

# Inspired voices driving change

**CANADIAN YOUNG  
SPEAKERS FOR  
AGRICULTURE**



**[WWW.CYSA-JOCA.CA](http://WWW.CYSA-JOCA.CA)**

[cysa-joca@outlook.com](mailto:cysa-joca@outlook.com)

Chairman of the Board:

D. E. Ted Young 519-546-5053



# About Us

Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture Inc. (CYSA) delivers a national, bilingual public speaking competition for youth annually, in November, at the Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, Ontario. CYSA provides a platform for youth to develop communication skills in a public forum where they can express their thoughts and ideas on current topics related to the agriculture and agri-food industry.

CYSA connects directly with Canadian youth as an independent incorporated entity. CYSA also connects with youth via government bodies and NGOs, educational institutions, the agriculture and agri-food industry, families of youth, alumni, the Canadian public, and youth programs throughout Canada.



# Mission & Values

CYSA's mission is to provide Canadian youth with a professional public speaking competition through which they can develop communication and workforce skills demanded by Canada's competitive agriculture and agri-food industry.

CYSA is committed to strengthening the agriculture industry by contributing to the development and support of future spokespersons and leaders. We encourage youth to inform the urban population about agricultural issues and we provide them with:

- an opportunity to develop public speaking skills
- incentives to become involved with agriculture
  - a forum to express their concerns
  - recognition for their skills.



# Our History

**1985** First competition held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in honour of International Youth Year.

**1987** Farm Credit Corporation (now known as Farm Credit Canada) joined the ranks as a co-sponsor

**1996** The Leonard Wilhelm trophy was added to the prize list. Joanne Wilhelm had been the competition winner in 1988, and her sister had also participated in the program. Up until that time, there was no perpetual trophy or recognition given identifying past winners.

**1997** Many 'firsts' for the competition this year. This was the first year with newly unveiled name, Young Speakers for Agriculture; the first year with truly 'national' focus; the first year in the newly-renovated facilities at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair; and the first year for a new sponsor to the Young Speakers for Agriculture team, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada.

**1998** A new logo for Young Speakers for Agriculture was developed.

**2000** The Canadian Farm Writers' Federation joined the sponsorship team, and provided a financial grant to the committee. The competition enjoyed a record number of nine out-of-province participants registered (four from Alberta, first competitor from Manitoba, two from Nova Scotia, one each from New Brunswick and PEI).

**2001** The Eastern Canada Farm Writers' Association joined the sponsorship team. Out-of-province participation continued to be strong, with nine registered (three from Alberta; three from Manitoba; and one each from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia).

**2002** Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited joined the sponsorship team. Out-of-province participation continued to be strong, with ten registered (three from Alberta; two from Nova Scotia; and one each from British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec). This marked the first year that British Columbia sent a participant.

**2003** 4-H Ontario became a supporter of Young Speakers for Agriculture. A new logo was developed, and our first website was launched.

**2004** Many new initiatives were undertaken as the competition commemorated its 20th consecutive public speaking competition at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. The organizing committee undertook incorporation, and officially changed the name of the competition to Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture to better reflect the national scope of the competition. This marked the first year that Saskatchewan sent participants to the competition.

**2006** A Junior Competition for 11 to 15-year olds was introduced to complement the long running Senior level event, which is open to youth up to 24 years of age.

**2007** May 2007 saw the introduction of CYSA's new bilingual and independent website at [www.cysa-joca.ca](http://www.cysa-joca.ca), featuring online registration.

**2009** CYSA celebrates 25 years of organizing and facilitating the "Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture" competition

**2010** March 2010, Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture, Inc. entered into a new funding agreement under the Growing Forward Program with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in cooperation with the 4-H Council of Canada.



# Our Board of Directors

The Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture Inc. (CYSA) Board is comprised of agriculture and agri-food industry experts and knowledgeable professionals representing several provinces across Canada. Our board is currently made up of:



**D. E. (Ted) Young - Chair** (Guelph, ON) - President and CEO of Edward Young International Inc., Ted operates the family farm at Wiarton, Ontario, with Hereford beef cattle, and an aggregate stone quarry. He also owns and operates a language training studio in Guelph. Ted enjoyed a long career in public service, working for several government departments and corporations. Current volunteering includes many years with the University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA), where he is now serving as a board member to the University Centre representing the UGAA. Ted was recently elected to the national board of directors for the Federal Superannuates Association. Ted has played a major leadership role with the competition, having held many offices since its inception in 1985.



**Gerry Sullivan - Past President & Vice-chair** (St. John's, NL) – Gerry is the Business Optimization and Research Specialist with Eastern Composite Services and Owner/Operator of Pro Fit TFW. A graduate of Memorial University, Gerry spends much of his time helping to promote healthy living throughout Newfoundland as well as providing a voice for local business by his involvement in various Chamber of Commerce groups and business committees. Gerry is an international speaker / corporate strategist and a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers and Global Speakers Bureau.



