almost every weekend since early in 2001, and, add to that the traveling to competitions, Kreider's dedication paid off for his team.

Other major events for the Pennsylvania 4-Hers and their team placings were: Eastern Nationals, Sept. 22 in Maryland, fourth overall; Keystone International (KILE), Oct. 6, fifth; and the American Royal Livestock Exposition, Oct. 27, in Kansas City, second overall.

The Lebanon County team started participating in judging contests in March. They first competed at a Spring contest at Penn State, and then the Southeast 4-H Regional livestock roundup in Chester County where they won first place.

An out-of-state event in which they placed first for the second year in a row was the Cattail Classic at the Mullinex farm in Maryland. Travis Adam who was the first place individual winner won a two-year scholarship to Butler College in Kansas where Chris Mullinex coaches the livestock judging team.

All of the members of the two Pennsylvania State champion teams, both FFA and 4-H, became interested in livestock judging in the 4-H program, beginning in elementary school. Some were as young as eight years old. These outstanding eight teenagers and their parents and coaches deserve congratulations for their outstanding achievements.

the individual rankings, only one point behind the first place finisher, Craig Steck, from Knoxville, Ill. Sealing their Pennsylvania team's third place overall was Kyle Fleener, who was the fourth highest individual winner.

The Pennsylvania 4-H team's coach certainly is to be congratulated for all their achievements. Kreider has spent countless hours working with each member of the



Lebanon County's Cedar Crest FFA livestock judging team which placed first in the state FFA Livestock Judging Career Development Event (CDE): From left: Nate Artz, Gretchen Artz, Billie Jo Atkins, and Carl Eisenhauer Jr.

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