

The 2017 North Central Weed Science Society Summer Weed Contest was hosted by Iowa State University on July 27 in Ames, IA. There were 22 teams in the event, which included 10 graduate teams and 12 undergraduate teams, for a total of 80 individuals representing 7 land-grant universities and one regional university. This is an applied contest designed to hone the skills needed to be an effective weed science practitioner in the public or private sector. The contest consists of 5 individual events: weed identification, unknown herbicide identification, written sprayer calibration, team sprayer calibration, and solving an applied field-based farmer problem. Each event is scored by a panel of judges and individual winners are identified in each event and in overall team scores.

As in the past, Purdue students fared well in the contest. In the graduate division, we sent two teams. Team #1 was comprised of Jodi Boe, Marcelo Zimmer, Brent Mansfield, and Nick Steppig. This team placed 2nd overall. Jodi and Marcelo were chosen to participate in the finals of the farmer problem event. For overall scores from all events combined, Jodi was the top individual graduate student (1st place) and Marcelo placed 3rd among graduate students. The Purdue #2 team was Cade Hayden, Jesse Haarmann, Stephanie DeSimini, and Stephen Boersma. In the undergraduate division, we sent one team which was comprised of Troye Hook, Hailey Holcomb, and Aidan Groves. Aidan Groves placed 1st in the farmer problem and was the 3rd place overall undergraduate. All students learned a lot from this experience and will be in a great position to bring home some hardware next year. A big thank you goes to Cara McCauley and Joe Ikley for their work in organizing team practices. Good work guys and gals!