FFA members (l to r) Joe Sramek, Cameo Rector and Billy Straub received their certificates for free FFA jackets from the Nebraska FFA Foundation.

FFA members Cameo Rector, Joe Sramek, and Billy Straub were selected in September as winners of new FFA jackets.

Three hundred and thirty Nebraska members, including five Wauneta-Palisade students, applied for the jackets through the Nebraska FFA Foundation. Rector, Sramek and Straub were among the 189 students selected to receive jackets. Candidates fill out an application and need a recommendation from their advisor.

“We had an excellent response this year of the program,” said Wauneta-Palisade graduate Stacey Barger Agnew, now executive director of the Nebraska FFA Foundation. “FFA jackets are costly and this is a great way for deserving students to apply and potentially be selected to receive a jacket through this program.”

The idea for the jacket fund came from similar programs in New Jersey and North Dakota. Nebraska’s program began in 2008.

Wauneta-Palisade student Nicole Strand and former student Tyler Knotts were two of 125 who received jackets last year.

“All of the students receiving jackets have been so grateful for this opportunity,” said Agnew. “We know they will wear their jackets well, representing an outstanding legacy of youth in agriculture.”

To help ensure that legacy the Nebraska FFA Foundation will be launching its annual I Believe in the Future of Ag fundraising campaign in November.

The campaign helps local FFA chapters raise money for innovative projects in their classrooms, leadership programming, community service projects and field trips to advance agriculture education in their school.

The Nebraska FFA Foundation, along with 17 corporate sponsors, will provide extra incentives to participating FFA chapters. This year, $20,000 in matching funds will be distributed to chapters proportionate to the percentage of dollars raised.

According to Wauneta-Palisade FFA sponsor Dan Andrews, donors will be able to say which FFA chapter they’d like their money to go to.

The local campaign runs through January 31, 2013.

The mission of the Nebraska FFA Foundation is to enhance quality agricultural/FFA programs in order to achieve excellence in leadership development, curriculum innovation and scholastic advancement of students.

The fall will continue to be busy for the FFA members with fruit sales starting up soon.