

July 9, 2009

NEWS RELEASE

International Youth Livestock Show breeds leaders of the future



The International Youth Livestock Show is an engaging way to showcase the keen and knowledgeable future custodians of agriculture. Scholarship winners will be announced Saturday night during the Grandstand Show, which begins at 8 p.m.
Photo credit: Calgary Stampede

Calgary — Think of the Calgary Stampede's International Youth Livestock Show as a sort of agricultural yellow-brick road.

"It starts with livestock," says Tracy Lundago, "and ends with some really cool life opportunities."

The International Youth Livestock Show is an engaging way to showcase the keen and knowledgeable future custodians of agriculture. Young enthusiasts demonstrate their stewardship skills in sheep, dairy, heavy horse or beef species classes, and will compete this year for \$26,500 in scholarship money.

The event has a long, rich history at the Stampede — and has produced a bumper crop of industry achievement.

"One thing we don't bring up enough," says Lundago, the Stampede's International Youth Livestock committee chair, "is that a lot of the kids who've gone through this program, and have had access to the connections the Stampede offers — whether it's through our major sponsors, our directors, our patrons or our exhibitors — have gone on to some great success.

"My youngest brothers went through this program on the beef side," adds Lundago. "The youngest, in his final year of the show, kept a connection with one of our scholarship interview panelists, who was representing EnCana, one of our major sponsors. Two years later, after he graduated from SAIT, he got a summer job with EnCana and discovered some really cool professional opportunities."

Agricultural skills, knowledge and practical experience, as well as problem-solving, operational and entrepreneurial savvy, all come to the forefront during this four-day event for competitors in the senior (ages 15 to 20), intermediate (12 to 14) and junior (9 to 11) age categories.

Young hopefuls can enter as many as six different disciplines — a youth marketing competition, a multi-species judging competition, heavy horse decorating, conformation (for beef and dairy cattle, heavy horse and sheep), showmanship (beef and dairy cattle, heavy horse and sheep) and a senior herdsman quiz.

This year, American youths from Wyoming and Colorado will vie for scholarships with their Western Canadian counterparts, giving the show a true international flavour.

"It's not just a conformation show," says Lundago. "What we've tried to do is bring a little more unique and challenging level to the fundamental competition.



"That entrepreneurial spirit is so incredibly evident in primary agriculture, which is where these kids are coming from," she adds. "These are future agricultural enthusiasts — and our future leaders."

After three days' worth of competition on Monday, Thursday and Friday, the International Youth Livestock Show's scholarships will be presented during Saturday night's Grandstand Show, which begins at 8 p.m.

Five post-secondary scholarships of \$2,000, and 10 more of \$1,000, are up for grabs among seniors. Intermediates will vie for three \$1,000 scholarships and seven more of \$500.

"Any time we can try to make our youths' lives a little easier," says Lundago, "or leave a footprint that helps them move on to future educational opportunities, it's a good thing."

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Erin Bartlett
Agriculture Program Coordinator
T 403.261.0336
C 403.829.9851
F 403.262.3067
E ebartlett@calgarystampede.com

Todd Kimberley
Agriculture Media Writer
C 403.815.2752
F 403.262.3067
E tkimberley@calgarystampede.com

The Calgary Stampede is a volunteer-supported, not-for-profit community organization that preserves and promotes western heritage and values. The Stampede contributes to the quality of life in Calgary and southern Alberta through its world-renowned 10-day Stampede, year-round facilities, western events and several youth and agriculture programs. All revenue is reinvested into Calgary Stampede programs and facilities. For more about the Stampede, visit www.calgarystampede.com.