

FARM NEWS

High school students participate in soil judging contest

On Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2018, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Iowa, Keokuk, Mahaska and Poweshiek Counties hosted their annual Quad-County Soil Judging Contest for local high school students. Twelve schools including Belle Plaine, Clear Creek Amana, Eddyville-Blakesburg-Freemont, English Valleys, HLV, Iowa Valley, Keota, Montezuma, Oskaloosa, Sigourney, Tri-County, and Williamsburg participated in the event. This allowed 137 students to participate in an outdoor soil class.

This year's competition was held at Lake



Students from many counties took part in a soil judging contest last month.

Iowa Park, north of Millersburg. Students evaluated three pits in five different categories: surface features, soil features (profile), land capability

and productivity potential, evaluation of land management practice and suitability of soils for nonagricultural uses. Contestants needed to

consider such things as landscape position, slope, depth of horizons, parent material, native vegetation, drainage, erosion, limitations to the land's ability to be productive, and appropriateness of multiple agriculture practices as well as nonagricultural uses.

Students also demonstrated their knowledge of soils with a written exam.

Congratulations to Alex Cheney of Montezuma and Ty Buresh from Williamsburg on their first-place tie in the senior division individual competition. Also, in the senior division, Sigourney Team 1(Nick Goad, Lainey Graff, Cole Weber and Mac Conrad) placed first with Montezuma Team 1(Alex Cheney, Jacob Ross, Lauren Klos and Carmen Klos) coming in second in team competition.

There was a tie also in the junior division individual competition. Dawson Baumert and Zane Hahn both from Sigourney earned first place. Junior team competition

finished with Sigourney Team 1(Dawson Baumert, Zane Hahn, Cullen Smith and Stacia Hammes) receiving first place and Belle Plaine Team 1(Zach Brecht, Kamryn Haskey, Carson Adams and Jared Ward) achieving second place. Congratulations to all.

Acknowledgement goes to the Iowa County Conservation Board for allowing the use of Lake Iowa as this year's venue, Jim Reinhart Tiling for digging the pits and for their work preparing the site, Monsanto for supplying port-a-johns and refreshments, Jason Steele for taking time to share his expertise of soils, taking almost an hour teaching those competing as juniors, and grading the pits.