

## St. Vrain program named Outstanding Colorado Young Farmer Chapter for 2011

For the fourth time in eight years, the St. Vrain Valley Young Farmer Chapter has been chosen the most outstanding chapter in Colorado by the Colorado Young Farmers Educational Association. This chapter has become the one to beat in state-wide competition, definitely setting the mark high for community service and chapter activities.

First established in 1983, the St. Vrain Progressive Farmer Chapter, as it calls itself, located in the Longmont area, consists of 30 chapter members. It takes great pride in the many community service projects and activities it sponsors each year. From a nationally recognized pinto bean drive to the support it gives area FFA chapters, the St. Vrain Young Farmer members are always at work making a difference in the community surrounding Longmont and beyond. Its' membership is open to anyone of any age interested in learning more about agriculture.

During an especially difficult economic year for the nation, the St. Vrain chapter's now nearly famous annual holiday food drive responded bigger than ever to the increased needs of area food banks. This year the St. Vrain group provided over 1.5 tons of pinto beans to give to the hungry and combined efforts with many other farm organizations and agencies in Boulder County to also come through with 2,500 pounds of flour, 100 pounds of ground beef, 1,000 pounds of sugar and \$1,000 in cash donations.

The pinto beans arrive at the food banks in 20-pound bags. The brown seeds, full of flavor and nutrition come from donations from Northern Feed



St. Vrain  
Outstanding Colorado Young Farmer Chapter  
(L to R): Artie Elmquist—Past President, Steve Coleman—Advisor  
and Greg Winter representing Syngenta Seeds—Garst Seeds

and Bean of Lucerne, Colorado Bean of Greeley and Twin Peaks Seed and Bean of Longmont, all long-time supporters of this Young Farmer project. It is the Chapter members who do the leg work to get the beans to the food banks .

Since the inception of this food drive back in 1992, over 29 tons of beans alone have been distributed to the needy. The Young Farmers also solicit help from area 4-H clubs and the Rocky

Mountain Offices of the Farm Service Agency to help make deliveries to the Outreach United Resource Center in Longmont, to the Mead Community Food Bank and the Trinity Housing Project in Greeley. A number of the St. Vrain Chapter members are bean growers, so this community service project means that those who grow the beans are helping make sure these donated gifts get to those who most need the beans.

A long time participant in the annual National Western Stock Show, this year the St. Vrain Chapter members once again assisted with the Annual International Sheep Shearing Contest and this year, the group also helped with the Colorado State University Ag Adventure Book on the top floor of the Hall of Education. Chapter member Artie Elmquist created a display on behalf of the Colorado Sugarbeet Growers Association that was a new addition to this year's CSU exhibit.

The St. Vrain Chapter continued its help to youth programs and the awarding of scholarships. This year the group awarded four new scholarships to area youth majoring in agriculture. Since this program started, the chapter has raised more than \$12,000 in scholarship money. With good grades, recipients of this gift are eligible to get additional money from the

*Continued on next page*

## St. Vrain program...

chapter in future years, provided they are still an undergraduate earning good grades. In addition, this year the chapter gave money to the livestock judging program at Northeastern Junior College to help cover some of the students' traveling costs to compete.

Other community service projects taken on by the St. Vrain Young Farmers included support of the local Cattle-4-Kids program which makes it possible for local 4-H kids to show a heifer at the Boulder County Fair and possibly the Colorado State Fair. The youngster gets to keep the heifer as a breeding project and keep or sell future calves born to the cow.

Money for these scholarships and other gifting to youth groups is raised in a number of ways, however the most popular fundraiser is an annual consignment auction. This event is held each year at the St. Vrain Sugarbeet Receiving Station near Mead. WW Auctions of Fort Collins donates auctioneering for the event and the Roosevelt FFA Chapter of Johnstown operates the food concession stand and the St. Vrain FFA Chapter provides clerking services at the sale. Both FFA Chapters use this event to raise money for their chapters.

In September of each year, the St. Vrain Chapter participates in the Mead Sugarbeet Festival by helping with displays of both old and new sugarbeet equipment and being on hand to lead the show and tell portion of the day when the public can actually see sugarbeets being delivered and piled at the station.

The St. Vrain Chapter is a strong supporter of the Colorado Foundation for Agriculture's "AgriCULTURE in the Classroom." As part of this program, teachers from throughout Colorado are invited to spend a couple of days each summer learning about farming. Chapter members serve as hosts for teachers and take them to their farm for a day of learning which helps prepare them better to teach their students the importance of agriculture.

Among its other community service projects, the chapter has a long tradition of supporting the Colorado Pedal Tractor Pull Association. In 2010 the Chapter assisted the St. Vrain and Roosevelt FFA Chapters in sponsoring the local pedal tractor pull competition at both the Boulder County Fair and the Mead Sugarbeet Festival. At these events, children ages 5-12 attempt to ride a specifically built pedal tractor equipped with a wagon and iron weights up to 50 feet. It is hoped that this partnership with these FFA chapters will eventually lead to new members in the CYFEA someday. Some of the St. Vrain Chapter members are also volunteers each year at the state tractor pull competition held in Yuma.

Chapter members are competitive at all levels. Since 1992, St. Vrain has had five Colorado Spokesperson for Agriculture state winners and has had several national winners.

Community service isn't all that the chapter does. Each year it holds educational meetings, runs a golf tournament, does a membership drive, and holds special events. This chapter is one of only a few in the state that have a website. The site provides regular updates of chapter activities and links to other agriculture websites of interest. It also allows students and teachers to log on and learn about agricultural issues of interest, especially those specific to northern Colorado. The site is [www.stvrainyf.org](http://www.stvrainyf.org) The president of the St. Vrain chapter is Bob Clifton and the chapter advisor is Steve Coleman.




### **CARLSON'S WELDING & REPAIR LLC**

Shop: 4531 WCR 32, Longmont, CO 80504

Business: 206 Buckrake, Platteville, CO 80651

**John – 970-231-2101**

**Everything Agriculture**