



UW

College of Agriculture,  
Life Sciences, and  
Natural Resources



Photo: JBS USA

2024

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

## MEAT JUDGING TEAM

Celebrating Achievements and Building the Future

# WELCOME

We are very interested in establishing and growing the network of the UW Meat Judging family! Those of you who are past UW Meat Judges or supporters have played a role in shaping and building this program into what we know it to be today. Your involvement makes you an integral member of the UW Meat Judging family, and we want you to know you are appreciated and thought of often. We hope you are proud to be a past judge or supporter because of what our program has accomplished recently, and what we aim to further grow in the coming years.

The 2024 team, a group of twelve dedicated students, has worked diligently to represent UW in competition and serve the program. Their work has been driven by a shared passion for meat judging and an unwavering commitment to each other. This booklet highlights their achievements, introduces you to the team, and offers a glimpse into the exciting future we are building together.

As we prepare for the upcoming season, we are deeply grateful for your support. You play a vital role in our journey, and together, we are shaping a legacy of tradition that will inspire future generations of the UW Meat Judging family.

Thank you for being part of our story.

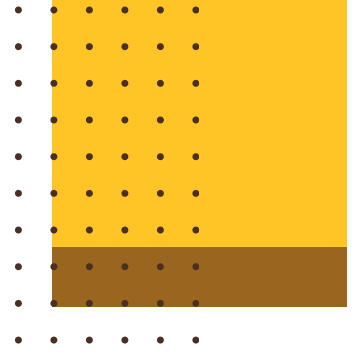
Warm regards,

McKensie Phillips  
Coordinator & Coach  
UW Meat Judging Team  
University of Wyoming





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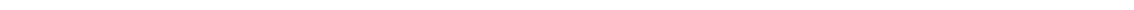
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**Leah Allen**  
Steamboat  
Springs, CO



**Jordan  
Anderson**  
Centre Hall, PA



**Kristy  
Benjamin**  
Boulder, WY



**Kaitlyn  
Brandenburg**  
Council Bluffs, IA



**Aida Hester**  
Hot Sulphur  
Springs, CO



**Stella Ordahl**  
Savage, MN



**Emi Ramirez**  
Steamboat  
Springs, CO



**Hailey  
Rasmussen**  
Estes Park, CO



**Sarah Turner**  
Cheyenne, WY



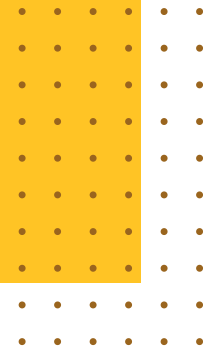
**Sam Waller**  
Basalt, CO



**Joe Mills**  
Peyton, CO



**Koy Stanley**  
Midland, TX



## 2024 UW MEAT JUDGING TEAM

Twelve students are the lifeblood of the 2024 UW Meat Judging team. Each of these students has been integral in establishing the unwavering bond that holds this team together. Every time these students enter the coolers for practice or competition, they do so with their teammates in mind, marking cards for each other and knowing that the collective group is working to continue the growth of the UW Meat Judging program. They have made it halfway through their collegiate meat judging career, spent summers working and interning, and are excited to have returned to finish their fall season.

# Meet the Team

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## **Jordan Anderson –**

### **Ag Communications, Class of 2025**

Jordan captures family and livestock moments through her photography business. This summer, she managed social media for the Center for Dairy Excellence and authored "Curious Clover," a children's book about dairy adventures.

## **Emi Ramirez –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2025**

Emi delved into research at UW, focusing on reproductive physiology and beef cattle. She also gained hands-on experience at Reprologix, a bovine reproductive technology company this summer. Emi is proud to raise sheep with her family in Colorado.

## **Joe Bailey Mills –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2026**

Joe is committed to sheep research at UW and presented his work on lamb performance at an international conference this summer. He looks forward to learning more about meat science as a new UW Meat Lab employee.

## **Kristy Benjamin –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2025**

Kristy transitioned from Wool to Meat Judging, driven by her passion for livestock. She's also involved in animal disease research and diagnostics at the Wyoming State Vet Lab. Kristy owns her own baking company.

## **Aida Hester –**

### **Elementary Ed. & Ag Business, Class of 2027**

Aida juggles coursework, clubs, and the judging team, always wanting to keep very busy. It is her goal to travel abroad to teach young kids as part of her undergraduate experience. She spent her summer mentoring young kids at Aerolab in Grand Lake, CO.

## **Stella Ordahl –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2027**

Stella, an adventurous sophomore passionate about animals, interned with the University of Minnesota Extension this summer. She serves the UW community as a Residence Hall Assistant.

