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## CCAC Awards FFA Grant to Soroco FFA

[Centennial, CO -- February 25, 2023] The Colorado Corn Administrative Committee is pleased to announce that the Soroco FFA chapter was one of three Colorado FFA chapters to have been awarded a grant to help them give students more opportunities.

“The Colorado Corn Administrative Committee is proud to provide grants to these FFA Chapters, so they have the tools to develop agriculture’s leaders of the future,” said Nicholas Colglazier, Executive Director for the CCAC.

**SOROCO FFA Grant Proposal:** *To improve the capabilities of Soroco Meats (Food Processing Lab and Store Front), which provides lab-based facilities for students to practice food processing, packaging, safety and marketing standards.*

Reece Melton, the Soroco FFA Advisor, said, “The Soroco Ag Ed department has developed a broad selection of content pathways (classes) for our students to select from, hopefully to narrow down and better guide them in their career interests. We are also very excited to have premier facilities in the state of Colorado, where students can practice relevant skills to prepare them for the workforce. We recognize that higher education is not practical for every student, and we strive to provide career-ready training in almost every learning pathway in those new facilities. Even with that consideration, these facilities also support students who might aspire to higher education.”

He added, “And with our food/meat processing kitchen, expanded shop, and greenhouse, students will have hands-on learning opportunities in high school that they might not even experience until their junior and senior years of college. The Grant we received from the Colorado Corn Administrative Committee will allow us to purchase essential supplies to operate the meat processing and food lab. Without their support, we would be delayed in our instruction and drastically further away from ensuring this facility is self-sustaining financially.”

The meat processing facility is important to the Soroco FFA chapter in many ways. “This project and facilities will not only allow us to expand career-ready practices and training within the classroom curriculum, but also provide after-school opportunities for students to further their practices in competitive events in the FFA. This facility has also attracted students from surrounding school districts. Since the same learning experience is not available in their schools, these students and their families have made the decision to transfer to Soroco where their education and career goals will be met. This has allowed for incredible growth in our FFA Chapter and the growth of our small rural school,” Melton said.

Having a positive impact on the school and the community is also important when considering the FFA grant applications and is considered when grant winners are selected. Melton continued, “As mentioned above, we have seen multiple families transfer their students to our school seeking an education more in

line with their career objectives and education. This not only increases the size and involvement of our FFA Chapter, but it also provides financial gain for the entirety of our district when students are enrolled in CTE (Career and Technical Education) courses. We are also looking forward to opening our kitchens storefront where students and community members will have the ability to sell and market their own products to local consumers. Not only supporting our local livestock/ag producers but providing high-quality, safe food to local consumers. We also look forward to providing our facilities to local processors, chefs, and caterers to stimulate and support other local businesses.”