



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Livestock show at Youth Fair reflects hard work, pride in agriculture** *Market auction brings in highest bids on record*

**MIAMI, Fla.** – March 25, 2015 – Ashley Franco of Miami beamed with pride when her 1,306-pound steer won the Grand Champion prize at this year's Miami-Dade County Youth Fair, where market bids ran up the highest auction prices on record.

Franco, 16, who walked out of the ring with a \$300 cash prize and a champion's belt buckle, was one of 49 Miami-Dade County students whose long hours of sweat and tears to raise cattle, swine and lambs culminated in the judging of their animals and the payoff at market.

"These students are learning about agribusiness and the first course is in ethics, where they are informed the farm animals they raise aren't pets. Because this is business, the kids figure out the more buyers they recruit to participate in the market auction, the better the chance the buyers will compete for their animal. The animal project means more to these kids than the money they might take home, because in the end they often are lucky to break even after they have settled their feed bills," said Ismael Ramos Jr., competitive exhibits manager for The Youth Fair.

The market auction raised 9 percent more revenue than the previous year for a total of \$65,727, including add-ons, for 50 animals, Ramos said. Add-ons are the donations people make to individual students in support of their project.

Not only do the students learn how to feed and groom their animals, they learn skills that will carry them through their lifetime, from fiscal responsibility, to animal ethics, to time management. All livestock must be purebred and registered with their respective national breed association.

Students participating in the livestock shows are members of Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters at Felix Varela Senior High, Hialeah Gardens Senior High and William H. Turner Technical Arts High schools. The 2015 Youth Fair cattle, swine and lamb livestock show winners are:

### **Youth Market Steer Show on March 12**

Grand Champion – Ashley Franco, 16, from Varela FFA received \$300 cash and a belt buckle (Steer weight: 1,306 pounds)

Reserve Champion – Arianna Balceiro, 16, from Varela FFA received \$200 and a belt buckle. (Steer weight: 1,130 pounds)

Senior Showmanship Champion – Angel Hernandez, 17, from Miami FFA received \$100 and a rosette.

Senior Fitting and Grooming Champion – Arianna Balceiro, 16, from Varela FFA received \$100 and a rosette.

### **Youth Market Swine Show and Sale on March 13:**

Grand Champion – Stella Arevalo, 15, from Miami FFA received \$150 and a belt buckle (Swine weight: 270 pounds).

Reserve Champion – Faith Morgan, 17, from Miami FFA received \$100 and a belt buckle (Swine weight: 250 pounds).

Intermediate Swine Showmanship Champion – Norman Lewis, 14, from Miami FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

Senior Swine Showmanship Champion – Alexander Roger-Paulus, 17, from Varela FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

Intermediate Swine Fitting and Grooming Champion – Norman Lewis, 14, from Miami FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

Senior Swine Fitting and Grooming Champion – Patrick Gilles, 15, from Miami FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

### **Youth Market Lamb Show on March 14:**

Grand Champion – Abigail Colon, 14, from Hialeah Gardens Senior FFA received \$150 and a belt buckle. (Lamb weight: 137 pounds).

Reserve Champion – Anay Ravelo, 16, from Hialeah Gardens Senior FFA received \$100 and a belt buckle (Lamb weight, 130 pounds).

Intermediate Showmanship Champion – Soleil Lobato, 14, from Hialeah Gardens Senior FFA champions received \$75 and a rosette.

Senior Showmanship Champion – Anay Ravelo, 16, from Hialeah Gardens Senior FFA champions received \$75 and a rosette.

Intermediate Fitting and Grooming Champion – Soleil Lobato, 14, from Hialeah Gardens Senior FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

Senior Fitting and Grooming Champion – Ashley Franco, 15, from Varela FFA received \$75 and a rosette.

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