

Hallie Barnes and K.C. Barnes, of Hulbert, participated in the American Farmers and Ranchers (AFR) Northeast District Speech Contest held in Sapulpa on Nov. 15. Both are members of the Porter FFA Chapter. Hallie Barnes placed first in the Agriscience Category-Intermediate Division and K.C. Barnes placed first in the Natural Resources Category-Senior Division. They both will advance to the AFR State Speech Contest on the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Stillwater Campus on Dec. 1. First and second place category winners in each division from each district contest qualify to compete at the state contest. There are five district contests across Oklahoma. The theme of this year's contest is "I Believe in Oklahoma Agriculture." This year marks the 68th year of the AFR fall speech contest series.

AFR and its farm service organization, Oklahoma Farmers Union, strive to provide Oklahoma youth, opportunities to develop into the leaders of tomorrow. "This speech contest is just one way to showcase the youth in Oklahoma," Terry Detrick, AFR president said. "These young people compete amongst other young people, vying for their chance to move on to the state competition. Every participant is a winner, and it's our priority to let others see the leaders they are becoming by partaking in this wonderful leadership occasion."

The speech contest is just one of several AFR Youth Program traditions. AFR offers a poster contest, summer camp, scholarships, livestock judging, livestock handling, skills contest, and other leadership opportunities. For more information on how to become involved in the AFR Youth Program, contact AFR Youth & Education Coordinator Lin Fariss at (405) 218-5561 or lfariss@afrmic.com.

American Farmers & Ranchers was established in 1905, and is headquartered in Oklahoma City.

AFR is actively supportive of Oklahoma's agricultural industry and rural population, and provides educational, legislative, and cooperative programs across the state. AFR also provides insurance products statewide, and is recognized as a leading domestic insurance carrier in the state of Oklahoma