? Gary Geswein, Chairman Harrison County Farm Bureau, Inc., spoke to approximately 45 members and guests of the Franklin Township Farm Bureau Tuesday, November 11. Agriculture education began in 1917 during the Industrial Revolution after the end of the first World War. Ag education at that time was mainly plant and animal management. “Students learned about agriculture at home by working with their parents on the farm”, said Geswein, retired Future Farmer of America teacher.

In 1928, Future Farmers of America was created. The creation of the FFA program has expanded the program for agriculture into three parts 1) classroom, 2) Future Farmers of America programs and 3) Supervised Ag Experience programs. These programs range from soil judging, forestry, debates, animal science, agribusiness and more. In 1969, women became involved in FFA. About 40% of Ag teachers are women.

Support groups for FFA are the State Department of Education, Purdue College of Agriculture and the local school community. FFA, the largest youth organization in the country, has more than 520,000 young students as members. All four school systems in Harrison County have FFA organizations.

The future for Ag education will be focused on world food and the energy age. High technology; (services); food types (diet); energy needs; animal care and marketing. The former Ag teacher said, “society, agriculture and Ag education programs mirror each other”. “Who is going to teach and inform students and the public the plant and animal management that effects our food, energy and wellness?” the speaker concluded.

Melissa Jones, Harrison County Farm Bureau Woman Leader, said Farm Bureau’s Food check-out will be February 7. Ag week will be around the first week in March. (Watch the papers for specific dates.) “The purpose of these two events is to promote agriculture; and to help people better understand how little food costs in the United States as compared to other countries”, Jones said.

Lanesville Community School Interim - Superintendent, Sam Gardner announced Aaron McKim, 2006 LHS graduate, as winner of the Townsend Outstanding Communicator in Agriculture debate. Aaron was one of three Purdue Ag majors on the team of three. The topic of the debate was, “whether U.S. consumers have more quality food choices than ever before”. All three young men were awarded a lap-top computer. Wayne Townsend, distinguished College of Agriculture Alumni and politician, set up this Foundation about three years ago. Aaron is the son of Denzil and Shirley McKim of Lanesville.

Joan T. Schickel, Franklin Township Farm Woman Leader said, “Agriculture is being attacked by a number of activists groups.” “Two years ago Arizona passed a law eliminating the production of eggs from caged hens.” On November 4 voters of the state of California voted in Proposition 2. This will ban the type of cages typically used to house egg laying hens. According to a report from the University of California’s Agriculture Issues Center, the expected impact will be the near-elimination of egg production in California.

Non-cage egg production costs at least 20% more than conventional egg production, the report says. Modern cage systems that separate eggs from feces and other fluids have virtually eliminated salmonella contamination over the least decade, and, Proposition 2 will likely result in more illnesses from eating salmonella contaminated eggs.

A number of activists groups opposed to modern livestock production are now attempting to zone livestock production out of existence. In Missouri, a State Judge earlier this year handed activists opposed to modern livestock production a huge victory. The judge banned indoor hog farming within a fifteen mile radius of the historic village of Arrow Park. “Fifteen miles! That’s a

distance farther than from Lanesville to New Albany", Schickel exclaimed.

"This is why it is so very important that Farm Bureau continue it's programs of 'Farming in the Classroom'; as well as our being active in local affairs; and community development," Schickel remarked.

"The next meeting of Franklin Township Farm Bureau will be Tuesday, February 10, 2009. The meeting will be at 6 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Lanesville High School", said Chairman Guy Heitkemper.