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Indiana FFA Association

Records, 1910s-2006

Mss 54

Indiana FFA Association Records, 1910s-2006 Mss 54 25.0 c.f. (18 cartons, 2 document boxes, 9 flat boxes, 7 audio cassettes, 14 video cassettes)

ABSTRACT

The Indiana FFA Association, formed in 1929, was the 19th state association chartered by the National FFA Organization, an agricultural education organization consisting of 52 chartered state associations including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Each state association is governed by its own constitution approved by the National FFA Organization and is comprised of chapters within secondary schools throughout the state. In 1968 the Indiana FFA Leadership Center was established in Trafalgar, Indiana, to house leadership activities, the State FFA Officers, and state staff. By 2004, the Indiana FFA Association included 9,000 members in 188 chapters statewide.

ACCESS

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ACQUISITION

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HISTORICAL NOTE

The Indiana FFA Association, formed in 1929, was the 19th state association chartered by the National FFA Organization, an agricultural education organization consisting of 52 chartered state associations including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Each state association is governed by its own constitution approved by the National FFA Organization and is comprised of chapters within secondary schools throughout the state. In order to receive a charter from the national organization, a state association must first have 125 members and four chapters. The state association responsibilities to the national organization include annual reporting to the national office, operating within the parameters of the constitution of the national organization, and participating in national activities.

When the Indiana FFA Association was founded, its headquarters were located on the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. The FFA operated as a branch of the Office of the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, a division of the State Department of Public Instruction (now called the Indiana Department of Education). The State Supervisor of Agricultural Education assumed the role of State FFA Advisor and a Teacher-Trainer at the Purdue University Campus was chosen to serve as the State Executive Secretary/Treasurer. In 1969 the Leadership Training Center opened in Trafalgar, Indiana, to house the administrative operations of the organization and to serve as a training camp for the members of the state association. Since its construction, the center has grown to include office space, camping facilities, hiking trails and swimming, and a residence for the state officers.

Today the association continues to maintain strong ties with the Indiana Department of Education through the Office of Career and Technical Education. The office determines the requirements for the school curriculum in agricultural education and works in conjunction with the FFA and other agricultural education organizations in the state to provide students with opportunities to meet and exceed state education standards. The FFA is part of a three-tiered program of agricultural education that includes classroom instruction, hands-on experience, and community-based programs.

The FFA is a student-led organization supervised by adult leaders designated by the Indiana Department of Education. These leaders, along with the state FFA officers, form the Executive Committee responsible for conducting the business of the organization. Each year members elect seven state officers to serve as student leaders and goodwill ambassadors for the state organization. The officers are: President, Northern Region Vice President, Southern Region Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel. Under the supervision of the State Advisor and Executive Director, the officers travel the state visiting donors, supporters, and local FFA chapters. The officers act as mentors to members and are responsible for conducting leadership training camps throughout the year helping students to develop skills in leadership, public speaking, and parliamentary procedure through skits, lecture, and recreation. The FFA divides the state into four sections comprised of three districts. Each section has a Section Director, a student elected by members, and a Section Advisor, the chapter advisor of the Section Director. The Section Director presides at section meetings of district officers and helps maintain contact within its districts. Each district elects six officers that travel throughout their areas providing direction and helping members stay in touch with the larger organization. The districts each hold conventions and award events in preparation for the state convention.

Members gather annually to conduct the organization's business at the Indiana State FFA Convention held on the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. This convention is the culmination of the year's events for the association and includes business sessions as well as a variety of award events such as the State FFA Degree, public speaking contest, proficiency awards, and the Stars Over Indiana Pageant. At the end of the convention the new state officers are elected by the delegates to lead the organization.

As part of the Indiana Department of Education's three-tiered approach to agricultural education, the Indiana FFA Association works to provide a successful program for its members. The first tier in this program is classroom instruction. Nearly 200 FFA chapters are located in secondary schools throughout the state. Each chapter has its own officers and is chartered by the state association. Students in grades seven through twelve taking classes in agriculture are eligible for membership in the organization and may maintain an active membership until the fourth year after their graduation from high school. Classroom instruction provides the background knowledge for participation in award events and supervised instruction.

The second tier of the agricultural program, hands-on experience, is accomplished through Supervised Agricultural Experience Projects (SAE). Through SAE projects, students develop and maintain their own business operation under the direction of an advisor and participate in competitions that reward skill in their areas of expertise. Awards include proficiency areas such as livestock, horticulture, agribusiness, landscape design, and a variety of other areas related to agriculture, agribusiness, or agriscience. Students are awarded degrees that signify their level of involvement with the organization and skill in their SAE projects. Degrees begin at the Discovery FFA Degree level for new members and advance to the Greenhand Degree, Chapter Degree, and State FFA Degree. The highest degree level, the American FFA Degree, is awarded by the national organization.

The FFA also succeeds in promoting the third tier, community-based programs, through its service activities. Throughout the year, FFA members participate in activities that place them in direct contact with their community. Through partnerships in local grade schools, members serve as mentors to younger students and help educate them about agriculture. The State FFA Association also sponsors the FFA Pavilion at the Indiana State Fair each year. The first FFA exhibit opened at the State Fair in the 1960s and quickly expanded to a greenhouse in the 1970s and a children's barnyard in the 1980s. In 1993 the Professional Greens of Agriculture, an 18-hole agricultural literacy golf course, built and operated by FFA members opened. The success of the golf course and FFA exhibits at the fair made possible the construction of the FFA Pavilion in 1999 to house FFA exhibits, the golf course, and Value-Added Country Market offering students a chance to educate the community about the agricultural industry in the state.

REFERENCES

Indiana FFA Association Website: http://www.indianaffa.org/index.htm

Indiana FFA...Bringing the Past Forward: Celebrating 75 Years of Indiana FFA. Evansville: M.T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2005.

RELATED MATERIALS

National FFA Organization Records, 1916-2000, Ruth Lilly Special Collections and Archives, IUPUI University Library, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Indiana FFA Association Records document the history of a state association of the National FFA Organization. The collection details its programs and activities, governance, and relationship to the national organization. While the Indiana FFA Association began in 1929, the majority of the records in this collection originate in the 1960s when the Indiana FFA Leadership Center opened and provides documentation through the 1990s.

Executive Committee Records, 1962-2000, include the records produced by the governing body of the organization and are comprised of minutes, committee information, and the state constitution. Since the minutes of the executive committee cover only a limited timeframe (the 1960s and 1970s), little information about the governing body of the state association is available. More information about the Executive Committee is located in the association's newsletters. The *Indiana Future Farmer* contains actions of the committee with regard to award requirements during the 1940s and 1950s and the *Hoosier Envoy* contains copies of the executive committee minutes during the 1980s.

Administration Records, 1929-2001, contain information about the internal office operations of the Indiana FFA Association and includes correspondence from the Executive Secretary/Treasurer, state officer records, information about the development of the State Leadership Center, audits and financial statements, and chapter information. The records of the Executive Secretary/Treasurer are not complete, but offer a look into the activities of the office through correspondence, convention activities, and reports from a limited period of time. The ledgers kept by the secretary/treasurer help track the involvement of chapters by the record of dues and awards given by the state.

Another source of information about the leadership of the organization is the state officer records. The directory of state officers lists the officers and their positions from the organization's beginning in 1929 through 1978. Biographical information, officer activities, and the names of later officers are located in the newsletters, *Indiana Future Farmer* and *Hoosier Envoy*. More detailed information about the officer team during the 1970s and 1980s is also available in the scrapbooks they produced commemorating their year of service to the organization.

Other records reflect the relationship of the state organization to local areas and include information from high schools, chapters, and the State Alumni Association. The chapter information includes chapter directories and samples of chapter charters. The chapter directories include statistics and can be used to determine how long a chapter has been in existence. Further information about the internal operation of the organization is available in the annual reports to the National FFA Organization also found in this series.

Indiana FFA Foundation Records, 1954-2001, contain records dealing with the fund raising branch of the organization and include annual reports, donor lists, executive committee minutes, and information about the foundation kickoff campaigns. The board of directors' files and annual reports contain the best information about the activities of the foundation. Although neither is complete, together the records present a fairly complete history of the foundation's activities from its incorporation through the 1980s. The foundation materials also contain information about the annual fund drives and fund raising for the leadership training center. Further information about the leadership center is located in the administration records.

Award and Program Records, 1930-2003, include information related to the contests and programs sponsored by the Indiana FFA Association. The information includes incomplete lists of state contest winners, award handbooks, and information about Indiana winners in national contests. More information about the names of award winners is available in the State Convention Proceedings and in the state newsletters. Information about the types of awards offered and their requirements is found in the Contests, Awards, and Activities Guide. The newsletters are good sources for information about early state contest guidelines.

The Indiana FFA Association also sponsors a variety of programs independently and in conjunction with the programs of the National FFA Organization. Most of the information about the state organization's programs relates to the state leadership camps and FFA participation at the Indiana State Fair. The program information includes handbooks describing activities, correspondence, and program highlights. This information also highlights the FFA's involvement in the community.

State FFA Convention Records, 1950-2006, contain materials related to the annual convention held at the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. The most complete convention records are from the late 1960s and 1970s and consist of proceedings, programs, letters, and award information. Other years' documentation is limited to programs or announcements. These records help identify award winners and

newly elected state officers. Further information about conventions is located in the newsletters and state officer scrapbooks.

State Vocational Education Records, 1913-1985, includes information about the state FFA association's relationship with the Indiana Department of Education. These records help to indicate how that relationship works. These records include reports, minutes, handbooks, and state board information. Two of the most important items in this series are the Annual Report for Vocational Agriculture from the 1950s and 1960s and the State Plan for Vocational Education from the 1970s. These publications offer a detailed look at vocational agriculture curriculum and statistics for that period. Other materials in this section relate to the State Board of Vocational Education, Indiana Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, and some early vocational education bulletins about the development of vocational education and the FFA in the state of Indiana.

Publications, 1946-2004, contain newsletters, directories, and handbooks produced by the Indiana FFA Association. The newsletters contain some of the most important information about the history of the organization. Although the set of state association newsletters incomplete, it covers a large time period (1940s-1980s) and includes information about chapter activities, the executive committee, and state programs.

Other publications include training handbooks and guides, news articles, and directories containing lists of state vocational education leaders and their positions in the state association as well as leaders in vocational agriculture throughout the state.

Scrapbooks, 1970-1993, consist of scrapbooks compiled by members, officers, and local FFA chapters. Eight scrapbooks compiled by the State FFA Officers document the highlights of their year in office through photographs, news articles, and other paraphernalia. This includes information about the state convention, various conferences, trips, and the state fair. This is an excellent place to find information about the officers' activities and responsibilities.

Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004, document the programs and activities of the Indiana State FFA Association visually through photographs and slides. This is the largest section of the collection and includes every aspect of the FFA experience from the perspective of both the state officer and the local chapter member through camps, state fair, state and national conventions, supervised agriculture experience, and other programs sponsored by the association. Also included in this section are images of the state officers, Indiana members who became national officers, and award winners. Images are generally identified by date and activity.

Audio-Visual Materials, 1971-2004, includes video and audio cassettes and 16 millimeter sound recordings. These recordings consist of convention footage, the Stars Over Indiana Pageant, State FFA Camp activities, state officer highlights, and promotional pieces.

SERIES LIST

CONTENTS Eventutive Committee Records, 1962, 2000	BOX	FOLDER
Executive Committee Records, 1962-2000 Constitution and Bylaws, 1962-1977	1	1
Consultant Committee, 1966-1978, 1980	1	2
Executive Committee	1	Ζ.
Minutes, 1966-1967, 1970-1974, 1977-1978	1	3
Training, 2000	1	3 4
Slides, 1981-1982, 1992	15	4
	15	12
Administration Records, 1929-2001	1	5
Alumni Association, 1972-1979, 1997	1	-
Annual Report to National FFA Organization, 1953/54- 1954/55, 1959/60-1962/63, 1966/67, 1979/80	1	6-9
Chapters		
Aquaculture at South Putnam, 1994-1995	V0001	
Chapter Meeting (reel to reel), n.d.	34	
Charters (#492-#496), 1977-1978	1	10
Directory, 1949, 1951-1954, 1960, 1965, 1969-1970	1	11
Interviews (audio cassette), n.d.	31	1
Organizing an FFA Chapter, n.d.	1	12
Photographs, 1970s-1998	9	18-22
Public Relations, 1964-1978	1	13
Slides		
1993	14	5
1966-1968, 1972-1979, 1983, 1987-1989, 1991, 1995	15	9-11
South Newton Chapter Scrapbook, January-December 1983 (oversized)	22	
Correspondence With National FFA Organization, 1968	1	14-15
Districts	-	
General Information, ca. 1970, 1977	1	16-17
Photographs, 1990s-1998	9	23-29
Executive Secretary/Treasurer		
Bob Juncker		10.00
General Correspondence, 1979-1980	1	18-20
Officer Correspondence, 1980-1981	1	21
Ledger, 1953-1967 (oversized)	21	
National Convention Preparation, 1964-1965	1	22
Report, 1958, 1970	1	23
Facts and Objectives, ca. 1970s	1	24
FFA: Focus on the Future, 1983	1	25
FFA Television Spots, 1977	1	26
Financial		
Audits, 1960-1965	1	27

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Administration Records, 1929-2001 (cont.)		
Financial (cont.)		•
Budget, 1966, 1969, 1971-1978, 1981-1983, 1986, 1988-1989	1	28
Treasurer's Reports, 1960-1963, 1968, 1976-1978	1	29
General Information, 1967-1970	1	30
Indiana FFA Membership, 1970-1971, 1983-1984	1	31
Leadership Training Center		
Anniversary, 1989	35	1
Audio Cassette, 1983	31	3
Blueprints, 1969 (oversized)	OV4	
Brochures, ca. 1970s	1	32
Central Indiana FFA Recreation and Leadership Corporation, 1973, 1976	1	33
Engineering Report and Landscape Development		
1969	1	34
1969 (oversized)	33	4
General Information, ca. 1969, 1983-1984	1	35
Pageant (reel to reel), 1982	34	
Photographs, 1970s-1990s	10	25-31
Planning Guide, ca. 1980	35	34
Proposals, 1967-1968	35	2
Scrapbook, 1970-1971	8	9
Sketches, ca. 1969 (oversized)	30	4
Slides, 1966-1967, 1970-1979, 1984, 1986-1988, 1990- 1992	16	2-5
Policies and Procedures for State Student Organization Advisors, 1977	1	36
Proposals		
Legislative Proposal, 1973	1	37
Lilly Proposal, 1973-1974	1	38
Schools	_	
Correspondence, 1968-1969	1	39
Crown Point City Schools, 1958-1969	1	40
Lowell School District, 1958-1969	1	41
MSD of North Menton, 1959-1970	1	42
Visitations, 1973-1980	1	43
Staff Management by Objectives, 1978-1979	2	1
State Officers		
Candidates, 1988	2	2
Directory, 1929-1978, 1995/96, 2000/01	2	3
General Information, 1964-1976	2	4
Highlights		
Reel to Reel, 1981/82	34	

