



The Handbook for ND FFA Members

“The Owner’s Manual you never received.”



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So, I have an FFA Member. Now What?

Congratulations on becoming part of the North Dakota FFA family! Your child is now one of over 8,000 FFA members across North Dakota and part of the National FFA Organization, which proudly serves more than 1 million members nationwide.

The North Dakota FFA Foundation has created this Parent Handbook to help you, and your family navigate the exciting world of FFA. Inside, you'll find a calendar of events, descriptions of programs and opportunities, and helpful insights to support your FFA member's journey.

Did you know...



- The FFA was founded in 1928: North Dakota FFA joined in 1929.
- The National FFA Convention draws nearly 70,000 attendees annually.
- The FFA is the largest student organization in the world with over 9,000 chapters
- FFA members wear the iconic blue corduroy jacket, a tradition since 1933.
- The letters "FFA" stand for Future Farmers of America; however, in 1988 the official name of the organization was changed from "Future Farmers of America" to "The National FFA Organization" to reflect the growing diversity of agriculture.
- FFA Membership 1,027,000 members represent all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; representing members grades 5-12 and college
- Largest Annual Event: [The National FFA Convention](#)
- **FFA Mission:** The National FFA Organization is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.
- **FFA Motto:** Learning to do. Doing to learn. Earning to live. Living to serve.
- **Number of Chapters:** 9,235 in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Island
- **Scholarships:** National FFA awards over \$2.7 Million in annual scholarships.
- **Funding:** FFA Programs are funded through sponsorships and private donations, at the local, state, and national level

The story of the blue and gold jackets . . .

FFA members are steeped in tradition and, since 1933, have proudly worn the blue corduroy jacket with the official emblem and colors, national blue and corn gold, as our official FFA dress. Along with the FFA jacket, official FFA dress requirements for male members are black slacks, a white collared shirt, an official FFA tie, black socks, and black dress shoes and for female members, official dress requirements are black slacks or black skirt with black hosiery, a white collared shirt, official FFA blue scarf, black closed-heel, and closed-toe dress shoes. ****Jeans, yoga pants, boots, sandals, open-toed shoes, or tennis shoes are not acceptable official dress for any student.****

FFA jackets have remained affordable after all these years, even so in 2004 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of FFA, the ND FFA Foundation started the **Blue Jackets, Bright Futures** campaign. Since its inception, the generous sponsors of this program have provided over 4,000 official FFA jackets to deserving students across ND. Go to www.ndffaoundation.com if your son or daughter is interested in this program. Become a sponsor of this great program today by calling Laiken at the ND FFA Foundation (701) 224-8390.



What are CDEs?

Career Development Events (CDEs) connect classroom learning to real-world experiences. Rooted in the skills taught through agricultural education and FFA, CDEs help students apply their knowledge in hands-on, competitive settings—both individually and as part of a team. These events not only bring classroom lessons to life but also prepare students for success in future careers across a wide range of industries.

Why FFA? Over 1 Million Members – and Growing!

How many times have you thought, "If only I knew then what I know now?" The FFA is the answer to that question for so many young people. Through involvement in CDEs, community service projects, and leadership activities, FFA members gain invaluable life and career skills that set them apart. Beyond technical knowledge, members build social connections, grow their confidence, and develop a powerful network that benefits them in any career path. The personal growth and real-world experiences offered by FFA help prepare students not just for a job, but for lifelong success.

How will FFA benefit my child?

Through FFA, your child will gain practical, achievable skills that extend far beyond the classroom. By participating in CDEs, leadership events, and service projects, students are not only learning—they're earning recognition for their hard work and success. Each year, the North Dakota FFA Foundation contributes over \$400,000 in scholarships and awards to help members further their education and pursue their goals. Nationally, the FFA Organization awards more than \$2.7 million in scholarships annually. FFA opens doors to leadership, lifelong friendships, and career opportunities, helping your child grow into a confident and capable leader for tomorrow.

Leadership|

FFA offers countless leadership opportunities for students to grow and shine. Encourage your child to consider running for a chapter officer position—a rewarding role that builds time management, communication, and leadership skills through service to their chapter. Each year, chapter officers and the executive committee work together to plan the Program of Activities (POA), which outlines chapter events and initiatives. Involvement in this process gives students valuable experience in teamwork, organization, and responsibility—skills that prepare them for future leadership roles both inside and outside of FFA.

Membership has its privileges!

If your student is enrolled in an agricultural education class in middle or high school and has paid their annual FFA membership dues, they are active members with access to a variety of opportunities. Active members can take part in chapter events, serve on committees, run for office, start a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), attend leadership camps, and compete in CDEs. FFA membership not only enhances classroom learning but also fosters personal growth and leadership development that lasts a lifetime.

FFA is GREAT, but don't take our word for it . . .

"FFA taught organizational and public speaking skills that have stayed with me for more than 40 years. Those have been key to my career and being an active engaged citizen." - Steve Strege

Steve was the Executive Director of the ND Grain Dealers Association and was the State FFA President in 1967-68. Steve was a member of the Wyndmere FFA chapter.

"I learned my first leadership skills in FFA. It was the first time that I was a club secretary and everything that I know about parliamentary procedure I learned in FFA. That fundamental training is still used by me today." – Al Jaeger, ND Secretary of State and an honorary member of the Killdeer FFA chapter.

"Remember the goosebumps you felt when the session was about to start, the music began, and the state officers paraded into the Old Fieldhouse during the State FFA Convention? I do. They are the same kind of goosebumps I feel when I see outstanding young people outfitted in their blue and gold corduroy jackets. For me, those jackets symbolize the premier leadership the organization is built around, as well as the bright future in store for American agriculture. My involvement in the FFA provided the foundation for my career. Through the FFA, I developed technical skills, parliamentary procedure know-how and self-confidence that help me in my day-to-day work as a professional." – Julie Ellingson, Executive Vice President ND Stockman's Association, State FFA Sweetheart 1992-93, Mandan FFA chapter.

"I was at Washington Leadership Conference in the summer of 1989. We were just getting off the bus at Arlington National Cemetery and two elderly ladies asked us if we were all in a gang because of our matching official dress. I told them yes, we are, to make sure they had good leaders and never went hungry!"

"Judging contests were great! We got to visit with kids from other chapters around the state, travel to new places, and really enjoyed the competition!"

"State FFA Convention was what I looked forward to all year long! It was a week with so many other FFA members to visit and learn about them. We competed heavily but learned to play hard too!" - Bridgette Rath Readell was a state officer in 1991-92 from Wishek.

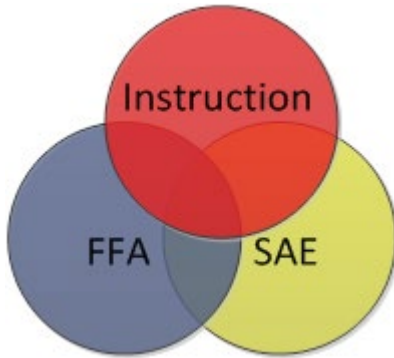
"My experience in FFA was absolutely life changing. FFA encourages goal setting and provides abundant opportunities outside the classroom to exercise judgment, leadership, teamwork, cooperation, public speaking, and networking with some of the best and brightest youth in the state. In my professional career today, I continuously draw and build upon the many experiences and life lessons gleaned from my days as an FFA member." - Shane Goettle, Commissioner, ND Department of Commerce. Shane was the State FFA Secretary in 1988-89 from the Stanley FFA chapter.

"FFA provided me with the tools and experiences to pursue my dreams and goals in an effective way. As a professor of Animal Sciences at NDSU, I still use the leadership skills learned in FFA every day. Without a doubt, I am a more successful person due to my experiences in FFA." – Robert Maddock, Professor of Animal Science, North Dakota State University. Rob was State FFA President in 1991-92. His home chapter is Maddock.

FFA, more than a “club”, it’s a partnership. . .

"Don't look at FFA as a competitor of 4-H - they are complimentary youth organizations that together can help develop the potential of our youth in agriculture. Some of the most successful programs have great partnerships between County Extension and Ag Education Programs, 4-H and FFA. My strong background in the Barnes County 4-H program led me to a great career in Agriculture Education." - Doug Vannurden, former State FFA Executive Secretary

SAE and the Three Circle approach to Agricultural Education



Agricultural education is built on the Three-Circle Model, where each circle plays an equally important role in shaping a well-rounded learning experience. These three essential components are: Classroom Instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), and FFA.

