

Rosemund Ragetli's CYSA 2017 Experience

My name is Rosemund Ragetli, and I am a member of the Headingley 4-H Club. On November 3, 2017, I had the privilege of travelling to Toronto in order to compete in the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture Competition. This national public speaking competition is held at the Royal Winter Fair, the largest agricultural gathering in the world. The early morning flight was the beginning of what would prove to be a truly memorable weekend.

The evening before the competition, the CYSA Board kindly hosted a welcome dinner. This was an amazing opportunity for delegates and their families from across Canada to meet and socialize. Although the looming competition was more than a little stressful, I was able to meet and chat with a number of my fellow competitors. Early the next morning, we boarded the bus for The Royal Fair, each one of us quietly practicing our speeches and nervously awaiting the competition.



In the Junior category, I was one of 14 speakers; nine from Ontario, one each from Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Alberta, Newfoundland, and myself from Manitoba. From the five predetermined topics which the CYSA board had set, I chose for my speech "Agriculture is More Than Just Farming". Focusing on the scientific, political and enforcement aspects of the Canadian Agriculture industry. I strove to highlight that Agriculture is not solely based on the small family farm, but instead it is composed of many integral and complex fields.

After I delivered my speech, the pressure was off for the moment! At 2:30, we gathered to hear the announcement of the six senior finalists and the Junior Champion. After a long and ominous wait, they announced that I had won the Junior competition! The stress, practice and waiting had paid off and I could not have been happier.

After the announcement was made, I was slightly surprised to find out that I would be delivering my speech once again after the senior finalists completed their presentations. I would speak to the senior competitors and their families, as well as the CYSA Board. Mentally preparing for the added pressure, I was extremely honoured and excited that I would have this opportunity to share my presentation once again with a larger audience, including numerous agricultural professionals. Many more pictures ensued, and then suddenly it was all over! We climbed onto the bus, no longer silent and pensive but relieved and enthusiastic, returning to the hotel for a fun and stress free evening. After a wonderful Sunday afternoon of sightseeing, we headed to the airport, boarded a late night plane, and a few hours later touched down in Winnipeg.

The competition was over, but there was so much I took away from those few short days. Tessa, the senior representative from Manitoba, and I became good friends. I was so grateful that we were able to spend the weekend together. I met so many amazing and talented people, both competitors and the organizers of the competition. The CYSA board members were amazing, from a welcome dinner, to incredibly qualified judges, and top notch accommodations, the weekend could not have been better. I am also very thankful to 4-H, and in particular Mr. Clayton Robbins, who introduced me to the idea of the CYSA competition, at the Provincial 4-H Extravaganza. 4-H Manitoba sponsored my trip to Toronto, and I am extremely grateful. I also would like to acknowledge the role 4-H has played in my public speaking.

Eight years ago, I joined the Headingley 4-H Club and did a speech on my pet pony. Since then, I have discovered my passion for public speaking. A passion that I would never have found if not for the yearly opportunity 4-H has provided, to compete and grow as a presenter. I had an incredible time in Toronto, and I would like to thank the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture as well as Manitoba 4-H for giving me this memorable experience.