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Administration Records, 1929-2001 (cont.)		
State Officers (cont.)	10010	
Video, 1988/89	V0013u	_
Indiana State Officers Guide, 1973-1975	2	5
List, 1929-1987	2	6
Meyers (Ken) Interview (State Officer 1934-35), 2002	V0007	
Photographs	10	0.00
1971-2003	12	9-20
2002/03-2003/04	32	29.20
2000/01-2001/02, 2004/05	35	28-30
Scrapbooks	0	10 11
1973/74, 1976/77	8	10-11
1978/79	30	5
1983/84	23	
1984/85	24-25	
1985/86	26	
1987/88	27	
1988/89	28	
1992/93	29	
Slides		
1970s-1991/92	19	4-7
1992/93	20	1
Team Highlights (audio cassette), 1989/90	31	9
State Program of Work, 1962/63, 1965-1969, 1971-1978	2	7-8
State Supervisor Mailings		
1969-1970	2	9-10
1969-1970 (oversized)	OV4	
Surveys		
A Survey of FFA Activities, ca. 1968-1969	2	11-12
Indiana Vocational Agriculture Student Interest	2	13
Survey, 1970-1971		
Indiana FFA Foundation Records, 1954-2001		
Annual Reports, 1966, 1968-1969, 1985-1986, 1988-1991	2	14-15
Audits, 1972-1987	2	16
Board of Directors		
Executive Committee, 1961-1962, 1965, 1970-1971, 1975-1982, 1985-1988	2	17
Members, 1961-1990	2	18
Minutes and Attachments, 1961-1989	2	19-25
Brochures, 1970s	2	26
Chapter Fund Raising, 1977-1978	2	27
Constitution and Bylaws, 1957-1972	2	28
Correspondence, 1954-1972	2	29

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Indiana FFA Foundation Records, 1954-2001 (cont.)		
Foundation Fund Drive		
Audio Cassette, 1988	31	2
Donors and Contributors, 1966, 1972-1978	3	1-2
Fund Drive Results, 1967-1987	3	3
General Information		
1972-1986	3	4
1972-1986	35	3
Kick-Off Agenda, 1965-1976	3	5
Ledger, 1971	33	8
Possible Donors, 1978	3	6
Sponsors, 1985	3	7
Leadership Center Development, 1969-1972	3	8
Lilly Endowment, 1998	35	4
Sponsors, 2001	3	9-10
Award and Program Records, 1930-2003		
Awards and Contests		
Agricultural Mechanics		
General Information, 1978-1979	3	11
Slides, 1981-1982	13	4
Chapter Awards, 1969-1978	3	12
Contests, Awards, and Activities Guide, 1968-1972, 1976-1979	3	13-17
Cooperative Activity Awards, 1979	3	18
Essay Contest, 1975-1981	3	19
Fire Safety Contest, n.d.	3	20
Greenhand Contest, ca. 1975	3	21
Honorary Hoosier Farmers, 1930-1984	3	22
Hoosier Farmers		
Applications, 1970s	3	23
Winners, 1945-1964, 1969-1971, 1977-1978, 1988	3	24
Workshop, ca. 1970s	3	25
Horse Judging, n.d.	3	26
Horticultural Judging		
1977-1982	3	27
1978-1979 (oversized)	33	6
Job Interview, n.d.	3	28
Judging	-	_
Handbooks, 1970, 1973-1978	3	29
Judges, 1977-1978	3	30
State Judging Committee, 1973-1977, 1996-1999, 2001	3	31
Leadership Contests, 1977-1980, 1988, 2000	3	32

BOX FOLDER

Award and Program Records, 1930-2003 (cont.)

CONTENTS

ru and Program Records, 1950-2005 (cont.)		
National Awards		
American Farmers		
General Information, 1930-1955, 1959, 1961, 1978	3	33
Photographs, 1972	8	14
American Star Photographs, 1978, 1990	8	15
Building Our American Communities (BOAC), 1971-1978	3	34
Foundation Awards, 1960-1963, 1971-1973	3	35
Judging Contests, 1976-1977	3	36
Proficiency Contests, 1978	8	16
Press Releases, 1970, 1975, 1983, 1991	3	37
Proficiency Awards		
AIC Trip, 1973, 1977-1978	3	38
Applications, 1970	3	39
General Information, 1970-1978	3	40
Handbook, 1971	3	41
Photographs, 1987, 1998, 2002	8	17-21
Slides, 1965-1990s	13	8-21
State and District Winners, 1973-1979, 1988	3	42
Public Speaking, 1980	4	1
Quiz Bowl, 1974-1978, 1980	4	2
Slides, 1969, 1972-1978, 1984, 1987-1993, 1995	13	5-7
Stars Over Indiana		
Audio Cassettes, 1981, 1988, 1990, 1994	31	5-8
Todd Lotter, 1990	V0006	
Photographs, n.d., 1970	8	23-24
Slides		
Star Farmer, 1992	13	22
Stars Over Indiana Pageant		
1991	13	23
1994-1995	14	1-3
State Soil Judging Contest		
General Information		
1978, 1983	4	3
1978 (oversized)	33	6
Slides, 1976, 1978, 1981-1982, 1990-1992	14	4
Welding, 1980-1986	4	4
Programs		
Agriculture Day, 1978-1979, 1981	4	5
Bicentennial, 1976	4	6

