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Funded by the Beef Checkoff.

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## **Three Youth Selected for Ohio Beef Ambassador Team**

On January 24th, the Ohio Beef Council (OBC) in conjunction with the Ohio CattleWomens Association (OCW) held their annual Ohio Beef Ambassador contest in conjunction with the Ohio Cattlemen's Association Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet at the Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center in Lewis Center, Ohio. This program, funded in part by the OCW and Ohio Beef Checkoff, works with youth across the state to connect beef ambassadors with consumers through educational and promotional consumer events, in the classroom and online.

The first ambassador was Darby Walton of Wyandot County. He is the son of Douglas and Eileen Walton and Jennifer and Michael McKee. Darby is a sophomore attending The Ohio State University where he is studying Agricultural Business and Animal Sciences. At OSU, he serves as treasurer for Saddle and Sirloin, and is involved in the Dairy Club and Agribusiness Club. After college, Darby plans on going back to the farm and continue as the family's eighth generation cattle and grain farmer. Aside from farming, he plans to become a fulltime auctioneer, following in his father and grandfather's footsteps. This third generation auctioneer recently received his license and wants to specialize in livestock auctioneering and eventually begin his own sale management firm, focusing on marketing cattle and other livestock across the nation.

The next ambassador was Josie Vanco of Gallia County. Josie is the daughter of Marc and Karen Vanco. She is a sophomore at Colorado State University (CSU) double majoring in Animal Science and Ag Business. Josie is involved in several clubs including the Block and Bridle, Collegiate Stockgrowers, and Collegiate Cattlewomens. She was a member of the Colorado State dairy judging team and next year will be on the CSU livestock judging team. She loves working with the beef industry, as emphasized by her internships with Leachman cattle as a sale intern.

The final ambassador was Laura Schmuki of Stark County. Laura is the daughter of Michael and Patsy Schmuki. The Schmuki's own and operate a Holstein Dairy Farm and few commercial black baldy cows. Laura is currently a sophomore at The Ohio State University majoring in Animal Bioscience with a pre-vet specialization. Laura is a member of the Stark County Cattlemen's Association, and Farm Bureau, Ohio Cattlewomen's Association and Cattlemen's Association and National Cattlemen's Beef Association. Laura hopes to get her doctorate degree, specializing in large animal veterinarian medicine where she can assist her clients with their animals and help them make economical decisions to excel their herd.

Congratulations to these three youth! Be sure to follow their travels on facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/ohiobeefambassador](http://www.facebook.com/ohiobeefambassador).

The Ohio Beef Council (OBC) engages with Ohio's producers and consumers to strengthen the demand for beef with the goal of maintaining the profitability and growth of Ohio's beef industry. It is part of a coordinated state/national marketing effort funded by beef producers through the beef checkoff program. OBC collects the \$2 per head beef checkoff each time cattle are sold. Fifty cents of the federal dollar is invested in national beef demand building programs by the Cattlemen's Beef Board. The remaining fifty cents and the state \$1 are invested in Ohio by the OBC. The organization is directed by a 15-member Operating Committee of cattlemen appointed by the Ohio Director of Agriculture, representing the state's beef, dairy and veal producers.

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