Classroom and hands-on laboratory instruction lay the foundation for knowledge and skill development. SAEs take that learning beyond the classroom, giving students real-world, work-based learning opportunities tailored to their interests—whether through entrepreneurship, employment, research, or service. Meanwhile, involvement in FFA builds leadership, communication, and teamwork through activities, competitions, and service projects.

Together, these three components provide students with valuable career skills, leadership development, and personal growth—all in an educational and supportive environment.

http://www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.SAE.

Foundation & Association Roles in the FFA

Association

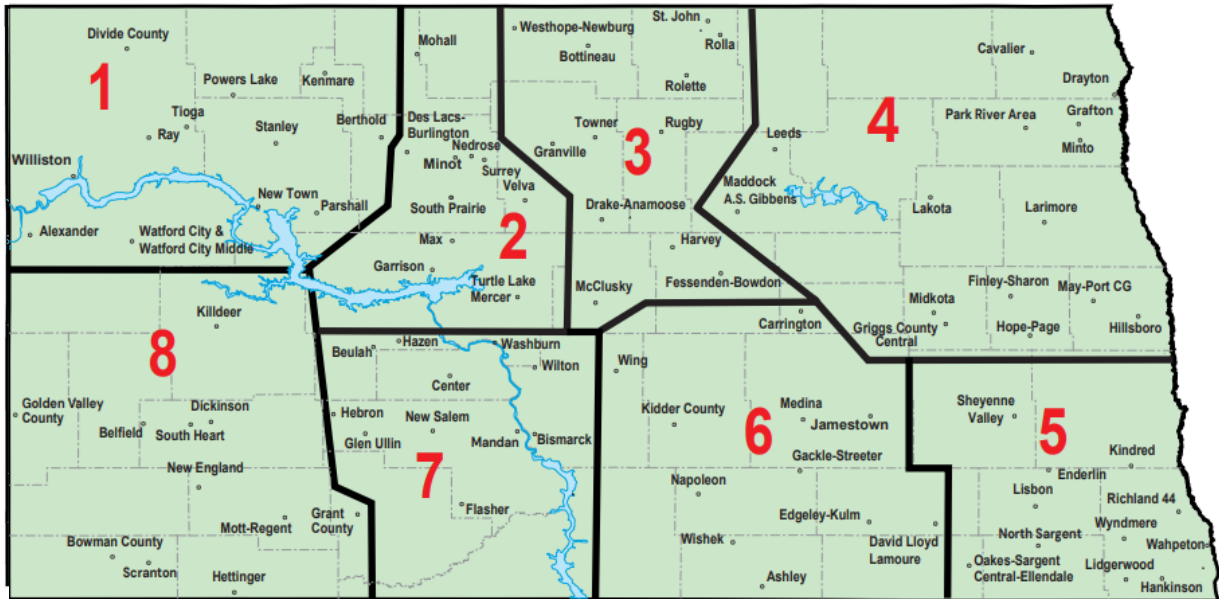
The North Dakota FFA Association is the core of agricultural education in our state, working alongside Career and Technical Education (CTE) to deliver technical knowledge, leadership development, and personal growth opportunities to students. Through events, contests, and leadership activities, the Association helps students discover their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through the lens of agricultural education.

Foundation

The North Dakota FFA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, exists to enhance and support the leadership development of FFA members and agricultural education programs. The Foundation provides funding for college scholarships, Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) grants, Ag in the Classroom grants, and the Blue Jackets Bright Futures Program. By partnering with businesses, individuals, and organizations, the Foundation helps ensure that students have the resources and opportunities to thrive, lead, and succeed



NORTH DAKOTA FFA Chapters and District Map



ND FFA Calendar of Activities



JULY/AUGUST

Land Judging

Members participating in land judging will evaluate four different sites, which vary in location each year. At each site, students assess the following land characteristics: surface soil texture, internal drainage, soil depth, land slope, erosion hazards, and degree of salinity. Using this information, members classify the land and select the appropriate management practices for the evaluated sites.

FFA Camp

Our main objective for the annual ND FFA Camp is building community amongst members across the state. We invite FFA Members 8th grade – 11th grade to join us at Camp Wesley near Valley City, ND for friends, outdoors and memories that will last a lifetime. We won't cut corners on outdoor fun, swimming, kayaking, canoeing, hammocking, basketball, volleyball, disc golf, four square, gaga ball, and much more!