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Award and Program Records, 1930-2003 (cont.)		
Programs (cont.)		
Citrus Fund Raising	4	7
General Information, 1977-1980	4	7
Indian River Quality Growers, 1976-1978	4	8
Seald-Sweet Growers, Inc., 1973-1977, 1985	4	9
Educational Exchange, 1970	4	10
FFA Wagon, 1976-1999	35	12
FFA Week		
General Information		
1978	4	11
1978 (oversized)	33	1
Photographs		
1990s, 1997-1998	9	31-32
1990s, 1997-1998	10	1-2
Farm Business Management, 1978-1979	4	12
General Information, 1970-1980	4	13
Indiana Young Farmers Association, 2003	4	14
Interns, 1968-1970, 1997-2000	4	15
Joint Youth Camps and Conferences		
Audio Cassette, n.d.	31	4
Audio Reel, 1973-1975	34	
Combined Youth Camp, 1971-1978, 1982	4	16
Joint Youth Meetings, 1977-1978	4	17
Youth Power, 1974-1980	4	18
Leadership Camp		
Audio Cassette, 1978	31	
Indiana FFA Leadership Camp Handbook, 1977	4	19
Leadership Camps, 1970-1971, 1973-1978, ca. 1980s	4	20-21
Leadership Camp Materials		
1968-1970	4	22-27
1968-1970 (oversized) Leadership Training Conference, 1070	33	4
Leadership Training Conference, 1970	4	28
Photographs	0	25.25
1970s-2003	8	25-35
1970s-2003	9	1-17
Slides	4.4	
1970-1993	14	6-21
1970-1993	15	1-8
Subregional Leadership Conference, 1968-1978	4	29
Suggestions, 1976	4	30

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Award and Program Records, 1930-2003 (cont.)		
Leadership Camp (cont.)		
Videos		
1989-1990, 1993-1994, 1996	V001	4-V0021
2003	32	
Leadership Conferences		
National Leadership Conference for State Officers (NLCSO)		
General Information, 2000	4	31
Photographs	т	51
1992, 1996	10	35
1998	10	1
Slides, 1984-1985	16	6
Washington Leadership Conference	10	0
General Information, 2000	4	32
Slides, 1970s-1980s	20	$\frac{32}{2}$
Legislative Pages, 1981-1982	4	33
Machinery to Mexico, 1965	4	34
Soil Sampling Program, 1971	4	35
State Fair	-	55
General Information, 1974-1977, 1999-2000	4	36
Indiana FFA Association at the State Fair, 1970-	4	30
1971, 1973, 1975-1976		
Landscape Design, 1974, 1976-1979	4	38
Photographs		
1970s-1999	10	8-22
1999-2001, 2004	35	19-22
Program Proposals, 1968-1971, 1973-1979	4	39
Project List, 1979 (oversized) Slides	33	7
1967, 1969, 1971-1979, 1981-1985, 1987- 1988	18	15-18
1988-1992	19	1-3
State Fair FFA Building Blueprints, 1998 (oversized)	OV4	
Video, 2003	32	
State Programs for Improving Agricultural Leadership, 1971-1977	4	40
Tentative Case for FFA Indiana, ca. 1970	4	41
Thrust '75, 1975	4	41
Traffic Safety, 1976	4	42
Traffic Safety Scrapbook, 1978	4 8	43 12
Tractor Trouble Shooting, 1970, 1976-1977	8 4	44
11actor 110001c Shooting, 1770, 1770-1977	4	44

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
State FFA Convention Records, 1950-2006		
Audio Reel, 1971	34	
News Releases, 1997-2000, 2002	5	1-5
Photographs		
1972-1973, 1977, 1985-1986, 1996-1999, 2001	11	17-32
2001, 2003-2004	12	1-7
2002-2003	32	
2000	35	26-27
Slides		
1969-1974	16	23-25
1974-1984, 1986-1991, 1994-1995	17	1-14
State FFA Chorus Photographs, 1977	11	16
State FFA Band, 1956-1967	5	6
State FFA Convention		
1950, 1955, 1960-1973, 1975-1980, 1983-1990, 1992,	5	7-29
1995-2006		
1954	35	5
Videos, 1986-1987, 1993, 2002	V000	9-V0012
State Vocational Education Records, 1913-1985		
A History of Vocational Education in Indiana, ca. 1970	5	30
A Study of Continuing Education in Indiana, 1968	5	31
Agriculture Enrollment, 1970-1976	5	32
Annual Report for Vocational Agriculture		
1949/50	5	33-34
1950/51, 1953/54-1955/56, 1958/59, 1961/62-1962/63	6	1-14
1949/50, 1953/54-1955/56, 1958/59, 1961/62	33	5
(oversized)		
Curriculum, 1973-1974, 1977-1978	6	15
Final Report on the Development of Instructional Materials,	6	16
1976		
Handbook for Vocational Agriculture in Indiana Schools, 1968-1969	6	17
Indiana FFA Public Education Program, 1971-1972	6	18
Indiana State Plan for Vocational Education, 1970/71, 1973-	6	19-22
1977	0	1)-22
Indiana Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, 1964- 1971	6	23
Instructional Materials, 1977	6	24
Pamphlets, 1968-1978	6	25
Program Criteria, 1975	6	26
Research Proposal, 1967	6	27
State Advisory Council on Vocational Education, 1977-1979	6	28
State Board of Vocational Education, 1966-1976	6	29
Teacher Training and Certification, 1968-1971	6	30-31
	-	

