



For Immediate Release

Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture Competition Welcomes Youth Representative to the Board

June 4, 2019, Guelph, Ontario – The Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture (CYSA) Competition is pleased to announce the appointment of Maria Clemotte from Nanaimo, British Columbia, to sit on the board as the Youth Representative.

Maria first became involved with CYSA in 2017 when she placed second in the Seniors category. An avid 4-H member and current B.C. 4-H Ambassador, she is in her eleventh year with the 4-H program. It was the public speaking component of 4-H that led to her love of communication and taking the stage at CYSA.

“I’m excited to be on the CYSA board as the youth representative,” said Maria, “and I’m looking forward to connecting with fellow youth across Canada and hearing their perspectives on agriculture. I’m also looking forward to promoting CYSA’s public speaking competition to a broader audience.”

Maria is in university studying psychology and philosophy, with the long-term goal of becoming a school psychologist.

Her role as Youth Representative will involve reaching out to Canadian youth on behalf of CYSA to capture their thoughts and feelings on current agricultural issues. She will also be involved in sourcing suggestions for the competition’s annual topic list, identifying potential judges, sponsors and sponsorship opportunities, and coordinating interprovincial speaking opportunities for CYSA competition winners.

“We’re really excited to have someone on our board as dynamic and in tune with today’s agricultural youth as Maria,” said CYSA’s President April Stewart. “She will be a great asset in helping us reach out to and promote the CYSA competition among our target audience.”

“CYSA is extremely fortunate to have Maria Clemotte accept the role of CYSA Youth Advisor for the next two years,” said CYSA Chair Ted Young. “She has a formidable amount of ability and public relations, networking, and promotional skills. Her role in connecting with youth across the nation will be a valuable resource to the Board. CYSA wants to constantly hear and learn what young people are thinking about agriculture and Maria will be the primary conduit to that critical role. We are delighted that she is fully on board with our team.”

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Each year the renowned public speaking competition is held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. The competition is open to youth, ages 11 to 24, with a passion for agriculture whether raised on a farm, in the country or in the city.

Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture is a national, bilingual competition that provides a platform for participants to share their opinions, ideas and concerns about the Canadian agri-food industry in a five- to seven-minute prepared speech. It is also an opportunity for youth to flex their communication skills, a much sought-after skill in today's workplace.

Since the first competition held at the Royal Winter Fair in honour of the International Year of the Youth in 1985, it has gone on to become the premier public speaking event in Canada for young people interested in agriculture, with more than 980 participants over the past 34 years. For more information about CYSA visit www.cysa-joca.ca

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