

**Ag in the Classroom News Release
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plainfield Student Wins Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest

MADISON – Elli Rettler, a fourth-grade student from Plainfield, is the state winner of the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest. Wisconsin fourth- and fifth-grade students were asked to write a 100- to 300-word essay with the theme, ‘How have Wisconsin soybean farmers fueled Wisconsin’s economy?’

Elli is the daughter of Jessica and Matt Rettler. Her teacher is Christina Schmick at Tri-County Elementary School in Waushara County.

Each year the Wisconsin Farm Bureau’s Ag in the Classroom program hosts an essay contest focusing on food and agriculture. This contest is open to fourth- and fifth-grade students across the state.

A total of 1,461 students wrote essays for the essay contest, which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Association, Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board, and We Energies.

The nine district winners received a prize package including a plaque, books about soybeans, Culver’s gift card, Agriculture Fast Match game, Trivia cards, and “I Love Soybean” mugs. The state winner also received a plaque and gift. The finalists were:

- District 1 – Grace Hying, fifth grade, North Cape School in Franksville
- District 2 – Bentley Johnson, fourth grade, Roosevelt Elementary School in Janesville
- District 3 – Grace Varo, fifth grade, Seneca Elementary School in Seneca
- District 4 – Devin Herricks, fourth grade, Cashton Elementary in Cashton
- District 5 – Elli Rettler, fourth grade, Tri-County Elementary in Plainfield
- District 6 – Madalyn Novak, fourth grade, Divine Savior Catholic School in Kiel
- District 7 – Lauryn Peters, fifth grade, St. Thomas Aquinas Academy in Peshtigo
- District 8 – Shelby Yates, fifth grade, Washington Elementary School in Merrill
- District 9 – Gracie Benson, fifth grade, Ladysmith Elementary School in Ladysmith

Elli’s winning essay:

Sassy Soybean Fuels Wisconsin’s Economy and Beyond

Hi! I'm Miss Sassy Soybean Seed. I am a single bean among approximately 100 million bushels of soybeans harvested in Wisconsin each year!

Like many of my relatives and friends, I know my potential!! We soybeans (and our ancestors) start out with stored energy in our protective seed coat, and in a large bag. From there, some awesome farmer buys us, plants us, harvests us, and sells us. With just that much, we've already fueled Wisconsin's economy.

Just think about the people we keep busy! There's the soybean seed sales person, the office workers who keeps orders straight, orders more seed, and keeps track of the bills and payment, the warehouse people who unload and load the seed, the trucker who delivers the seed, the fuelman and mechanic who keeps trucks running, and the farmer. All these people earn money and spend money! That's fueling Wisconsin!

Our jobs as seeds have only started, and whether we stay in Wisconsin or move across the ocean, we're in high demand. Some of us are used in making ink, crayons, oil, tofu, biodiesel fuel, animal food, milk, tires, and many other products. Can you imagine all of the jobs that are part of making, selling, and using these products? One use that surprised me is that more than 90 percent of America's daily newspapers use soy ink. Now, that's a lot of reading!

Henry Ford certainly was not "full of beans" in his thinking and inventing. Almost a century ago, he knew we soybeans were special and he proved it. Researchers are still proving we have even more potential. I'm very proud of what we soybeans do. I love helping Wisconsinites and people around the world, sassy or not!

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[Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom](#) program provides teachers and K-12 students with an understanding of how their food is produced. The program seeks to work within existing curricula to provide basic information on our nation's largest industry: agriculture. Wisconsin's Ag in the Classroom program is carried out by a network of local educators, volunteers and representatives from agricultural organizations and businesses. The goal of the program is to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies.