



# Future farmers compete at annual CCM Next Generation event

Confident young people committed to the future of farming gathered at Skipton Auction Mart to compete in the fourth year of owner CCM's annual Next Generation event. (Sat, Feb 28)

The packed day was designed to help them hone their skills in a variety of disciplines, be that how to judge prime livestock, value a range of agricultural items, or how to communicate key information effectively,

Young Farmers Clubs from across the region were well-represented, but it was also open to all under 25s actively engaged with agri-business, be that college students or those from family farming backgrounds.

CCM Auctioneer and Farmstock Sales Manager Ted Ogden explained the aim of the event, which again offered £500 in prize money: "It's all about encouraging young people to improve what they already know and gain the personal confidence to take things forward.

"When it comes to judging livestock, they need to know all the reasons why one animal might be of better quality than another and importantly, be able to explain those reasons. It may not be the biggest animal that's the best and so they need to consider everything and present their case to the judges. They are also scored on that ability to communicate an argument effectively and that's one of the reasons we include the public speaking competition, which is a great way to boost confidence."

An example of the need for close attention to detail came in the sheep judging, where one ewe, while appearing to be a strong contender physically, had a severe under-bite which could have limited its ability to feed.

Mr Ogden said how the Next Generation event was also a valuable way for young people to build a strong sense of identity as part of the farming community: "They have come from all over and it's great to see so many young people who are so enthusiastic about farming."

One of the younger competitors was Rhianydd Gill, 12, of Lawkland Young Farmers, who came third in her age group for public speaking, together with her albino ferret, Thor. "I've really enjoyed it, it's been great," said Rhianydd, who revealed the little-known fact that Queen Elizabeth the First had a pet ferret who featured in a royal portrait!

Other topics covered included the meaning of the universe in five minutes and a similarly challenging attempt to explain the recent proposed changes to inheritance tax.

Max Robinson, of Catterick Young Farmers, notched up a notable stock judging double for the second year in succession, not only winning the Next Generation class, but also the standalone Yorkshire YFC Stockman of the Year Competition, again hosted by CCM.

He said why he thought the day was such a success: "It's really important to get the next generation of livestock farmers involved so that they can learn how to judge and value things themselves. Farming is all about working together and because we tend to be tight-knit communities in our own local areas, days like this are a great way to meet new people and develop good contacts for the future," said Max, who joined CCM as an 18-year-old trainee auctioneer in 2025 as a direct result of his Next Generation impact.

Rathmell YFC finished overall winning club, with Lawkland YFC runner-up and Silsden with Skipton YFC in third place.

All those who took part were praised by the judges for their enthusiasm and commitment to the future of farming. Thanks also went to annual organiser Kelly Armitage, of CCM, alongside local stewards, judges and stock providers, and all those who sponsored or supported the event.

## RESULTS

10-14 years: Public Speaking, sponsor Skipton & Clitheroe NFU, judges Andrea Wade, CCM General Farm Worker Apprenticeship co-ordinator, and Michael Winchester, CCM director – 1 Seth Feather, Worth Valley, 2 Henry Hitchen, Calderdale, 3 Rhianydd Gill, Lawkland, 4 Harry Dibb, Farnley Estate; Agricultural Questionnaire, sponsor, Massey Feeds – 1 Ben Dugdale, Rathmell, 2 Finley Miladinovic, Worth Valley, 3= Jack Keighley, Farnley Estate, Izzy North, Lawkland, Thomas Marshall, Felliscliffe, Winnie Throup and Jessica Parker, both Silsden with Skipton.

10-25 years: Stock Judging, sponsor H&M Ltd Chartered Accountants, judge Ian Lancaster, Whitwell – 1 Max Robinson, Catterick, 2 Thomas Capstick, Rathmell, 3 Sam Blackwell, Rathmell, 4 Anna Booth, Rathmell, 5 Sophie Dibb, Farnley Estate; Valuation, sponsor Carrs Billington. Judge Jim Hennessy – 1 Rosie Garth, Lawkland, 2 Molly Ayrton, Silsden with Skipton, 3= Henry Hitchen, Calderdale, Archie Hotham, Winksley cum Grantley; promotional Video/Blog/Toktok, sponsor Auctionmarts & Newline ASP, judge Skipton & Clitheroe NFU – 1 Izzy North, Lawkland, 2 Rosie Garth, Lawkland, 3 Alfie Penty, Lawkland, 4 Harriet Robinson, Reeth.

15-25 years: Crop/Produce Identification, sponsor WBW Chartered Surveyors, judge John Beckwith, Gargrave – 1 Jack Metcalfe, Felliscliffe, 2 Emily Wilson, Felliscliffe, 3= Jack Keighley, Farnley Estate, Thomas Capstick, Rathmell; Agricultural Questionnaire, sponsor Prembiz – 1 Anna Booth, Rathmell, 2 Thomas Capstick, Rathmell, 3 Booth, Rathmell; Public Speaking, sponsor Fred Greenwood & Son, judges Andrea Wade & Michael Winchester – 1 Izzy North, Lawkland, 2 Belle Whitwell, Lawkland



Taking a bow - participants in CCM's fourth annual Next Generation Competition.



Rhianydd Gill with her ferret, Thor, and Alfie Penty, both members of Lawkland YFC.



Junior Sheep Judging

Below: In no particular order, all individual prizewinners, joined by CCM Auctioneer and Farmstock Sales Manager Ted Ogden, right, and CCM Director Michael Winchester.





