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For immediate release

Eau Claire, WI (Dec. 15, 2020) – Five exceptional young farmers will participate in the 67th

Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) Awards Weekend Jan. 22-24, 2021, in Neenah, WI at the Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel & Conference Center.

The finalists include:

- Joseph & Ashley Dudkiewicz, Crivitz
- Clint & Erin Hodorff, Eden
- Michael & Jenny Jenson, Elk Mound
- Shane & Jennifer Sauer, Waterloo
- Leslie & Scott Svacina, Deer Park

The OYF candidates are sponsored to the state event by past OYF finalists, UW Extension County Ag Agents or other agricultural groups; sponsors can still contribute to the overall event or a specific candidate. Due to Covid-19 we are not opening the event to the public.

The Awards Weekend in Winnebago County allows the candidates to network on farm and family issues at the two-day event and they will participate in an Ag Forum/Workshop. The group will also have “tours” from local businesses brought to the venue.

The 2021 state OYF winner will be named Saturday afternoon at the finale luncheon. Also recognized will be a runner-up and a “Speak up for Ag” winner. The state winner will be nominated to attend the February 2022 national OYF Awards Congress, which will be held in Hilton Head Island, SC.

The OYF award is based on 50 percent progress in ag career, 25 percent soil and water conservation and 25 percent contributions to community, state or nation. Goals of the OYF program are:

- To foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of farmers' challenges, as well as the appreciation of their contributions and achievements;
- To bring about a greater interest in farmers/ranchers;
- To help build an urban awareness of the farmers' importance and impact on America's economy.

The 2020 state winners, Phil & Laura Finger, Oconto, are awaiting their results for the National OYF(which has been canceled for 2021). The 2021 national OYF finalists may be invited to the 2022 event in Hilton Head Island, SC. Now in its 67th year, Wisconsin OYF has had 18 national winners. On the national level, OYF is sponsored by John Deere and the Outstanding Farmers of America Fraternity; and supported by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents.