

Taylor Nielsen, a member of the Wallace FFA Chapter, has been selected to participate in the third annual Agricultural Issues Academy (AIA) on April 3 as part of the 2013 Nebraska State FFA Convention held in Lincoln. AIA is a leadership-based academy that focuses on providing participants with skills needed to become spokespeople for the agriculture industry. The day-long program will expose participants to current agriculture issues, develop communication skills, and provide an opportunity to meet with industry leaders and law makers.

Nielsen looks forward to attending the Agricultural Issues Academy and acquiring the skills to help innovate agriculture in coming years. He says he looks forward to improving his skills with protecting producer/consumer relationships and solving problems related to both.

He was selected from a pool of 95 qualified applicants from across Nebraska and were narrowed down by a selection committee to 35 participants. Selected candidates were charged with a task to a research current "ag" issue of their choice and be prepared to explain the issue at the academy.

At the Agricultural Issues Academy participants will be a part of the following:

- Round-robin sessions presented by experts on learning how to speak to lawmakers, preparing a successful and positive message for TV and radio, and have firsthand training for written and online communications.
- A visit to the State Capitol, accompanied by agriculture lobbyists who will introduce participants to the State Legislature, and provide an opportunity for them to meet with the senator from their home district.
- The following day, academy participants will be expected to serve as peer leaders for the state convention's annual legislative breakfast with State Senators and other FFA members.
- Participants will be recognized for participating in the academy at the Opening Session of the Nebraska State FFA Convention on Thursday morning.

The Agricultural Issues Academy is sponsored by Alliance for Agriculture in Nebraska (A-FAN), Nebraska Cattlemen, Nebraska Corn Board, Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation, Nebraska Association of Resource Districts Foundation, Nebraska Corn Growers Association, Nebraska Soybean Board, and Nebraska Pork Producers Association.