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National FFA Organization and AgriNovus Indiana Announce Cutting-Edge Initiative to Showcase Transformational Innovation

INDIANAPOLIS (*Monday, June 25, 2018/National FFA Organization*) – The National FFA Organization and AgriNovus Indiana are bringing the convergence of innovative technology, science, research and entrepreneurship to FFA members attending the 2018 National FFA Convention & Expo through the inaugural Blue Room. The Blue Room is the kickoff to Blue 365, an initiative that will bring this same innovation into classrooms and impact more than 650,000 members nationwide. FFA student members are the future leaders of the food industry, which is relying on this generation to meet unparalleled challenges to feed a growing world population.

Through the vision and commitment of AgriNovus Indiana, the National FFA is unveiling the Blue Room experience at the national convention and expo—the nation’s largest student convention—hosted in Indianapolis Oct. 24-27. The Blue Room is the organization’s comprehensive vision for Blue 365, which serves as the latest catalyst for evolving sustainability, innovative efficiency and preparing the future leaders who will solve the world’s critical agricultural challenges. This partnership and industry support exemplify why Indiana is the premier location to showcase innovation and cultivate talent within the agricultural sector.

The 17,000-square-foot interactive Blue Room will center on the challenges facing our community—from respecting the planet to the urgent matter of feeding the world. This cutting-edge approach will focus on experiential learning and thought-provoking exposure to the convergence of agriculture, technology, human health, engineering, and more.

“Today’s FFA members are our future leaders in the industry,” said Mark Poeschl, chief executive officer of National FFA. “Through agricultural education and FFA, our members are bringing their skill sets to the 21st century; we know they will be the change in our industry. The Blue Room allows us to begin exposing our members to current innovations within the food and agriculture sectors and be the spark they need to create the next big idea in agriculture.”

Beth Bechdol, president and chief executive officer of AgriNovus Indiana, shares Poeschl’s excitement of bringing The Blue Room to FFA members. “Today’s food and agricultural industry is bursting with cutting-edge technology, science and research—from genomics and microbiology to artificial intelligence, robotics and informatics,” Bechdol said. “AgriNovus Indiana is committed to showcasing the power of these and other agbioscience innovations whether they come from a large company, a university or an entrepreneur. The Blue Room is just the place to bring together these real-world innovations, giving FFA members an experience to see and to understand how technology will help us feed the world, protect the planet and improve human lives.”

Gov. Eric Holcomb supports the initiative and says it makes sense that a partnership like this would happen right here in Indiana. “Two of our finest organizations, The National FFA and AgriNovus Indiana have created an innovative way for young people to explore careers in the always-evolving agbioscience industry. Hoosiers are innovators and leaders in the agbiosciences, the life sciences, advanced manufacturing, logistics and tech, and we have been for over 200 years. The Blue Room will help inspire the next generation of agbioscience leaders.”

Corteva Agriscience, the agriculture division of DowDuPont, and Elanco are also proud participating sponsors of The Blue Room and supporting partners of AgriNovus Indiana.

The National FFA Organization provides leadership, personal growth and career success training through agricultural education to 653,359 student members who belong to one of 8,568 local FFA chapters throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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About National FFA Organization

The National FFA Organization is a national youth organization of 653,359 student members as part of 8,568 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The FFA mission is 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 National FFA Organization operates under a federal charter granted by the 81st United States Congress and it is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs. For more, visit the National FFA Organization online at FFA.org and on Facebook, Twitter and [the official National FFA Organization blog](#).

About National FFA Foundation

The National FFA Foundation builds partnerships with industry, education, government, other foundations and individuals to secure financial resources that recognize FFA member achievements, develop student leaders and support the future of agricultural education. Governed by a 19-member board of trustees composed of educators, business leaders, individual donors and FFA Alumni, the foundation is a separately registered nonprofit organization. About 82 percent of every dollar received by the foundation supports FFA members and agricultural education opportunities. For more, visit FFA.org/Give.