NEWS RELEASE

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ELEVEN FUTURE AGRICULTURE TEACHERS SELECTED AS NATIONAL AMBASSADORS

Eleven future agriculture teachers will spend the next year promoting the agricultural education profession as part of the National Teach Ag Campaign ambassador program. The students were selected from a nationwide pool through an application and interview process. The Teach Ag Ambassadors will encourage high school students currently enrolled in agricultural education programs to consider becoming agriculture teachers at the 2013 National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky. October 30-November 1. Additionally, the ambassadors will be paired together and assigned a mentor agriculture teacher who will guide the ambassadors as they plan, prepare and present an agriculture lesson at a Louisville middle school.

The ambassador program is a component of the National Teach Ag Campaign, an initiative designed to raise awareness of the need for more agriculture teachers. With more than 700 agriculture teachers expected to retire in the next three years and new programs opening every year there is a real demand for agriculture teachers. The Teach Ag ambassador program allows future agriculture teachers the opportunity to share their passion for agriculture, build their professional network, and develop valuable communication and leadership skills.

“The ambassadors display incredible passion for agricultural education,” said Ellen Thompson, National Teach Ag Campaign Coordinator. “They will ignite a fire in others through their ability to connect on a personal level.”

The Teach Ag ambassadors will be given promotional materials to take back to their college campuses and communities to spread the Teach Ag message even further. Their connection to local schools and groups is important to ensuring an adequate supply of quality agriculture teachers across the country.

“The demand for agriculture teachers exceeds supply right now,” said Thompson. “The ambassadors will be able to take the message to the masses and encourage others to Teach Ag.”

The 11 Teach Ag ambassadors for the 2013-2014 academic year are Whitney Barnes, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Sara Colome, South Dakota State University; Lacie Darnell, Kansas State University; Kessa Firkus, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Jillian Gordon, The Pennsylvania State University; Brianna Harmon, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Stacey Kunde, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Melissa Nordboe, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Kinzie
Selke, Kansas State University; Meagan Slates, The Pennsylvania State University and Brittany Ware, University of Florida-Gainesville.

The National Teach Ag Campaign is an initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education led by the National Association of Agricultural Educators. Funded by the CHS Foundation and CSX as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, the campaign is designed to raise an awareness of the career opportunities in agricultural education, encourage others to consider a career as an agriculture teacher and celebrate the positive contributions that agriculture teachers make in their schools and communities. For more information about the National Teach Ag Campaign, visit http://www.naae.org/teachag.

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