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Jason' Smith's Capitol Report - National FFA Week

FEBRUARY 17TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

8th Congressional District - Missouri - Since its founding in 1928, the Future Farmers of America organization has brought together students, educators and private sector agriculture professionals to support agriculture education in schools across our country. Guiding the 580,000 FFA members in the United States is the FFA Mission of working: *To make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.*

The week of February 15-22 has been designated National FFA Week to celebrate the contributions made by the organization. In high school I served as a chapter and area officer and I participated in numerous FFA competitions. Like many people raised in rural communities, FFA invigorated my passion for agriculture. I'm proud to say I still own my family's farm started four generations ago.

In rural communities, FFA prepares the next generation of leaders. The economy of our own Eighth Congressional District depends on agriculture and ag leaders from FFA. Starting in the Missouri Bootheel and following along the banks of the Mississippi River we grow everything from rice, cotton and soybeans to corn, milo

and peanuts. In the western hills of our district farm families raise cattle, hogs and chickens. The central part of our district has a rich timber industry that supports numerous mills and small businesses. FFA prepares young people to lead our region's rural agriculture-based economy.

In FFA chapters throughout the country, students develop leadership skills that will last a lifetime. Additionally, FFA puts an emphasis on the global importance of agriculture and the always increasing role of technology in production. FFA seeks to strengthen student's confidence in public speaking. I remember my early days in FFA, I was so nervous speaking in front of a crowd that I could barely get through even the shortest speech.

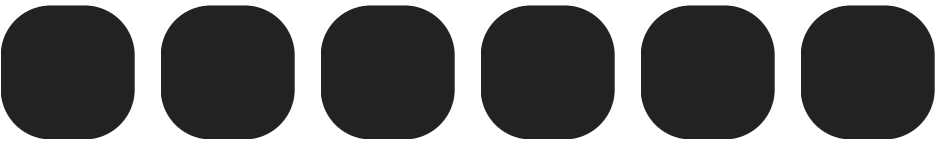
In our Eighth Congressional District, agriculture drives the economy. For rural America to succeed, we must continue working with young people to expand agricultural knowledge and leadership skills. For me, and for thousands of young people across America, FFA is the foundation for lifelong skills that strengthen farming communities in rural America.

Jason Smith will be making a visit to the Dexter Senior High School on Tuesday, February 18th to meet the Future Farmers of American Club.

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