**April Stewart - President** (Elgin, QC) – An agricultural communications and public relations consultant at Alba PR, April is also a sixth generation, Quebec dairy farmer. A graduate of McGill University, she's an eager industry advocate who is determined to ensure the sustainability of rural regions and family farms. She is the Social Media, Communications and Marketing Agent for Quebec's Community Economic Development & Employability Corporation (CEDEC), a seed sales rep for Speare Seeds, an award-winning freelance writer, and creator of 'The Farmer's Survival Guide: Communicating with 21st Century Consumers.'



**Lydia Harrison - Volunteer Committee Chair** (Rockwood, ON) – Lydia Harrison is the proud winner of the 2012 Senior Speaking Competition and has sat on the board as Youth Representative since that time. Her passion for agriculture led her to study at the University of Guelph's Ontario Agricultural College from which she graduated in 2013 with a degree in Honours Agriculture. Since graduating, Lydia has obtained her Certified Crop Science Consultant designation. Because of her love for Canadian agriculture, public speaking and agricultural advocacy, Lydia is delighted to sit on a board that provides young people with a platform to share their insights and optimism for our industry. She currently resides on her fiancé's family farm near Rockwood, Ontario where they raise sheep and cattle.



**Anne McGee - Treasurer/Registrar** (Guelph, ON) – Served as Secretary of the competition since 1989, and has been heavily involved with the competition over that 20 year period. Completed a 25 year career with Farm Credit Canada.



**John J. MacDonald - Honorary President** (St. Nicholas, PEI) – Retired to his farm with wife Cynthia, and continues to represent the Canadian Federation of Agriculture at 4-H Canada. John was president of the national 4-H program in 2000, and is currently a trustee with Canadian 4-H Foundation. He is a director of Summerside Port Inc., represents PEI Cattle Producers on Canada Beef Inc., is a trustee for PEI 4-H Trust Fund, sits on East Prince Environment Board, and is a member of his church finance committee. John was inducted into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2013.



**Anna Marie O'Connell - Director** (Guelph, ON) – Now a Supervisor with the City of Guelph, formerly with Farm Credit Canada, and has been involved with the competition for a number of years.



**Maria Clemotte - Youth Representative** (Nanaimo, BC) - Maria first became involved with CYSA in 2017 when she placed second in the Seniors division, a wonderful experience she thoroughly enjoyed! An avid 4-H member and current BC 4-H Ambassador, she is in her 11th year with the 4-H program. It was the 4-H public speaking component that led to her love of communication. She is excited to be on the CYSA board as the Youth Representative and is looking forward to connecting with fellow youth and hearing their perspectives on agriculture. Maria is in university studying psychology and philosophy, with the long-term goal of becoming a school psychologist.



**Pat Dares - Administrative Assistant** (Guelph, ON) - Although Pat did not grow up on a farm, she has a love for the land, animals and people who work in agriculture to provide food for us all. Pat has worked in agricultural administration for more than 25 years and previously in customer service. Currently at Kahntact Marketing, Pat has the opportunity to channel her experience into helping clients meet their marketing and advertising goals.

Pat enjoys people and learning new things, so when asked to join the CYSA board in 2017, it was with great enthusiasm. She is continuously impressed with and engaged by the Canadian youth who care so passionately about our food and agriculture.

Pat has adult children and many grandchildren with whom she loves to share information that will help them develop an appreciation for our food and farming systems. When not at work or with her family, she loves to explore new roads on her motorcycle or travel to new places. Tasting new food in new places and meeting the local people who produce it never gets boring!



**Ashley Knapton - Judge's Committee Chair** (Ottawa Valley, ON)

# Our Competition

CYSA's inaugural competition, held in 1985 in honour of International Youth Year, was originally sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The competition includes both junior (11-15) and senior (16-24) age categories and is judged by bilingual communications and industry professionals from across the agriculture and agri-food sector. Cash prizes are awarded to finalists and there is significant opportunity for media exposure and for competitors to be scouted by potential employers. Competitors are also frequently invited to participate in additional speaking engagements across the country.

## Format of the Competition

CYSA is a national competition, open to all Canadian residents between the ages of 11-24 as of the date of competition. The competition takes place on the first Saturday of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto, Ontario, every November.

There is one heat for the Senior competitors in the Main Presentation Theatre (Salon 108) and simultaneously one heat for the Junior competitors in the adjacent room. The Junior winner and runners-up are selected once their portion of the competition concludes after the lunch break. The Senior competition, which typically involves more entrants, continues after lunch and concludes with the awards ceremony mid-afternoon once judges have deliberated.



