

## Purpose

- Educate both rural and urban youth about the importance of Ohio Farm Bureau, its core values, programs and structure.
- Provide youth an opportunity to be involved and committed to our organization now as well as effective active and involved members, leaders and employees in the future.
- Build confidence, self-esteem, and cooperation skills by emphasizing teamwork, affirmation, and hands-on experiences in a positive, fun atmosphere.

## Unique Aspects of Ohio Farm Bureau Youth

- Promotes self esteem and learning based on *teamwork and cooperation* rather than *competition*
- Teaches young people about Ohio Farm Bureau specifically
- Free to anyone – no dues
- Educates young people about the entire OFBF policy development process
- Introduces youth directly to the advisory councils, F.B. Board, Annual Meetings and delegate meetings.
- Conducts workshops on the cooperative business way and how Ohio Farm Bureau has been instrumental in forming many cooperatives
- Promotes Nationwide Insurance specifically
- Sponsors leadership conferences with workshops that address specific youth concerns not commonly available in other venues (affirmation of others, conflict resolution, family dynamics, etiquette).
- As youth are involved, non-member parents join the organization and also become involved.

## How Our Youth Program Directly Relates to Our Envisioned Future

A major initiative recently undertaken by the Ohio Farm Bureau is the Envisioned Future project where Farm Bureau and the ag industry created a vision of building a strong and viable future for both our organization and agriculture.

The Farm Bureau Youth program plays a direct role in our Envisioned Future by contributing to and embracing the OFBF Indicators of Success and Core Values at the heart of the youth program and goals. While a few examples are listed below, please refer to the “Youth Program Accomplishments” and “Comments from Youth Alumni” sections for more examples.

### OFBF Indicators of Success

#### Strong relationships

- Farm Bureau Youth promotes Nationwide Insurance and our heritage along with safety education at our conferences.
- Farm Bureau youth activities and contributions are regularly featured in youth's local communities through the media and service involvement.
- Farm Bureau Youth members are actively involved in county Jr. Fair Boards, churches, 4-H, FFA and school extracurricular activities, enabling them to be in regular contact and to promote Farm Bureau to those who would otherwise not be familiar with our organization.

#### Viable future for agriculture

- Farm Bureau Youth provides an opportunity for its members to study cooperatives, how businesses are formed and to build strong business skills through the summer conference program. Through stock sales and operating a cooperative store, teens learn the vital knowledge that working together and using good business practices will benefit our industry, community and economy.

- Youth are often the first adopters of new technologies. They are easily able to embrace and navigate the world of IPODs, internet, digital cameras and more while most of us are still unable to program their VCRs. Fostering our own youth to be involved in the agriculture industry and our organization helps our future members handle upcoming technologies with more ease and comfort.

### **Strong organization**

- Ohio Farm Bureau has a track record of excellence proven by national recognition of its programs. By involving our youth, Farm Bureau is continually building its leadership and involvement base. Youth members actively support county and state Farm Bureau programs and initiatives by rolling up their sleeves and getting involved. That commitment to our organization continues as they later join the organization, recruit members and take an active vocal role in the organization. As we prove our commitment to them, they will demonstrate their commitment to us by being strong, involved, enthusiastic leaders. We are actively training tomorrow's voters, county board members, membership workers, and state board members.

### **Balanced ecology**

- As Ohio strives to be a world leader in the production of food and fiber, there is a real need and urgency to invest in our young people; especially those involved in our organization. We want them to be successful pioneers in agriculture as they tell our positive story as faithful stewards of our resources.

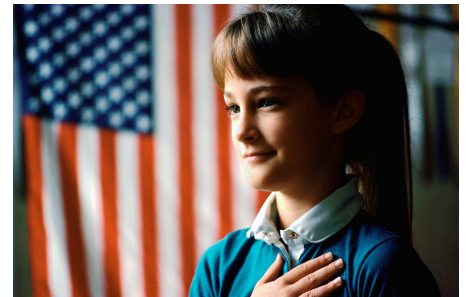
## **Core Values**

### **Integrity and honesty**

- An old proverb states, "Train up a child in the way he should go and he will not stray from it." As we provide strong, positive mentors as youth advisors we are actively influencing the kind of person they will become. Our summer youth conferences and programs help instill not only integrity and honesty, but also allow teens to learn about and practice other qualities such as creativity, compassion, servant leadership, affirmation of others, and teamwork.

### **Grassroots involvement and member advocacy**

- A key ingredient of the youth program is emphasizing that personal involvement in Farm Bureau is vital. Modeled after adult advisory councils, youth councils support and contribute to county programs. Some counties invite youth members to serve as board members. Teens learn our structure and policy development process by participating in our Ignite, Higher Ground and The Edge, reinforcing the importance of personal involvement and commitment while providing them with confidence to speak out on behalf of their beliefs and current issues. *Please see page 22 for comments from participants on Farm Bureau in Action.*



### **Farming's contributions to the world**

- In addition to promoting agriculture through activities like Food Check Out Day, fair booths at the county fair and community service projects, our teens teach consumers about agriculture. In addition, they are instilled with a sense of pride about farming and their families. The following are examples of teens' responses when asked what they learned at a Farm Bureau summer conference:
  - "I am proud to farm."
  - "The pride I have for this organization."
  - "Show others how important Ohio Farm Bureau is to our state."
  - "It has made me appreciate my dad because he is a farmer and I respect him more because of all his hard work."

### **Teamwork**

Cooperation skills are continually reinforced at all Farm Bureau youth events and programs with an emphasis not on "me" but rather on "we". *Please see alumni comments on page 12 and the summer youth conference sections (pages 15-26) for comments from the youth.*