



Celebrating Ripley County's Future Farmers of America

FFA Week 2021



Times may not be as usual; but Batesville FFA is carrying on



Students Celebrate Agriculture and Leadership Around the Country

Agriculture is part of our daily lives—from the food we eat to the clothes we wear. Next week, more than 760,000 FFA members across the country will share the story of agriculture as part of National FFA Week.

Today, FFA provides the next generation of leaders who will change the world. As the top school-based youth leadership development organization in the nation, FFA helps young people meet new agricultural challenges by helping members develop their unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of career

pathways. FFA members are our future leaders, our future food-suppliers, our future innovators and so much more!

Whether it is through service projects or community gatherings, National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to raise awareness about the role the National FFA Organization plays in developing agriculture's future leaders and the importance of agricultural education.

National FFA Week always runs Saturday to Saturday and encompasses Feb. 22, George Washington's birthday. This year, the week

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Cassie Wallpe, Batesville High School Agriculture Educator, noted that the group is continuing with activities even through the pandemic and now weather conditions. Things may be

slow, or done differently at times, but the students have been able to attend events and participate over the school year. They have regularly scheduled meetings monthly.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The current officer team is pictured (left) back row from left: Hannah Nunlist, Joshua Honert, Shalee Harrington (president), and Brooks Werner. Front row from left are: Paige Stirn, Jason Emsweller, Onika Struewing, and Mrs. Cassie Wallpe.

Pictured below, students in Batesville FFA are having a regularly scheduled monthly meeting.



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Each year, FFA chapters around the country celebrate National FFA Week. It's a time to share what FFA is and the impact it has on members every day.

Support FFA members during FFA week and year-round



Bruce Kettler,
INDIANA STATE
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE DIRECTOR

"FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education." This FFA mission statement is a testament to our members, chapters, advisors and supporters everywhere.

National FFA week starts Saturday, Feb. 20. It is held annually on the last full week in February. This year it will look unlike any other FFA week, showcasing virtual "events" rather than Blue and Gold filling the school halls or a pancake breakfast made by members for all the teachers. Our more than 12,000 Indiana FFA members have found ways to still make it special, nonetheless.

The celebrations this week will include virtual visits from Indiana FFA State Officers to FFA chapters across the state. Like every year, this FFA week will also include a proclamation from Indiana legislators who are set to recognize the importance of FFA week and supporting our students. FFA students from across the state will also have the opportunity to learn from agriculture leaders about creating opportunities to tell their story in agriculture and to stand up for agricultural practices on the local, state and federal level with four virtual FFA Advocacy days. Even though this FFA week is certain to look unlike any other, these resilient students have found a way to keep FFA traditions alive.

We cannot honor and celebrate National FFA week without remembering former Indiana FFA Association Director Rob Hays, who passed away last summer. Rob embodied everything FFA is and stands for and is dearly missed in our department and throughout the state. Rob was most passionate about building leaders, something that FFA does so well.

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture and Indiana FFA Association believe leadership development and equipping members with the skills they need to succeed at any stage of life is crucial. Recently we partnered with Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch's office to develop Indiana's Rural Road to Recovery plan, designed to get our state back on track following the pandemic. One priority outlined in our rural road to recovery is to strengthen the pipeline of individuals seeking careers in agriculture. FFA is a great way to get students learning and involved in agriculture-related careers.

Many times I have heard it said that FFA members are some of the hardest working, most eager students on a job or in an internship. I am certain that is due in large part to FFA's leadership and learning model along with the positive support from advisors and parents.

I want to encourage businesses and post-secondary educational institutions to take a deeper look into FFA members as they are moving into careers or furthering their education. Beyond leadership skills, FFA members learn so much about agriculture, food science, technology and a variety of other disciplines preparing them for success.

I further encourage business and community leaders to ask themselves how they can promote youth education or support their local FFA chapter. Our local FFA chapters and schools need business's participation for events and to expand learning opportunities. This is also a great way to establish a connection with the next generation of community leaders, which could lead to job shadowing or an internship.

FFA members exhibit the value of hard work, education and strong leadership instilled in them from the very beginning of their membership and make excellent additions to any workforce or team. At the Indiana State Department of Agriculture we feel that firsthand because almost half of our 60 employees were FFA members. During FFA week I encourage others to think, when was the last time I volunteered with my local FFA chapter? By working together and supporting our local chapters we can take FFA and Indiana's 12,000 FFA members to the next level.

CELEBRATE — Continued from Pg. 3

kicks off on Feb. 20 and culminates on Saturday, Feb. 27.

The National FFA Board of Directors designated the weeklong tradition, which began in 1948, in recognition of Washington's legacy as an agriculturist and farmer. A group of young farmers founded FFA in 1928, and the organization has been influencing generations that agriculture is more than planting and harvesting — it involves science, business and more.

National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to share agriculture with their fellow students as well as their communities. Chapters also give back to their communities through service projects during FFA Week.

During FFA Week, the six national FFA officers will connect virtually with chapters across the country — delivering keynotes, greetings, workshops and more!

National FFA Week is also a time for alumni and supporters to advocate for

agricultural education and FFA. Alumni and Supporters will celebrate Alumni Day on Tuesday, Feb. 23, and on Thursday, Feb. 25, the National FFA Foundation will celebrate Give FFA Day, a 24-hour campaign encouraging the public to support various needs impacting FFA members. If interested in giving, one can visit FFA.org/GiveFFADay. Friday, Feb. 26, all FFA members and supporters are encouraged to wear blue and show their FFA pride!

National FFA Week will be featured on social media as well. Follow the #FFAweek hashtag on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and don't miss @NationalFFA Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat posts.

The National FFA Organization is a school-based national youth leadership development organization of more than 760,000 student members as part of 8,700 local FFA chapters in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

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What better way to show your support of FFA than to get involved in FFA Week? Whether it's in person, on the phone or via social media, be sure to share your FFA stories during #FFAweek!



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

(Above) Batesville took ninth place in the Livestock Judging Team for 2020. Pictured from left: Kaitlyn Sarringhaus, Shalee Harrington, Mrs. Wallpe (in back), Sarah Ronnebaum, and Josh Honnert. (Right, top) Batesville FFA members who attended the State 4-H Skillathon and earned fourth place at the National 4-H Quiz Bowl Contest are pictured from left: Mrs. Wallpe, Anna Bergmann, Onika Struewing, Shalee Harrington and Blake Belter. (Right, bottom) Pictured from left: Luke Meer, Jason Emsweller, Blake Better and Josh Honnert, who have earned a National trip in June to National Grasslands in Missouri.



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