

National FFA Land and Range Judging Trip 2023

On April 30 2023, Four members of the Kadoka FFA Chapter loaded up and headed South for Oklahoma City. These students qualified for Nationals Last fall at the West River Land Range Event in Wall S.D. where they were the top team. Students spent long hours driving down on Sunday. Monday morning the students spent time with Lance Howe, NRCS Soils Scientist from Redfield South Dakota to get dialed in to the new soil profiles and textures. In the afternoon they went to see the extensive Oklahoma City Zoo. Tuesday and Wednesday, the official practice pits were opened at El Reno where students from all over the county had a chance to climb into soil pits and work through challenging soil judging scenarios to better prepare. The Kadoka students also had an opportunity to work through a very challenging “escape room” at the Sanctuary Escape Room Complex in Yukon Oklahoma. The students also enjoyed go-carts, bumper and miniature golf.

Thursday morning the students were up early to register and pick up their contest scantrons. A mass of traffic was directed out on to the interstate and formed a three mile long convoy and traveled thirty miles west of El Reno to the secret official contest site. All the good weather we had in the previous week left us for driving rain throughout most of the contest, It was a particular challenge to keep their computer scored scantrons dry in order to for the scanners to be able to read them.

The students attended the awards banquet that night at the brand new Canadian County Expo Center where the students received awards for placing 19th out of 93 team in Land Judging. Kadoka was the highest placing Land team from South Dakota. Wyatt Mansfield was the highest placing Land Judging student from South Dakota by placing 46th out of nearly 400 other competitors. Emily Zickrick placed 95th, Daniel DeCory placed 110th. Mia Fernandez was 281st.

The Kadoka FFA students also competed in Homesite Evaluation where they were the 16th highest placing team in the Nation. Emily Zickrick led the team in 30th place. Wyatt Mansfield was 33rd, Daniel Decory was 91st and Mia Fernandez was 125th.

Certainly, a trip they will all remember for a lifetime!