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
State Vocational Education Records, 1913-1985 (cont.)		22
VICA Meeting Contest, 1978-1979	6	32
Vocational Education Bulletins, 1913, 1915, 1917-1918, 1922, 1931	6	33
Vocational Education Occupations, 1969	6	34
Vocational Education Reorganization Act of 1968, 1970	6	35
Vocational Education Service and Demonstration Center Project, 1971-1972	7	1
Young Farmers Association, 1968, 1973, 1982-1983, 1985	7	2
Publications, 1946-2004		
A Program for Developing the Fund Raising Potential of FFA, 1970	7	3
Advisory Committee Handbook, 1977	7	4
Analysis of the Needs, Problems, and Objectives of 5 Youth Organizations, n.d.	7	5
Articles and Papers		
1970s	7	6
1970s (oversized)	33	3
1989, 2001 (oversized)	30	3
Directories		
Agricultural Organizations in Indiana, 1976	7	7
Area Vocational Directors, 1977-1978	7	8
Combined Youth Organization Officers, 1971-1976	7	9
Cooperative Extension, 1971	7	10
Directory of Indiana Vocational Agricultural Teachers, 1966-1969, 1977-1981	7	11
District Coordinators, 1973-1977	7	12
National Society of Livestock Record Associations, 1971-1976	7	13
State Association Master List, 1978-1979	7	14
State Staff, 1976-1977	7	15
Good Grooming, 1974	7	16
Guide to Sponsorship of FFA Activities, ca. 1983	7	17
FFA Leadership Guide, 1976	7	18
FFA Leadership Handbook, ca. 1969, 1974	7	19-20
Group Dynamics, 1973	7	21
Indiana FFABringing the Past Forward: Celebrating 75		
Years of Indiana FFA		
Book, 2004	S533.F	8 153 2005
Book, 2004 (CD)	32	
Chapters, 1945-2004	35	6
Cline, Phillip, 1982-2004	35	7
Clippings, 1935-2004	35	8
General Information, 1961-2004	35	9

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Publications, 1946-2004 (cont.)		
Indiana FFABringing the Past Forward: Celebrating 75		
Years of Indiana FFA (cont.)		
Photographs		
1930s-2000s	35	15-18
1930s-2000s (CD)	32	
Roupp, Bob, 1967-1995	35	10
Zimmer, Paul, 2004	35	11
Leadership for Agricultural Industry, 1978	7	22
Leadership Training Center, 1967-1968	7	23
Leadership Training Handbooks for Officers, ca. 1970s	7	24
Newsletters		
Agricultural Education in Indiana Schools, 1962-1968, 1988	7	25-27
Agricultural Education Newsletters, 1963, 1965	7	28
Hoosier Envoy		
1972-1980, 1983-1989, 1991-1992, 1994-1996	7	29-33
Convention 1991, December 1994 (oversized)	33	2
Impact FFA, 2003-2004	7	34
Indiana FFA, 1997-2002	7	35
Indiana Future Farmer	,	50
1946, 1948-1954	7	36-39
1959-1963, 1965	8	1-4
Indiana Vocational Agriculture Digest, 1943-1944,	8	5
1948, 1952-1953, 1956		
Social Graces, 1974	8	6
Writing News Articles, ca. 1958	8	7
You and Vocational Education, n.d.	8	8
Scrapbooks, 1970-1993		
Leadership Center Scrapbook, 1970-1971	8	9
Miscellaneous Scrapbook Pages, 1973, 1978/79 (oversized)	30	1
South Newton Chapter Scrapbook, January-December 1983	22	
(oversized)		
State Officer Scrapbooks		
1973/74, 1976/77	8	10-11
1978/79	30	5
1983/84	23	5
1984/85	24-25	
1985/86	26	
1987/88	20	
1988/89	27	
1992/93	28 29	
Traffic Safety Scrapbook, 1978	29 8	12
manne salety schapuouk, 1970	0	12

