

## Ag Days Education in Johnson County, Indiana

By: Sarah Hanson

The folks with the National Ag Day group ([www.agday.org](http://www.agday.org)) encourage us to share what agriculture means to us. While some people might have an immediate picture that pops into their head, I could take the topic so many different directions. Agriculture varies for us all, but for me it has depended on where I have lived. As a child, agriculture meant cattle, pasture, and a hay field. My family has a small farm that keeps my dad busy taking care of animals and land down near the Ohio River. Later in life, as I studied Animal Science at Purdue, I learned a ton more about agriculture. My horizons were broadened regarding genetics, behavior, large-scale production, health, etc.

I'll spare you the details of all the other places I've lived, but along the way I continue meeting new people in different ag fields and it is always fascinating—whether someone is growing grapes, producing flowers, raising livestock, or combining corn. Farms come in many sizes too, and I want to make sure people realize the importance of every farm.

I hope that everyone passes on their narrative of agriculture. It is important that children keep hearing about the way that food *was* raised and what is *currently* happening as well. I know people in the ag business love to network with one another to swap stories, but having the stories be told to the next generation is crucial since all of them will be consumers and a few of them will be farmers. I don't consider myself a history fan, but as a kid, I did enjoy hearing my grandpa talk how they had horses working the fields. I will remember those stories just as much as experiences up close and personal with animals.

Each year as we have fourth graders come visit Johnson County Ag Days, they get to hear from farmers about soil, equipment, fruit, vegetables, milk, meat, honey, grain, wool, eggs, etc. I am grateful for the teachers that bring students to come visit our program. Thank you also to the many volunteers that help us carry out all the agriculture related programming throughout the year. As the world continues to change, the meaning of agriculture seems to morph along with it. Purdue Extension offers education to people of all ages and backgrounds. I'm happy to hear suggestions on ways to reach more people with information about agriculture. Or if you want to learn about all the great upcoming programs we have planned, feel free to contact me.

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## PURDUE EXTENSION — AG &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES

## Agriculture has a different meaning for each person

BY SARAH HANSON

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In 1922, just two years after women earned the right to vote in the United States, INFB outlined a program to incorporate women into the organization, which still exists today as INFB's Women's Leadership Committee. In 1923, Edna Sewell was the first woman to be elected to the INFB board of directors.

In order to help Indiana's farmers with their unique insurance needs, INFB founded Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance in 1934. Its first insurance policy was sold in February 1935.

Throughout the years, INFB has been instrumental in educating Hoosiers about the issues and concerns of Indiana's farming community and has encouraged its members to advocate for their needs locally and at the state and national levels. For example, in 1939, 15,000 INFB members marched to the Statehouse to successfully save Gross Income Tax repeal. And in 2016, INFB helped reduce farmland property taxes by approximately \$500 million.

As the organization grew, it continued to build a



John G. Brown, INFB's first president, served until 1922.

variety of programs. In 1982, INFB formed Farming the Classroom, now called Agriculture in the Classroom, which is a volunteer-led program that teaches children across the state about farming and where their food comes from. In 1938, INFB formed Indiana Rural Youth, a networking and education program for young adults in farming. Today, INFB runs a Young Farmers program, which provides education, leadership and networking opportunities for young adults in agriculture.

"Indiana Farm Bureau has always realized the importance of youth and youth development," Kron said. "As the future of Indiana Farm Bureau, we look forward to seeing how they shape this organization and how they influence agriculture in Indiana for many years.

Over the past 100 years, INFB has evolved to meet the needs of Indiana's farmers and agribusiness professionals while remaining a grass-roots, member-driven organization.

"As INFB members, we're so proud of the legacy of this organization and we look forward to doing our part to carry that legacy into the next century," said Kron. "I'm confident that we will remain true to the founding purpose of this organization — to be the voice of Indiana's agricultural community — and continue to be a vital part of one of Indiana's largest industries."

To learn more about INFB's history, visit [www.infarmbureau.org/about/history/INFB100](http://www.infarmbureau.org/about/history/INFB100).

► AGRICULTURE

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Sarah Hanson is the ag & natural resources educator and county extension director/Purdue Extension Johnson County. She can be reached at [sspeedy@purdue.edu](mailto:sspeedy@purdue.edu) or 317-736-3724.

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