

A person wearing a plaid shirt and jeans is walking on a dirt path. The background is a warm, golden sunset sky. The text "ON THE RECORD: GORDIE GASCH" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

ON THE RECORD: GORDIE GASCH

This retired agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor participated in a monumental movement to make FFA a place for all.

- By Jessica Mozo

“Some thought girls didn’t belong in agriculture back then, but today many farms around the world are run by women.”

- GORDIE GASCH

Throughout his time as an FFA member, advisor and alumnus, Gordie Gasch has had a front-row seat as our organization continues to evolve.



Gordie Gasch, an FFA Alumnus and 1969-70 Wisconsin FFA state secretary, served as a delegate during the historic 1969 National FFA Convention business session when women were granted full FFA membership

for the first time. We recently caught up with Gasch to learn more about what that historic day meant to him and how he’s seen the National FFA Organization change in the years since.

Q: In the moment, did you realize how monumental it was to grant full FFA membership to women?

A: At the time, we weren’t thinking it was a monumental change, and it didn’t hit us that the decision was going to be life-changing for so many people. Some thought girls didn’t belong in agriculture back then, but today many farms around the world are run by women.

Q: How did that historic vote impact FFA?

A: I taught agriculture for 28 years. In all my years of teaching, I wondered what would happen if girls were never allowed to join FFA. They’re currently officers

leading chapters, participating in competitions and making decisions. They want to hold leadership roles and demonstrate their skills, and FFA does a great job of facilitating this growing interest.

Q: How have you seen FFA evolve in the years since you were a member?

A: In Wisconsin, the biggest thing is we don’t have many dairy farms left. The ones we have are between 3,000 and 5,000 cows, and families who operate the farms are often managers. There also seems to be fewer farm kids involved in production agriculture now. Agriculture classes and FFA have learned to adapt and appeal to students interested in things like

natural resources, horticulture and food science.

Q: How has FFA been a multigenerational affair for your family?

A: My dad judged at the American Royal Livestock Show in 1935 or so. When I was in high school, I competed in winning poultry and dairy career development event (CDE) teams during my time as an FFA member. My four daughters have been on five state-winning CDE teams and competed at nationals. I also have a grandson who’s an FFA member in high school now.

I’m technically retired but still actively involved in FFA. I coach the poultry judging CDE team for my local FFA chapter in Brillion, Wis.