SEPTEMBER *ND Ag in the Classroom Grants – ND FFA Foundation’s Website – due Sept. 1st*

Range Judging

In North Dakota, over 60% of the land is suitable only for use by livestock and wildlife. This valuable resource is called rangeland. This Career Development Event (CDE) is designed to teach students to evaluate potential productivity, current conditions, and possible treatments to produce forages and grasses most useful to humans and animals. The contest includes plant identification and an understanding of each plant’s characteristics, identification of the types of range sites, and how they respond to various environmental factors. Students also evaluate the current condition of the range site and how the area has responded to use or overuse. Finally, students make recommendations to improve the use, condition, and overall health of the range based on the needs of beef cattle and Sharptailed Grouse.

Leadership Conferences

The National FFA Organization offers a series of leadership and personal growth conferences, open to anyone with a desire to grow, learn, and have fun.

These conferences include Aspire, Blue, Gold, and the 101 Conference. Blue and Gold are conducted by National FFA staff, who join us in Bismarck each September for these high-energy leadership events. Both conferences operate on a three-year topic rotation, with new topics introduced each year, so members are encouraged to attend annually.

For more information or to register for any of these conferences, talk with your FFA advisor or visit www.ffa.org and check out the conferences link.

101 Conference

The 101 conference is designed for first year FFA members who wish to develop their leadership skills. Presented by ND’s very own state FFA officer team, this conference covers a variety of topics and exposes new FFA members to the many opportunities FFA has to offer.

Blue

This conference will focus on the basic elements of teamwork. YourNextSpeaker, LLC, based in Oklahoma, will lead the training. These highly trained, professional speakers will provide an engaging, interactive, content-focused, and meaningful conference experience. The content will be based on the 10 Techniques to Help Your Teams Work curriculum authored by Rhett Laubach, Professional Speaker, and Owner of YourNextSpeaker, LLC. This curriculum includes applicable team building lessons that members can use in both their personal and educational experiences.

Gold

This conference will focus on the advanced elements of teamwork, including specific ideas applicable for any chapter officers attending the conference. The teamwork lessons will include advanced techniques for how to maximize contributions to teams the members are on today and in the future, as well as how to serve and help teammates do the same.

Aspire Conference

This new conference is designed for seniors who might have an interest in running for state officer at the upcoming State Convention. Students will need to fill out an extra application as we are going to limit this conference to 40 individuals. They will learn about the running process as well as learn employability skills through workshops and facilitation. Those seniors who are not selected from their application will be placed down into the Blue Conference for participation.



OCTOBER

***Blue Jacket Applications – due Oct. 1st**

National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN

October marks the National FFA Convention where 70,000+ FFA members gather for a week of competition, learning, and networking. The National FFA convention includes:

- National CDE competitions
- American FFA Degree ceremony
- Industry Tours
- National Day of Service community service opportunities
- Career Fair
- Famous keynote speakers and first-class leadership workshops



NOVEMBER

Beginning/Expansion SAE Grants- due Nov. 15th



DECEMBER

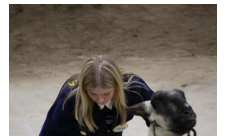
** Indicates a non-state-qualifying event. All other District Leadership contests advance two individuals/teams from each district to state competition.*

District Leadership

ND FFA membership has 8,000+ members from 95 chapters, in 8 districts across the state. Every year, members compete at the district level in the following CDEs for a chance to represent their district at state competition:

Extemporaneous Public Speaking

In this CDE contestants are given eight articles on agricultural topics, from these eight articles they select three to review and finally select one to present a speech on after 30 minutes of preparation. It's great practice to learn how to think on your feet, make your case quickly and persuasively. After each speech, judges may ask related questions.



Prepared Public Speaking

Prepared Public Speaking requires contestants to write and deliver a six to eight-minute speech about a current agricultural subject. This experience will help students excel in school, community, and career settings. Participants are rated based on the written speech, delivery, and their answers to judges' questions.



Creed

This CDE was the first national event specifically for FFA members in grades 7, 8, and 9. It's a member's chance to prove their ability to present the FFA Creed from memory and to answer questions about its meaning and purpose. The event is just one way to boost self-confidence, earn recognition, and develop communication skills in a powerful, organized, and professional manner.

Demonstration

The demonstration CDE provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate skills and agricultural knowledge as an individual or two-person team. Members are given five to eight minutes to demonstrate an Ag-related skill followed by a question-and-answer session.

Quiz

Students answer 100 multiple-choice questions on all things FFA whether it's who wrote the creed, what year the FFA was founded, or what are the official FFA colors. Students participate at district levels for the opportunity to compete at state competitions.

Greenhand Quiz*

This contest is designed specifically for students in grades 7, 8, and 9 and is composed of multiple-choice questions covering FFA history, people, and the basics of FFA.

Employment Skills

Students should choose this event to develop and practice their skills in gaining employment and launching a career. At the competition, each member submits a resume, completes a job application, and participates in an interview via telephone, in person one-on-one, or with a panel of possible employers.



Conduct of Chapter Meetings

Designed for FFA members in seventh, eighth, and ninth grade, this LDE challenges a team of seven students from one chapter to demonstrate the correct use of FFA opening and closing ceremonies. Students will learn to communicate and participate effectively as a team while growing skills in effective decision-making.

Parliamentary Procedure

This CDE helps students learn and polish parliamentary skills. Teams are composed of a chapter's officers/executive committee. At the competition, members complete a written exam. Then teams will conduct a mock chapter meeting to demonstrate knowledge of basic parliamentary law and the use of correct parliamentary procedures. Additionally, each officer is scored on their individual office's duties and participation earning them a gold, silver, or bronze officer award and the chance to earn the title of "Officer of the Day" for their office. The top two teams from each district will advance to compete in the state competition in December.

State Leadership

**Indicates a district qualifying event. See above in District Leadership for descriptions of these CDEs:*

- *Prepared Public Speaking
- *Extemporaneous Public Speaking
- *Demonstration
- *Employment Skills
- *Parliamentary Procedure
- *Conduct of Chapters

The top two from each district's District Leadership competitions compete at State LDE Day for a chance to advance to national competition.



JANUARY

Ag Education, Al Giese & ND FFA College Scholarship – Due January 23rd

Regional CDEs

January starts a circuit of regional CDEs across the state hosted by local chapters, sponsors, organizations, and FFA alumni. Some of these CDEs include agronomy, livestock evaluation, agricultural sales, small animal care, and hippology (not an official FFA CDE), to name a few.



FFA FEBRUARY

National FFA Week

The week of George Washington’s birthday was designated as National FFA Week in 1947 at a National FFA Board of Directors meeting. FFA Week always runs from Saturday to Saturday and encompasses February 22, Washington’s birthday. During this week FFA members from across the nation participate in activities at the local, state, and national levels promoting and celebrating the FFA organization.

To see how your business or organization can show your pride for the blue and gold, contact your local FFA chapter



FFA MARCH

WLC Scholarship – Due March 15th

State Winter Career Development Events (CDE)

State finals for the winter CDEs are held in March. The North Dakota State Fair Grounds hosts more than 800 FFA members for state competition in livestock evaluation, agronomy, and the agricultural sales CDEs. The following is a description of these CDEs. These contests are national qualifying events.

Livestock Evaluation

This CDE is the North Dakota state contest to determine which team will represent North Dakota at the national level. This event is the last of the judging season after the conclusion of several regional contests hosted by alumni and chapters throughout the state. The Livestock Evaluation CDE helps students learn to evaluate beef cattle, sheep, and swine and defend their decisions. At the competition, participants evaluate two classes of each species and place these classes based on market and breeding usage, physical characteristics, and performance records. Participants also determine keep/cull classes for market and breeding stock and give verbal reasons explaining their placing of these classes.

Agronomy

Students choose this CDE to build and prove skills in agronomic sciences. Participants complete a written exam, and identify seeds, plants, diseases, damages, machinery, soil types, insect identification, and other agronomic factors. In addition, contestants evaluate market and seed grain classes and grade grain.



Agricultural Sales

Students in this CDE demonstrate the professional sales process including customer relations, advertising and promotion, and product display. At the competition, members complete a 50-question general knowledge exam, present a product summary, and make a sales presentation for an agricultural product. Teams also work cooperatively to strategize a marketing campaign for an agricultural product and present this campaign to a panel of judges.



Chapter FFA Banquets

March also marks the beginning of banquet season for many of our local programs. It is a great time of year to gather with the community and school administration to celebrate FFA accomplishments.



APRIL

Chapter FFA Banquets

District CDEs – See June, State FFA Convention for descriptions of these events.



MAY

Chapter FFA Banquets

District CDEs – See June, State FFA Convention for descriptions of these events

Horse Evaluation

In this CDE, students evaluate and rank horses based on breed characteristics, conformation, and performance. Team members work together to solve problems related to equine selection, management, nutrition, and production. Additionally, they provide verbal reasons to explain their placements in various classes.



JUNE

State FFA Convention

Sports like basketball, football, and wrestling have championship games, ND FFA has the State FFA Convention! This event is jam-packed with activities, including competitions, career fairs, agricultural tours, dances, and other entertainment, ensuring your student will not be bored. During the first full week of June, over 1,800 FFA members from across North Dakota gather on North Dakota State University's campus to celebrate ND FFA and compete in state CDE competitions. Winning CDE teams are awarded travel stipends to the National FFA Convention by the ND FFA Foundation. Students compete in more than 40 different award, degree, and CDE events throughout the week. The following services, CDEs, degrees, and awards are presented at the state FFA Convention.

Chapter Delegates

Food for America

State FFA Degree Ceremony

FFA Chorus



Chapter Delegate

Each chapter will designate two delegates to participate in the voting sessions at the state convention. Delegates will be divided into committees to conduct official business and discuss proposed changes. Each committee will then report back to the session with its decisions and recommendations.

Food for America

Food for America is an award program focusing on agricultural literacy in elementary schools and communities. It is a program developed to assist FFA members and all agricultural education students in leadership skill development as they reach out to youth, peers, and their entire communities by sharing the world of agriculture. Chapters can apply to be recognized as ND's Outstanding Food for America Chapter by completing this form.

Talent

Members who wish to showcase their vocal, instrumental, dance, or other talents are invited to perform during convention sessions. We encourage students to participate in the FFA Talent Contest, as it adds unique entertainment to each session.

Proficiency Awards

Members apply for entrepreneurship and placement proficiency awards in more than 40 categories. For specific proficiency award categories, information, and application details visit with your chapter's advisor, visit www.ffa.org, or see the *Official FFA Student Handbook*.

Courtesy Corp

A league of assistants, courtesy corp members, work behind the scenes preparing awards, setting up and changing stage designs, welcoming members, and visitors to the convention, and assist in many other duties. These students ensure that the State FFA convention runs smoothly. Each year three students from the corps are selected to represent ND at the National FFA Convention.

Agricultural Mechanics

This CDE evaluates both technical and agricultural mechanics skills and a student's ability to work collaboratively. During the event, members complete a written exam and demonstrate problem-solving and hands-on performance skills. The event takes a "systems" approach, focusing on machinery and equipment systems, industry and marketing systems, energy systems, structural systems, and environmental/natural resource systems. ND FFA offers three levels of participation: Basic Ag Mechanics for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders; Intermediate Ag Mechanics for 9th and 10th graders; and Advanced Ag Mechanics for students who have completed the 10th grade. Students may compete only once at the basic and intermediate levels. The state-winning Advanced Ag Mechanics team is eligible to advance to the national competition.

Agricultural Communications

Students are challenged in the agricultural communications field by participating in a simulated news conference and then using the collected information to tackle a practical problem. This may include writing a news story and press release, preparing a radio broadcast, or developing a graphic or web design. Participants also complete a written communications quiz or an editing exercise. Finally, each team must create and present a communications proposal.

Agri-Science Fair

Students interested in agri-science get an opportunity to showcase their knowledge and talents as an individual or team member at the agri-science fair. There are junior and senior levels of this competition with the senior category including students in the 10-12th grades. Students can compete in one of five areas pertaining to agri-science: Animal Systems; Environmental Services/Natural Resource Systems; Food Products and Processing Systems, Plant Systems; Power, Structural and Technical Systems; and Social Systems. Students conduct a research project, write a technical paper, and prepare a display of their information/experiment. Participants are then interviewed about their project.

Dairy Handlers

Poise, calmness, and a positive attitude play a significant role in the Dairy Cattle Handlers activity. Students in this contest present the dairy cows for evaluation as part of the Dairy Cattle Management and Evaluation CDE. Handlers earn recognition for their ability to set up their assigned animal to its best advantage, maintain the animal in its most advantageous post, exhibit effective restraint, and move the animal as requested by the event ringmaster. Each state allows just one participant in this activity.

Dairy Cattle Evaluation

Students develop skills in dairy cattle selection and herd management. At the competition, members complete a written exam, evaluate dairy cattle on physical characteristics, and give verbal reasons. Team members also complete activities in linear evaluation, sire selection, and pedigree evaluation while cooperatively analyzing a herd record. Students in this event gain a greater understanding of dairy cattle management and become knowledgeable in areas that include animal welfare, biosecurity, business management, current issues, environmental management, and safety practices.



Environmental & Natural Recourses

This competition provides students an opportunity to gain awareness and demonstrate knowledge in areas that affect our air, soil, and water. Competitors interpret data, use measuring devices in the field, and work through real-life scenarios involving environmental threats. Students learn skills relevant to GPS navigation, soil science, water management, and wildlife conservation. The competitors produce written statements and verbal presentations and must exhibit competency via writing and identification activities.

Farm Business Management

Students learn business skills and apply economic principles to agricultural businesses. By competing, participants demonstrate their ability to analyze agricultural business management information, apply economic principles and concepts of business management, evaluate business management decisions, and work together cooperatively as a team. Students gain a wide appreciation of farm and agribusiness practices, ranging from business structure to succession planning and from cost concepts to risk management. At the competition, members complete a written exam and solve farm analysis problems.

Floriculture

This CDE builds knowledge and skills in arranging, propagation, and merchandising flowers and foliage. The competition includes plant identification, a general knowledge exam, equipment identification, a face-to-face sales practicum, problem-solving, and floral design. This event builds skills that are important to a career in greenhouse and field production management, garden center and floral shop management, and floral design management. Students who excel show a well-rounded knowledge of horticulture, the cultivation of flowering and ornamental plants, and the floral industry.



Food Science and Technology

In this CDE, students complete a variety of learning activities related to food science and technology in the food industry. The competition covers food presentation, food safety/ sanitation issues, and a team presentation of product development along with an identification practicum. Participants use their sensory skills to evaluate and solve problems while applying sound principles in a decision-making process. This event reaches students in an area of agriculture that's continuing to grow in all aspects. By exposing students to issues in food science and technology, students gain experience that prepares them for traditional and non-traditional careers.

Meat Science and Technology

Students obtain knowledge and develop skills related to careers in the meat animal industry by ranking classes of beef or pork carcasses and wholesale and retail cuts according to value. Contestants answer questions about the classes, identifying various retail cuts, including indicating proper cooking methods for the cuts, and quality and yield grading beef carcasses. In addition, students complete a written exam, a meat formulation problem, and describe how to fulfill a customer order.



Milk Quality & Products

In this CDE, students learn more about milk quality production, processing, distribution, promotion, marketing, and consumption of dairy foods. During the competition, members complete a written exam, evaluate milk samples, identify cheeses, look for defects in sediment pads and milking equipment, and distinguish real from artificial dairy food products.

Nursery/Landscape

This CDE focuses your students' skills on all aspects of producing, marketing, using, and maintaining landscape plants and related products, equipment, and services, including landscape design. Participants complete a written exam, identify plant materials and equipment, and interpret landscape plans. They also demonstrate their skills in landscape design, pest control, merchandising, plant materials measurement, interpersonal relationships, and sales.

Small Animal Care/ Veterinary Science

In this CDE, students complete a written exam, math practicum, breed identification, anatomy practicum, and team activity. The written exam focuses on nutrition, breeding and genetics, grooming, housing management, and veterinary terminology. Identification includes parasites, fish, birds, rabbits, cats, and dogs. The anatomy practicum can include any mammalian or reptile. Students competing in this event will gain a better understanding of housing management, nutrition, anatomy, and veterinary terminology.