## **Sam Waller –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2026**

Sam loves sharing meat-judging stories, especially with her family. This summer, she applied her skills as an Ag Steward at Marigold Livestock Co.

## **Koy Stanley –**

### **Animal & Veterinary Science, Class of 2025**

Koy, a transfer student, competed in meat judging at Western Texas College. He spent his summer rehabilitating wildlife at A to Z Vet Clinic as part of his pursuit towards vet school.

## **Kaitlyn Brandenburg –**

### **Ag Communications, Class of 2024**

Kaitlyn quickly became an advocate for meat judging with little previous experience. There is never a day Kaitlyn is not smiling. She spent her summer as an office aide at the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities.

## **Leah Allen –**

### **Ag Communications, Class of 2024**

Leah enjoyed a summer with Fitch Ranch Artisan Meat Co. and a trip to France. She graduated in August & returned to her family's beef cattle ranch.

## **Sarah Turner –**

### **Agriculture Education, class of 2026**

Sarah is very excited to educate in a high school ag classroom after she finishes school so she can share her passion with future generations. She worked at Blueberry Acres, her family's blueberry farm this summer.

## **Hailey Rasmussen – Ag Business, Class of 2026**

Hailey enjoys connecting her interests in production livestock to what she's learning in her business classes. Hailey interned at Patterson Performance Horses in Perrin, TX this summer.

# OUR COACHES

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## McKensie Phillips

Coordinator & Coach. McKensie serves as the team's coordinator and is coaching the 2024 UW Meat Judging team. As coordinator, McKensie works to recruit students and coaches for the UW Meat Judging team, train students in the Introduction to Meat Judging course, and organize fundraising efforts throughout the year. McKensie has enjoyed returning to the coaching scene this year especially because the 2024 meat judges are a tight-knit, competitive group of individuals who represent UW very well. It is very important for McKensie to see the continued growth of the UW Meat Judging Program as she is an alumnus (2013), and credits her involvement in intercollegiate meat judging for developing her career interests and professional network.

## Tessa Maurer

Coach. Tessa Maurer serves as the assistant coach for the 2024 UW Meat Judging team. She competed for UW in 2023 and knew she wanted to continue her involvement in the program because she realized the immense value it provides students. She is integral in preparing products as a coach and student employee in the UW Meat Lab and travels to every contest with the team. Tessa will graduate with her B.S. in Animal & Veterinary Science in May 2025 and plans to study meat science in a graduate program starting in the fall of 2025. This summer, Tessa interned with Fitch Ranch Artisan Meat Co. in Craig, CO.



Photo: JBS USA



# SPRING 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

**National Western Stock Show** – (Team results) 5th Overall (tie), (Individual results) Sarah Turner - 2nd Lamb Judging, Aida Hester – 7th Beef Grading

**Fort Worth Stock Show** – (Team results) 4th Overall, 3rd Beef Grading, 4th Beef Judging, 5th Lamb Judging, 2nd Pork Judging, 2nd Placings, 5th Reasons. (Individual results) Aida Hester – 9th Overall, 4th Lamb Judging, Jordan Anderson – 7th Pork Judging, Joe Mills – 1st Placings (perfect score), 7th Lamb Judging, 8th Beef Judging.

**South Plains** – (Team results) 6th Overall, 3rd Beef Grading, 2nd Lamb Judging, 5th Specifications. (Individual results) Sarah Turner – 2nd Lamb Judging, Aida Hester – 5th Specifications (perfect score), Kristy Benjamin – 5th in the Alternate Contest

**Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo** – (Team results) 8th and 12th Overall, (Individual results) Kaitlyn Brandenburg – 13th Overall, 3rd Beef Grading, 6th Overall Beef, Sam Waller – 10th Beef Grading, Aida Hester – 7th Beef Judging, 14th Specifications (perfect score), 14th Reasons





# RECORD BOARDS

Many past UW meat judgers and teams hold performance records that are showcased in the Animal Science building on campus. Each year, these record boards are updated. The 2023 UW Meat Judging team now holds six team records after a successful 2023 season.

