

Hello, I am Marcellus Cubit, and thank you for having me here today to discuss something that is very important to me and has gotten me to where I am today. I served as a state FFA Officer here in Vermont for three years and the things I learned then have helped me in life since. The law that grants a federal charter to the National FFA Organization states that the purposes of it are "to develop character, train for useful citizenship, and foster patriotism, and thereby develop competent and aggressive rural and agricultural leadership." This has been accomplished millions of times in the last 78 years.

There are many things that are going very well in the FFA but there are also things that could be improved. Many of these things are on the local and/or state level and under the control of the Education Department but there are several that can be directly affected by the USDA and the Farm Bill. One of these is in helping in educating the city dwellers of our country to understand the importance of agriculture in their lives. Too many view the farmer as a rustic figure whose treatment doesn't affect them. FFA chapters are growing in the cities and this education of the public would help those chapters to improve themselves and in turn their city. In 1994 the National FFA President was from Chicago and had never been on a farm until after he took office.

~~Support~~ Another thing that would be helpful to the local chapters would be increased ~~funding, if possible~~, to help the students be involved in some of the programs and conferences that are put on by the National FFA Organization. Many FFA chapters are in rural areas that do not have the resources available to send members to these programs. These programs help the students improve themselves and develop their leadership potential. The more the FFA members of this country are able to attend these programs the greater the benefit they are to their community. These are only a few suggestions of things that would help the FFA to remain strong and helping our nation develop future leaders.

The value of the National FFA Organization might be best summed up in the quote by Jimmy Carter, former U.S. president and former FFA member in Georgia, "I began to learn how to make a speech. And I began to learn how to work with other people. I also learned the value of agriculture, farm families, stability, commitment, idealism, hope, truth, hard work and patriotism from the FFA." Thank you for your time and attention.

Marcellus Cubit
Marcellus Cubit

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

2005 NOV -4 11 A 3: 15

COPIES: