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Denison Eighth Graders Display Science Projects as Part of Smithfield Foods' Learners to Leaders™ Program

*12 students take home ribbons for their science fair projects;
Local partnership prepares students for science- and math-related college degrees*

DENISON, Iowa (January 11, 2008) – Twelve eighth-grade students from Denison Middle School were all declared winners Thursday night for their projects featured at the school's Science Fair sponsored by Smithfield Foods' Learners to Leaders™ program.

Judges awarded ribbons for each student's achievement. In addition, top honors went to Katherine Acosta, Andres Castaneda, Alejandro Medina, Juan Meza, Oscar Portillo and Valeria Vargas.

“This Science Fair was an invaluable learning experience for our students, and each and every one of them did a fantastic job in creating their projects,” said Mike Pardun, superintendent of the Denison Community School District. “Their teachers and I are very proud of their achievements.”

In addition to the Science Fair, students currently enrolled in the Learners to Leaders/Science Bound program participated in an overnight retreat with their teachers at Springbrook Park last October, where they were introduced to the environmental sciences. They also visited the Iowa State campus for an engineering demonstration.

Denison's Learners to Leaders/Science Bound program, which was created last year, is a community educational partnership that includes Smithfield Foods, Inc.; its Denison independent operating company, Farmland Foods, Inc.; the Denison Community School District; and Iowa State University's Science Bound program.

Through the nonprofit Smithfield-Luter Foundation, Smithfield Foods' Learners to Leaders program provides learning opportunities to students who may not otherwise

have the chance to attend college due to academic, economic, geographic or social challenges. Participants include first-generation college-bound students, as well as low-income and minority students.

About 60 to 75 eligible eighth through 12th grade students from the Denison Community School District will be participating in the Learners to Leaders/Science Bound program from 2007 to 2012. The program's focus is to equip students during their high school years to successfully pursue science- and math-related college degrees. Smithfield Foods is underwriting the estimated \$296,000 cost of the program.

“The students who took part in the Science Fair clearly demonstrated that our Learners to Leaders program is working, and we’re confident that over the long term this partnership will help Denison’s young people fulfill their potential and in turn, strengthen our communities,” said C. Larry Pope, president and chief executive officer at Smithfield Foods.

Randy Dalinghaus, general manager for Farmland Foods in Denison thanked Iowa State’s Science Bound program “for providing all of the necessary resources to ensure the Science Fair’s success. Everybody did a marvelous job.”

Connie Hargrave, Science Bound program director at Iowa State University, pointed out, “The alliance between Science Bound and Learners to Leaders is an excellent example of the kind of productive partnerships involving businesses, universities and public schools needed to attract, prepare and enable students to excel in technical fields.”

Farmland Foods, founded in 1959, is a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, Inc., of Smithfield, Va. Farmland is headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., and has about 6,300 employees at its operations in Crete, Neb.; Denison and Carroll, Iowa; Monmouth, Ill.; Wichita, Kan.; New Riegel, Ohio; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Springfield, Mass. Farmland processes fresh and frozen pork products for national retail and foodservice markets, with a strong concentration in the Midwest. Farmland serves an international commodity, foodservice and retail market in Asia, Central America and Eastern Europe.

With sales of \$12 billion, Smithfield Foods is the leading processor and marketer of fresh pork and processed meats in the United States, as well as the largest producer of hogs. For more information, visit www.smithfieldfoods.com.

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Caption: Eighth-grade students from Denison Middle School created projects for the school's Science Fair sponsored by Smithfield Foods' Learners to Leaders™ program. Judges awarded ribbons for each student's achievement. Denison's Learners to Leaders/Science Bound program, which was created in 2006, is a community educational partnership that includes Smithfield Foods, Inc.; its Denison independent operating company, Farmland Foods, Inc.; the Denison Community School District; and Iowa State University's Science Bound program.