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004		
Photographs		
Autumn in the Woods, 1994	8	13
Awards and Contests		
National Award Winners		
American Farmers, 1972	8	14
American Stars, 1978, 1990	8	15
Proficiency Contests, 1978	8	16
Proficiency Winners, 1987, 1998, 2002	8	17-21
Sales Contest and Tree Diggers, ca. 1992	8	22
Section Stars, n.d.	8	23
Star Farmers, 1970	8	24
Benefit Auction, 2001	35	13
Camps		
Autumn Pow-Wow, n.d.	8	25
Fall Greenhand Camp, 1996-1998	8	26-30
General, 1970s-1990s	8	31-32
Leadership Development Workshop		
1990s, 1996-1997	8	33-35
1997-1999	9	1-4
Summer Camp, 1996-1998, 2003	9	5-12
Winter Camp, 1996-1998	9	13-17
Chapters		
Activities, 1970s-1990s	9	18
Crothersville Project Impact, ca. 1997	9	19
Retreats, ca. 1990s	9	20
Southwestern Shelby Hog Roast, n.d.	9	21
Triton Central PALS, ca. 1998	9	22
Districts		
Conventions, ca. 1990s, 1997-1998	9	23-25
Officers, 1996-1998	9	26
Picnic, ca. 1998	9	27
Stars, ca. 1990s, 1997-1998	9	28-29
Executive Committee Christmas Party, 1997	9	30
FFA Week		
1990s	9	31-32
1997-1998	10	1-2
Faces of Indiana, Sessions 1-4, 1998	10	3-6
Farm Progress, ca. 1998	10	7
Fire, 2004	35	14
Indiana FFABringing the Past Forward: Celebrating	55	
75 Years of Indiana FFA Book Photographs, 1930s, 2000s	25	15 17
Book Photographs, 1930s-2000s	35 35	15-17
Paul Zimmer, n.d.	35	18

hotographs and Slides, 1910s-2004 (cont.) Indiana State Fair Barnyard Carnival, n.d. FFA Day, 1998 General, 1970s-1990s General, 1999-2001, 2004 Goat Untie, n.d.	10 10 35 10 10	8 9 10-12 19-22 13
Barnyard Carnival, n.d. FFA Day, 1998 General, 1970s-1990s General, 1999-2001, 2004	10 10 35 10 10	9 10-12 19-22
FFA Day, 1998 General, 1970s-1990s General, 1999-2001, 2004	10 10 35 10 10	9 10-12 19-22
General, 1970s-1990s General, 1999-2001, 2004	10 35 10 10	10-12 19-22
General, 1999-2001, 2004	35 10 10	19-22
	10 10	
Goat Untie, n.d.	10	13
Heifer Chase, n.d.		14
Judging Contests, 1996-1999	10	15-17
Mechanic Contest, 1990s	10	18
Professional Greens of Agriculture, ca. 1997- 1998	10	19-20
Race to End Hunger, ca. 1997	10	21
Tractor Trouble Shooting, n.d.	10	22
IVATA and New Agriculture Teachers Meeting, ca. 1997	10	23
Joint Youth Task Force, 1978	10	24
Junior High Day, 2005	35	23
Kick-Offs, 2004	35	24
Leadership Center		
Camp Tecumseh, ca. 1990s	10	25
Forest Discovery Center, ca. 1990s	10	26
General, ca. 1970s, ca. 1990s	10	27-29
Memorial Deck, 1995	10	30
Scrapbook, 1970-1971	10	31
Monster Rec Day, 1994-1995, ca. 1997	10	32-34
NLCSO		
1992, 1996	10	35
1998	11	1
National Convention, 1975-1976, 1991, 1994, 1996- 1998	11	2-8
National FFA Center, ca. 1998	11	9
National Officers		
Abby Dougherty, 1998	11	10
Portraits		
1963/64 (oversized)	30	2
1963/64, 1972/73-1976/77, 1979/80,	11	11
1989/90-1990/91, 1999/00		
Proclamation Signing, ca. 1998	11	12
SOAR		
2003	11	13
2004	35	25
Star Recruitment, ca. 1997	11	14
State Advisors, ca. 1960s-1970s	11	15

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004 (cont.)	11	16
State Chorus, 1977	11	16
State Convention	11	17.00
1972-1973, 1977, 1985-1986, 1996-1999, 2001	11	17-32
2001, 2003-2004	12	1-7
2000	35	26-27
State FFA Activities, 1971-1972, 1980s-1990s	12	8
State Officers		
Activities		
1971-1972, 1976-1977, 1981-1982, 1995- 1999, 2002-2003	12	9-19
2001/02-2002/03	32	
2000/01-2001/02, 2004/05	35	28-30
Portraits and Group Photographs, 1971/72-	12	20
1973/74, 1976/77, 1986/87-2000/01,		
2003/04		
Student Activities		
1970s-1990s	12	21-22
1970s-2000s	35	31-32
State Staff, n.d.	12	23
Supervised Farming, 1970s-2000s	35	33
Vocational Agriculture, 1910s-1930s	12	24
Vocational Student Organization (V.S.O.), 1992	12	25
Workdays, n.d.	12	26
Young Farmers Convention, n.d.	13	1
Slides		
Agriculture Day, 1977-1979, 1981-1982, 1984	13	2-3
Awards and Contests		
Agricultural Mechanics Welding, 1981-1982	13	4
Contests, 1969, 1972-1978, 1984, 1987-1993,	13	5-7
1995		
Proficiency Awards		
Award Winners (identified), 1970, 1990- 1993	13	8-10
Award Winners (unidentified), 1965-1968, 1971-1980, 1983-1993, 1995	13	11-15
General, 1980s-1990s	13	16-19
Judging, n.d.	13	20
Slideshow, ca. 1980	13	21
Star Farmer, 1992	13	22
Stars Over Indiana		
1991	13	23
1994-1995	13	1-3
State Soils, 1976, 1978, 1981-1982, 1990-1992	14	4

