Amerah Taleb wins Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge Award at Central Arkansas Science Fair

Amerah Taleb, 15, a 9th grader at Central High School in Little Rock won the regional round of the Soybean Science Challenge at the 2014 Central Arkansas Science Fair held at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Taleb received a $300 cash award provided by the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board. Taleb said she felt honored to be selected. “The Soybean Science Challenge opened my eyes to so much. I will never look at soybeans the same again.”

When asked about the course in general, Taleb said, “I loved how easy it was to understand. Not only did it contain useful videos and lectures, but it also contained knowledge reinforcements and user-interactive exercises.”

Taleb particularly found the topics about the products including soybeans and how to make tasty snacks using edamame most useful.

She is already planning another soybean-related project for next year, based on how her research in that area progresses.

Amerah’s parents, Yaz and Julie Taleb said, “It was very fulfilling to see Amerah reap the benefits of her hard work. Amerah showed interest in science at a young age. She spent a lot of her free time watching science programs and researching scientific material online. She's always had a curious mind and a drive to find out how things work. We are very proud of her and her accomplishments.”

“The Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge Award program is a new partnership between the UofA Cooperative Extension Service and the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board,” said Dr. Karen Ballard, Extension developer and coordinator of the award.
“The goal of the Arkansas Soybean Science challenge is to engage students in “real world” education to support soybean production and agricultural sustainability,” said Shannon Davis, president of the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board. “The program also rewards scientific inquiry and discovery that supports the Arkansas soybean industry.”

The Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge was opened in January 2014 to 9-12 grade science students. Students who successfully completed the online course were eligible to have their original soybean-related research projects judged at the 2014 ISEF affiliated Arkansas science and engineering fairs.

Information on the 2014-15 Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge will be available in summer 2014. For more information, contact Dr. Karen Ballard or Dr. Julie Robinson at 501.671.2086 or jrobinson@uaex.edu.

The Cooperative Extension Service is part of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

Amerah Taleb – Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge Regional Winner – Central Arkansas Science Fair

Project Title: Watered to Death

Abstract:

The experiment was done to test whether or not Sodium Polyacrylate, a chemical used in diapers to absorb water, affected worms in a negative way. The experiment would be very beneficial because the soil benefits from worms. Sodium Polyacrylate can act as a soil substitute because plant growth rates are increased when grown in the polymer. In a project done by Ken Costello, it was proven that by using the polymer, water is needed to be added only 1/3 that of the time it would need to be added if the plant were in soil. It was predicted that as the concentrations of Sodium Polyacrylate increase, the number of dead worms increase. This experiment would be very beneficial to society if the hypothesis was proven wrong by the experiment. About 100 worms were required. After calculating different concentrations of Sodium Polyacrylate, 20 worms were put into one of five containers. After five days, one would observe how many died. The hypothesis that stated as the concentrations of Sodium Polyacrylate increase then the number of dead worms increase as well was proven and supported in the experiment.
Arkansas Soybean Science Challenge regional winner, Amerah Taleb, discusses her project with judges Drs. Rick Cartwright and Karen Ballard of the UofA Cooperative Service at the Central Arkansas Regional Science & Engineering Fair.