

Fourteen high school student teams from nine area schools competed in the annual regional Mid-Plains Envirothon competition held on Feb. 13 in North Platte and Feb. 20 in Curtis for the right to compete at the state level competition in May.

Six teams from four different schools competed earlier this month in North Platte at the Mid-Plains Community College, North Campus as part of the FFA District 9 competition event.

Since both FFA District 9 and 11 occur within the Mid Plains Envirothon Region, the results of both competitions were combined. The final Mid-Plains regional Envirothon took place concurrently with the FFA District 11 contest event on the NCTA campus in Curtis last week.

The Imperial FFA team scored the highest overall with a one-point advantage over Medicine Valley.

Imperial team members were seniors Spencer Hartman, Callin Ledall, Justin German, Jordan Gibb and Mason Holms. The team advisor is Jason Speck.

The Envirothon awards certificates to winners of each topic station. Arapahoe won a certificate for aquatics. Hyannis was the winner for policy and wildlife; Gothenburg HS tied with Hyannis for the wildlife station; Imperial won land use, environmental policy and the special topic; Ogallala and Medicine Valley won soils; and lastly, Medicine Valley won range.

The Imperial FFA team, along with the six other regional winning teams and seven invited wild card teams, will have the option of competing at the statewide competition on May 4 at the Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District Chaco Hills Recreation Area in Omaha. Wild card teams will be determined after the final regional Envirothon competition in the state which is scheduled for March 5.

The Envirothon is a high school competition where student teams of three to five compete in seven different natural resource and environmental disciplines: aquatics, environmental policy, forestry, range ecology, soils, wildlife and a special environmental topic that changes from year to year. This year's special topic is, "Sustainable Rangeland Management."

The Envirothon began in Pennsylvania in the spring of 1979. High school teachers and youth leaders recognized the value of the Envirothon as a means of strengthening the environmental awareness of young people, and the program spread to many other states and countries.

Nebraska held its first Envirothon in 1992.