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004 (cont.)	14	5
Big 10 Chapters, 1993 Camps and Workshops	14	5
Combined Camp, 1975-1976, 1978, 1981-1983	14	6-7
Fall Greenhand/Autumn Pow-Wow, 1983-1984,	14	8-10
1987-1991		
General, 1973-1979, 1981/82, 1988-1995	14	11-15
Leadership Development Workshop, 1978-1982, 1984, 1988, 1990-1993	14	16-21
Star Farmer and Proficiency Workshop, 1981- 1982, 1984	15	1
Summer, 1970-1979, 1983-1985, 1990-1992	15	2-5
Winter, 1980, 1982-1983, 1987-1992	15	6-8
Chapter Activities, 1966-1968, 1972-1979, 1983, 1987- 1989, 1991, 1995	15	9-11
Executive Committee, 1981-1982, 1992	15	12
FFA Wagon, 1976-1978	15	13
General Images, 1960s-1990s	15	14-20
Kick-Offs		
District Foundation Kick-Offs, ca. 1982	15	21-22
General, 1981-1982	15	23
Officer Kick-Off Sets, 1985	16	1
Leadership Center, 1966-1967, 1970-1979, 1984, 1986-1988, 1990-1992	16	2-5
NLCSO, 1984-1985	16	6
National Convention, 1971-1984, 1986-1989, 1991- 1992	16	7-19
National Officer Reception, ca. 1980	16	20
Prairie Heights, 1983-1984	16	21
State Convention		
1969-1974	16	23-25
1974-1984, 1986-1991, 1994-1995	17	1-14
State FFA Activities		
1976/77-1978/79	17	16-20
1978/79, 1980/81-1982/83, 1986/87, 1991/92- 1993, 1995	18	1-14
State Fair		
1967, 1969, 1971-1979, 1981-1985, 1987-1988	18	15-18
1988-1992	19	1-3
State Officers		
At Work, 1980s-1990s	19	4
General, 1970s-1990s	19	5
, - · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	-	-

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004 (cont.)		
Group Photographs and Portraits	10	67
1964/65, 1971/72-1978/79, 1980/81-	19	6-7
1981/82, 1983/84-1984/85, 1986/87- 1991/92		
1992/93	20	1
Washington Conference, 1970s-1980s	20	2
Workdays, 1974, 1976, 1978-1979, 1981-1982, 1991	20	3
Year in Review, 1976-1977	20	4
Young Farmers Association, 1992	20	5
Youth Conferences, 1970s-1980s	20	6
Youth Power, 1981-1982	20	7
Audio-Visual Materials, 1971-2004	20	
Audio Cassettes		
Chapter Interviews, n.d.	31	1
Foundation Kickoffs, 1988	31	2
Indiana FFA Center, 1983	31	3
Joint Youth Conference, n.d.	31	4
Stars Over Indiana, 1981, 1988, 1990, 1994	31	5-8
State Fair/Leadership Camp (8-track), 1978	31	
State Officer Team Highlights, 1989/90	31	9
Year in Review, 1994 (2 copies)	31	10-11
Audio Reel to Reel		
Agriculture Teacher Salute, 1976	34	
District Star Young Farmers, 1976	34	
FFA Chapter Meeting, n.d.	34	
Joint Youth Conference, 1973-1975	34	
Leadership Center Pageant, 1982	34	
State Convention, 1971	34	
State Officer Highlights, 1981/82	34	
Young Farmers Stars, 1976	34	
Digital Files		
Indiana FFABringing the Past Forward: Celebrating		
75 Years of Indiana FFA	22	
Book, 2004	32	
Photographs, 1930s-2000s	32	
State Convention 2002	20	
Convention PowerPoint Presentations, 2002	32 32	
Entrance Video Photographs, 2002	32 32	
Parent Video Photographs, 2002 State Convention 2003	52	
Entrance Video Photographs, 2003	32	
Honorary Degree Photographs, 2003	32 32	
Parent Video Photographs, 2003	32 32	
1 arone video 1 notographo, 2005	54	

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Audio-Visual Materials, 1971-2004 (cont.)		
State Convention 2003 (cont.)		
State Staff Photographs, 2003	32	
State Officers Photographs, 2002/03-2003/04	32	
Video Cassettes		
Aquaculture at South Putnam, 1994-1995	V0001	
Celebrating 75 Years, 2004	V0022u	
Columbus Today on the Indiana FFA Conference and	V0002	
Retreat Center, 1995		
FFA Banquet, 1997	V0003	
The Indiana FFA Association "Making an Impact," n.d.	V0004u	
Indiana FFA Project: Impact, 1997	V0005	
Leadership Camps, January 2003	32	
Ken Meyers Interview (State Officer, 1934-35), 2002	V0007	
Parent Video, 2003	V0023u	
Salute to Indiana, n.d.	V0008	
Stars Over Indiana, 2003, 2005	V0024	4-V0025
State Convention, 1986-1987, 1993, 2002	V0009-0012	
State Fair, 2003	32	
State Officer Highlights, 1988/89	V0013u	
State Officer Camp Speeches, 2003	32	
Summer Camp, 1989, 1994	V0014	4-V0015
Todd Lotter, Star America Farmer, 1990	V0006	
Winter Camp, 1989-1990, 1993, 1996	V001	5-V0021