



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Ontario Speakers Tackle Issues Facing Future of Agriculture to Win National Competition

Toronto, Ontario – Speakers from Ontario took top prizes in the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture (CYSA)'s 26<sup>th</sup> annual competition, held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

Among thirty-six registrants from eight provinces, Stephanie Kneeshaw of Stayner, Ontario, won the senior category, with Mikayla Ringelberg of Troy, Ontario, capturing the junior award.

Kneeshaw delivered an enthusiastic speech on the topic '*What is the biggest challenge in agriculture today?*'. She is a University of Guelph B.Comm. Agricultural Business graduate currently working with Agribands Purina. "The biggest challenge that Canadian agriculture faces today is the lack of understanding the general public has of modern farming practices. This is due largely to the increased separation between urban and rural lifestyles," Kneeshaw said in her speech. "As Canadian farmers, we need to strive to educate our consumers about the bacon they eat, in order to save our own."



Stephanie Kneeshaw of Stayner, Ontario. 2010 CYSA National Senior Champion

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CANADIAN YOUNG SPEAKERS FOR AGRICULTURE INC. JEUNES ORATEURS CANADIENS POUR L'AGRICULTURE INC.

Eleven-year-old junior champion Mikayla Ringelberg – whose age is the youngest allowed in the competition – selected the same topic. In her speech she confidently articulated, “Farmers deal with many challenges each day, farmers love a challenge. It drives them to succeed and keeps farm life interesting, never boring. But what is the biggest challenge in agriculture today? In my opinion, it is ensuring that farmers get a fair return for their labour and investment.”



**Mikayla Ringelberg of Troy, Ontario. 2010 CYSA National Junior Champion**

First senior runner-up was Avery Simundsson of Arborg, Manitoba, followed by second runner-up Rachel Lee of Langley, British Columbia. The other senior finalists were Donald Skinner of Listowel, Ontario, Emily Pearson of Vancouver, British Columbia and Erin Harris of Creston, British Columbia.

In the junior competition, first runner-up was Hayley Mullen of Toronto, Ontario, followed by second runner-up Karen Lemon of Meaford, Ontario. The other junior finalists were Emily Summerhayes of Mt. Pleasant, Ontario, Aithira Abraham of Scarborough, Ontario and Rebecca Swanson of King City, Ontario.

The Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture (CYSA) is a national, bilingual competition that provides opportunity for participants to share their opinions, ideas and concerns about the Canadian agri-food industry in a five to seven minute prepared speech. “We are focused on our competitors, providing them support to achieve their dreams and develop their skills,” says CYSA president, Eric Dalke. The competition fosters development of a skill set that is hard to come by and seldom developed without hard work and practice.

To book a speaking engagement with one of the winning speakers, or for more information, contact CYSA Chairman Ted Young at [tedyoung@cysa-joca.ca](mailto:tedyoung@cysa-joca.ca) or at 519-824-9253. CYSA Inc. is jointly sponsored by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and 4-H Canada, and has numerous dedicated contributors, donors and volunteers. To find out more, please visit [www.cysa-joca.ca](http://www.cysa-joca.ca).

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