

# Farming into the Future

## Buffalo High School Teen Shines in the National Spotlight



Kelly Irvine is just 15 years old. However, the rising junior at Buffalo High School in Putnam County has a big voice and she used it to tell the world about the importance of technology in agriculture. Irvine participated in the Land 'O Lakes "Fields of the Future" webcast on June 15. Also on hand for the event was U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and other industry leaders talking about the importance of agriculture and what the future holds.

A 2015 National FFA Agriscience Fair Finalist, Irvine caught the attention of the show's producers earlier this year. She sat in front of a camera and studio audience at the Land 'O Lakes WinField Crop Adventure at Fair Oaks Farms in Indiana and shared her story. A 7th generation farmer who wants to study agriculture biochemistry at West Virginia University, Irvine stressed the importance of getting the word out about the industry.

"Most kids in high school don't understand what agriculture really is. Most consumers think agriculture is production. Really it's not," stressed Irvine. "There's a lot of science and technology involved in this production to help feed our growing population."

From math and chemistry to engineering, Irvine says there are endless possibilities for young people who didn't grow up on a farm to get into the business of growing food. "By promoting more agriculture in the schools, you can really educate the youth of today in modern agriculture practices."

Irvine had the opportunity to meet and talk with Secretary Vilsack. She's excited about the connections she made and her future in agriculture. "I was very honored to be a part of it," says Irvine. "It was a big opportunity for me."