



NEWS RELEASE

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Minnesota student named Star in Agriscience

Amy Lynn Robak receives top honor for her conservation efforts

INDIANAPOLIS – Conservation and agronomy have always been important to Amy Lynn Robak. Her efforts to help farmers make economical and environmentally friendly decisions in the areas of crop nutrients are winning the 21-year-old top honors.

The National FFA Organization has named the Oak Park, Minn. resident 2009 American Star in Agriscience, one of the organization's highest honors. Each year at the national FFA convention, 16 national finalists vie for the organization's top awards: American Star Farmer, American Star in Agribusiness, American Star in Agricultural Placement and American Star in Agriscience. These awards honor students who have developed outstanding agricultural skills and competencies through their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE); demonstrated outstanding management skills; earned the American FFA Degree – the organization's highest level of accomplishment; and met other agricultural education, scholastic and leadership requirements. Each finalist was interviewed by a panel of judges, who named the top candidate in each area. The winner was announced in an onstage convention ceremony and received a plaque and an award of \$4,000. The runners'-up will also receive plaques and \$2,000 each.

Robak has always had an interest in natural resources and conservation. When she expressed these interests to her FFA advisor, Alan Stemper, he helped her set goals that would dovetail with her interests and help her continue to learn more about these areas. She began work at the Benton County Soil and Water Conservation Office, and was able to work with farmers who were concerned with environmental and natural resource issues on their land.

"I simply wanted to learn new technologies in the field of agronomy such as crop nutrient tools," Robak said. She was able to learn about soil conservation practices and how nutrient

management can benefit local farmers. Robak credits her father, Richard Robak, for getting her interested in conservation methods, such as crop rotations and manure applications.

Robak is currently attending University of Wisconsin-River Falls, majoring in conservation/agronomy.

“My nutrient management research project influences me enough to pursue a minor in Land Use Planning focusing on agriculture preservation,” Robak said. “I plan to pursue graduate school at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities to obtain my degree in soil fertility. I want to help farmers develop economically sound farming practices with my future career.”

Robak is the daughter of Richard and Linda Robak. Her FFA advisor is Alan Stemper.

The American FFA Degree recognition programs are co-sponsored by Case IH of Racine, Wis.; Farm Credit Systems of Washington, D.C.; Pioneer Hi-Bred of Des Moines, Iowa; and Syngenta of Greensboro, N.C., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, is national youth organization of 507,763 student members – all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture – as part of 7,439 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The National FFA Organization changed to its present name in 1988, in recognition of the growth and diversity of agriculture and agricultural education. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education. Visit www.ffa.org for more information.

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