**Jennie Wagner Awarded Careers-In-Conservation Scholarship**

Running the family farm was not what Jennie Wagner had envisioned for her life. But after watching a documentary examining corporate and conventional farming techniques in the United States, she began to rethink her career path. Although once considering a degree in either History or Animal Science, Jennie became increasingly aware of the benefits of sustainable agriculture practices.

The Gray Stone High School graduate is beginning her second year at N.C. State University (NCSU) where she is majoring in Plant and Soil Science with a concentration in Sustainable Agriculture. The North Carolina Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation awarded her a merit-based Careers-In-Conservation (CIC) scholarship in the amount of $1000 for attendance at NCSU this upcoming year. The purpose of the scholarship is to increase the number of college graduates from a NC institution who are qualified for careers in natural resource conservation and other closely related fields that aligns with the mission of Soil and Water Districts.

When asked “Why agriculture?, Jennie replied, “It’s always been a part of my life.” That’s because she has grown up on her family’s farm on Esther Road in the Millingport community. Carlea Farms, owned by her parents Carl and Leah Wagner, utilizes organic practices to raise seasonal produce, and also maintains pastured pigs, laying chickens, and turkeys for meat. Jennie’s plan is to eventually take over the day to day running of the family farm.

 *“I see sustainable agriculture as the future to farming. In addition to preserving the land, allowing animals to exhibit natural behaviors, and producing healthier food, sustainable agriculture connects consumers, farmers, and food, thereby fostering local consumption and supporting the local economy.” Jennie Wagner*

Additional scholarships awarded her include the Lydia F & Michael M. Woody Scholarship, the A. Tab Williams Jr. Endowed Scholarship, and the Isaac Daniel & Lucy Gentry Long Agricultural Scholarship.

The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District compliments Jennie on her awareness and dedication to natural resource conservation and congratulates her on earning the CIC scholarship.

Jennie, who is a marathon runner, also enjoys reading, hiking and kayaking.

 