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LINCOLN, NE (April 13, 2018) --Awards were presented to 22 FFA members for their speaking skills and knowledge of cooperatives during the 90th annual Nebraska FFA Convention on April 5-6, 2018.

Each contestant in the Cooperative Speaking Competition was judged on a six- to eight-minute prepared speech on a topic dealing with cooperatives and their benefits to the local, state and national economies. Participants were selected for the competition at district contests throughout the state over the past several months.

The competition is sponsored by the Nebraska Cooperative Council Education Foundation in an effort to help develop leadership skills and increase understanding of the cooperative system. The Council is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan trade association representing approximately 96% of the agricultural cooperatives throughout Nebraska. 2018 marks the 67th consecutive year that the Council or the Education Foundation has supported the Nebraska FFA Association.

Thomas Bosmeniel from the Seward FFA Chapter took top honors in the 2018 competition and received a trophy, first place medal, and check for \$250 from the Nebraska Cooperative Council. Second place went to Jocelyn Pohl of the Bridgeport Chapter along with a medal and check for \$125. Third place went to Jadyn Burenheide of the Howells-Dodge FFA Chapter who received a medal and check for \$75.

Also receiving medals in the competition and the FFA chapters they represent were (in alphabetical order after 4th place):

Gold - Elizabeth Kment, Plainview (4th); Caleb Hendrickson, Shickley; Brea Hostert, West Holt; Kara Krejdl, Southern Valley; and Laura Wuskowiak, Gothenburg

Silver - Sarah Adam, Ravenna; Jordyn Anderson, Plainview; Creighton Harrington, Loup City; Ana Leise, Mead; Abby Pieke, Newman Grove; Renee Redsem, Chadron; Madison Stracke, Stuart; and Anna Thede, St. Paul

Bronze - Rebecca Dozler, Boone Central; Alexis Gerritse, Tri County; Abigail Goosey, McPherson County; Sarina Jassen, Adams Central; Zane Kern, Blair; and Bailey McLaughlin, Pawnee City

Rocky Weber, NCCEF President, indicated that "The Council is proud to provide support for these students as they develop their leadership and communication skills while at the same time learning about the value cooperatives bring to Nebraskans all across the state."