

## EAST KNOX FFA FIRST IN STATE NURSERY/LANDSCAPE CDE

Four members of the East Knox FFA recently competed in the state finals of the FFA Nursery/Landscape Career Development Event on March 26 at Delaware Area Career Center in Delaware.

The team consisting of seniors Ariana Talbott and Aiden Kapper, sophomore Ava Page, and freshman Madisyn Frost finished first in the state event after the day of hands-on competition. They will now represent Ohio in the National Event on October 29 and 30 in conjunction with the 98th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In the event competitors had to program an irrigation control panel, repair an irrigation line and install a sprinkler head, calculate a landscape maintenance estimate, lay sod, operate zero-turn mowers, plant and stake a tree, and operate commercial mid-size walk-behind mowers. Individually, Ariana Talbott finished first, Ava Page placed second, Aiden Kapper was fourth, and Madisyn Frost finished fifteenth out of 253 competitors.

To qualify for the finals the team completed two online phases of the competition on February 11 and February 25 where they took a written test, identified specimens, and completed practicums.

Participants had to identify 80 specimens of deciduous trees and shrubs, needled evergreens, broad-leaved evergreens, annuals, perennials and groundcovers with both common and scientific names. They also had to identify 40 specimens of weeds, insects and diseases, equipment and supplies, and turf found in the nursery and landscape business. In addition, contestants complete a landscape drawing practicum, interpret a pesticide label, and complete an operators manual practicum. From this part of the competition the top ten teams advanced to the finals.

The nursery/landscape event is an educational activity designed as a practical method of teaching students to perform hands-on skills and to identify various horticultural plants, weeds, insects and diseases that affect the nursery and landscape business. The team will receive a banner for placing first in the state at the Ohio FFA Convention on May 1-2 at the Ohio Expo Center. The top ten individuals also receive a plaque for their efforts. The contest awards are sponsored by the Ohio Green Industry Association (OGIA). This is the twenty-fifth year that an East Knox FFA Nursery/Landscape CDE Team has placed in the top ten in the state. They have won the event nine times including a stretch of four years in a row and six out of the past eight years.

Picture (L to R) – The East Knox FFA State winning Nursery/Landscape team members Madisyn Frost, Aiden Kapper, Ariana Talbott, and Ava Page at Delaware Area Career Center.