# Participant Feedback

“It was nice to come across the country and be treated to an event as well run as the CYSA competition. Thanks to [CYSA], I was given the opportunity to speak against competitors of profound calibre, present my own message, and make connections with ambassadors of the agriculture industry.”

**- Spencer Graling, 2016 Senior Champion**

“I very much enjoyed every speakers’ approach to their topics. The entire experience was absolutely incredible!! I definitely hope to come back next year.”

**- 2014 Competition Participant**

“As a three-time participant of the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture (CYSA) competition, I appreciate how it allows me to not only work on my public speaking skills but provides me the opportunity to network with other like-minded and passionate people. As our industry changes, it is so important that we are able to speak up effectively and tell our story to consumers. CYSA is an awesome opportunity for young people to do just that.”

**- Ashley Knapton, 2014 Senior Champion**

**87% of competitors surveyed said the  
2017 Canadian Young Speakers for  
Agriculture Competition was Above  
Average or Excellent.**

# Join Our Sponsors

## Our 2018 Sponsors:



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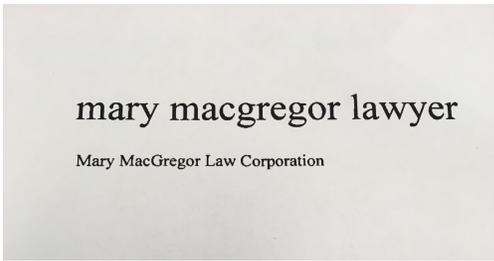


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Gordon Maxwell,  
Legal Counsel

# Become A Sponsor

All sponsors are recognized in the competition day program and the annual report. All sponsor logos also appear on the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture website.

## Platinum Sponsor

Platinum sponsors provide a donation of \$5,000 or more (cash, gift-in-kind or combination thereof). In recognition of your significant contribution, you will receive the following opportunities and benefits:

- Sponsorship of a particular events(s) including but not limited to travel, the welcome reception, competition day lunch, evening reception, etc.
- Opportunity to make remarks during the competition.
- News release highlighting your significant contribution.
- Your company website link on our website.
- A recognition plaque.
- Your company logo included on all news releases.
- Your company logo on promotional banners.
- Your company display at the event.
- Your company logo included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website and your company will be mentioned on competition day.



## **Gold Sponsor**

Gold sponsors provide a donation of \$2,500 - \$4,999 (cash, gift-in kind or combination thereof). In recognition of your significant contribution, you will receive the following opportunities and benefits:

- Sponsorship of Senior and/or Junior winner award.
- Your company logo included on all news releases.
- Your company logo on promotional banners
- Your company display at the event.
- Your company logo included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website and your company will be mentioned on competition day.

## **Silver Sponsor**

Silver sponsors provide a donation of \$1,000 - \$2,499 (cash, gift-in-kind or combination thereof). In recognition of your generous contribution, you will receive the following opportunities and benefits:

- Your company display at the event.
- Complimentary tickets to the competition
- Lead on participants' welcome package and judges' package.
- Your company logo included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website, and your company will be mentioned on competition day.

## **Bronze Sponsor**

Bronze sponsors provide a donation of \$500 - \$999 (cash, gift-in-kind or combination thereof). In recognition of your important contribution, you will receive the following:

- Complimentary tickets to the competition.
- Your name/logo on the participant's welcome package and judges' package.
- Your company logo included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website, and your company will be mentioned on competition day.

## Friend of CYSA

A Friend sponsor provides a donation of \$1 - \$499. In recognition of your contribution, you will receive the following:

- Your name/logo on the participant's welcome package and judges' package.
- Your company logo included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website.

## Supporter of CYSA

A Supporter sponsor provides an in-kind donation. In recognition of your contribution, you will receive the following:

- Your company name will be included in our annual report and competition day brochure as well as on our website.

## Benefits of Being a Sponsor

- Provide an opportunity and a platform for youth across Canada to gain communication skills while advocating for the agriculture industry.
- Brand recognition with traditional and digital media before, during, and after the competition.
- Potential to recruit new employees from our high caliber competitors.



# CYSA Sponsorship Form

If you'd like to receive more information about becoming a sponsor of CYSA, or you'd like to send a Friend or Supporter category donation, please reach out to:

Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture  
Box 25015, Stone Road Mall, Postal Outlet  
370 Stone Road West, Unit 17  
Guelph, Ontario  
N1G 2X0

[cysa-joca@outlook.com](mailto:cysa-joca@outlook.com)

Thank you for your interest in supporting the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture competition. Without the support of our dedicated sponsors, the competition would not have provided hundreds of Canadian youth with the opportunity to hone their public speaking skills, develop their self-confidence, and express their passion for agriculture.