- 1st Team Overall Contest Score (High Plains)
- 6th Team Overall Contest Score (International)
- 1st Team Placing score (High Plains)
- 6th Team Placing score (Eastern National)
- 3rd Team Beef Grading score (National Western Stock Show)
- 5th Team Total Beef score (International; tied with 2015 & 2021 teams)

**There were also many individual records broken and replaced by students on the 2023 team.**

- 1st Overall Contest score – Casey Spencer, International (replacing BW Ochsner, 2015)
- 5th Placing score – Joseph Kennah, American Royal (replacing Abby Vogl & Karlie Rumbeck, 2021)
- 6th Placing score – Casey Spencer, High Plains (replacing Cassidy Smith, 2014)
- 7th Placing score – Tessa Maurer, High Plains (replacing Haley Franks, 2001)
- 1st Beef Grading score – Tessa Maurer, American Royal (replacing Taryn Chapman, 2015)
- 4th Beef Grading score – Casey Spencer, International (replacing BW Ochsner, 2015)
- 4th Total Beef score – Casey Spencer, International (replacing Ryan Ford, 2002)

**The following students earned a perfect 100 on the specifications rail in a 2023 contest:**  
Joseph Kennah, Ashlyn Manuel, Haley Rutsch, Casey Spencer, Sophie Fuhrmann

Each of the 10 students on the 2023 UW Meat Judging team placed in the Top 10 of at least one contest throughout the year, earning a spot on the Top 10 record board.

If your record was pushed off the record board at this year's update, you will be receiving the plaque in the mail to commemorate your hard work as a past UW Meat Judging team record holder.



# LOOKING AHEAD



## Upcoming Season

**Here's where we'll be this fall!**

**Eastern National -  
Wyalusing, PA (Sept. 21)**

**American Royal -  
Omaha, NE (Oct. 13)**

**High Plains -  
Friona, TX (Oct. 27)**

**International -  
Dakota City, NE (Nov. 10)**

## 2025 UW Meat Judging Team

The introductory meat judging class is excited to have 12 students enrolled this fall. These students will learn how to evaluate beef, pork, and lamb classes, develop their reasons writing skills, and start to understand how carcasses are broken down to primals and subprimals as they learn about specifications. This year, students will travel to the Texas panhandle to tour JBS Beef operations in Cactus, TX, the West Texas A&M University Meat Lab in Canyon, TX, and Superior Farms in Denver, CO. A similar field trip was organized last year where 29 UW students were on the road touring and practicing their meat judging skills prior to the High Plains contest. We look forward to the growth of these students as they learn about meat evaluation and become part of the UW Meat Judging family.

# WE NEED YOU!

## ANNUAL FUNDRAISING

It takes a village to support a judging team. Last year, \$38,000 was used to fund the 2023 team's travel to eight contests. We are always very grateful for the support of the UW Animal Science Department, and are fortunate to be able to supplement their support with other fundraising efforts like UW Giving Day and the Holiday Meat Sales.

### Giving Day

From noon on Oct. 23 to noon on Oct. 24th this year you can help the UW Meat Judging team raise funds for contest travel as part of UW Giving Day. Last year we raised nearly \$9,000 and we aim to top that record this year. All we need are donors like you! Look for more information about Giving Day on our Facebook page this fall, or at <https://give.uwyo.edu/giving-day-2024>.



Photo: Cargill

### Holiday Meat Sales

If you're looking to stock your freezers or give the perfect holiday gift, plan to purchase meat in this year's Holiday Meat Sales. All proceeds are used to support judging team travel in 2025. Sales will open at the end of October and run through the middle of December. Contact [holidaymeatsales@uwyo.edu](mailto:holidaymeatsales@uwyo.edu) with questions and to request sales information.



# NEW DEVELOPMENTS & EVENTS



## IN THE MEAT LAB

We are excited to be working with a new Meat Lab Manager, Cheyenne Schisler. Cheyenne started in June and has already been extremely accommodating to the UW Meat Judging program. She is working to ensure our students have fresh product to look at in practices and will lead efforts for preparing all items sold in the annual Holiday Meat Sale fundraiser. Meat judging programs are stronger because of the meat lab managers who work behind the scenes to ensure the success of our program. Thank you, Cheyenne!

## Upcoming dates

We are excited to host our regular youth meat judging activities throughout the next year!

- Oct. 2, 2024 (workout)
- Jan. 10, 2025 (workout)
- April 2, 2025 (WY FFA contest)
- Spring 2025, date TBD (workout)
- Spring 2025, date TBD (WY 4-H contest)

All youth are invited! If you know of any teams who'd like more information, please pass along our contact information: 307-766-2334  
[Mckensie.phillips@uwyo.edu](mailto:Mckensie.phillips@uwyo.edu)







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## **MEAT JUDGING**

Follow us on Facebook! <https://shorturl.at/O7eob>

307-766-2334

[mckensie.phillips@uwyo.edu](mailto:mckensie.phillips@uwyo.edu)

**Visiting Laramie soon?**

PLEASE let us know you're in town!

We'd love to connect with you!