Washington Leadership Conference (WLC)

Approximately 2,000+ FFA members converge on our nation's capital annually to participate in the WLC. The focus of this conference is to take members' leadership skills to the highest level by learning to know their purpose, value people, act, and serve others. While there, FFA members donate 11,000 hours of community service to help those in need. The Washington Leadership Conference is a five-day event that trains FFA members to make a positive impact in their school, local community, state, and country. The capstone event of the Washington Leadership

Conference is a civic engagement activity, which takes leadership and service learning to new standards.

This conference is held in June and July annually. National, state, and local scholarships are available for this conference. Visit with your student's FFA advisor, the ND FFA Foundation at www.ndffaoundation.com, or visit the National FFA at www.ffa.org and click conferences.



July

North Dakota State Fair (NDSF)

The NDSF is the showplace for North Dakota agriculture. NDSF offers an opportunity to show the citizens of our great state, and thousands of guests, just what agricultural education/FFA means. It is our opportunity to showcase the products of our efforts, and for students to receive valuable recognition and experience.

ND's more than 4,700 FFA members use the NDSF as an opportunity to enhance their background in areas relating to agronomy, livestock, agricultural mechanics, technology, and horticulture, or by testing their skills in competitive events like tractor driving. There is an activity and an opportunity for every student who is enrolled in agricultural education/FFA.



Over 20,000 projects are entered for exhibit by FFA members every July at the NDSF. For more information on ND FFA involvement at the NDSF see the NDSF website at www.ndstatefair.com and view the FFA link under the exhibitors tab.

State Tractor Operating CDE

The State Tractor Operating CDE is held at the North Dakota State Fairgrounds. Each year, participants compete at the district level in either the basic or advanced categories for a chance to advance to the state CDE. The event requires participants to navigate a tractor and implement through a specially designed course and includes general knowledge and problem-solving exams. Note that this is not a national contest.



FFA Degrees and Star Awards

FFA Proficiencies

The proficiency awards program enables students to focus on their SAE programs by setting goals and documenting the work required to achieve them. Complete SAE records allow students to apply for one of over 40 different proficiency areas. Proficiency awards recognize students in both placement and entrepreneurship experiences. Placement proficiencies involve SAE programs where students work for an individual or business for experience or pay. Entrepreneurial proficiencies pertain to SAEs that involve owning an agricultural production operation or agribusiness enterprise.

For a more detailed explanation of these proficiency award areas ask your student's advisor or visit the National FFA's *Agriculture Proficiency Award Handbook* at https://www.ffa.org/sitecollectiondocuments/prof_handbook.pdf

Degrees

The FFA organization recognizes five official degrees its members can earn throughout their involvement in the organization. Below is a brief description of each of these degrees. For more detailed information on how your student can qualify and earn these degrees speak with your chapter advisor or view the *Official FFA Student Handbook* at <https://www.ffa.org/official-manual/>. Students are encouraged to apply for these degrees as they

fulfill each degree's requirements.

- **Discovery FFA Degree**
The Discovery Degree is for due paying members of the local chapter FFA who are in the 7th or 8th grade, have knowledge of FFA, are familiar with their chapter's POA, and have participated in local chapter activities.
- **Greenhand FFA Degree**
As a high school member of FFA, the Greenhand Degree is earned by members who have planned a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) project, have basic knowledge of the FFA, and an understanding of the FFA history, the FFA Creed, emblem, motto, mission statement and code of ethics.
- **Chapter FFA Degree**
Demonstration of their role in the growth and development of their chapter will earn students the Chapter FFA Degree. Other requirements of the degree are an operating SAE project, community service, demonstrated parliamentary procedure participation, and leadership activities. Chapter FFA Degree recipients must have already obtained the Greenhand Degree.
- **State FFA Degree**
This degree signifies your student's successful completion of their high school FFA participation. Students must have received the Chapter FFA Degree, been an active member for at least two years, demonstrated leadership abilities, and earned or invested \$1000 or worked a minimum of 300 hours for their SAE project.
- **American FFA Degree**
The highest degree attainable in the National FFA Organization, the American FFA Degree shows a member's dedication to their chapter and state associations via their SAE project, their leadership abilities, and community involvement. There are several requirements a student must meet to earn this degree, among them, they must have received the State FFA Degree and have earned and/or productively invested in their SAE.

Star Awards

Chapter Level Star Awards

- **Star Discovery** – awarded to the most active Discovery FFA Degree recipient
- **Star Greenhand** – awarded to the most active Greenhand FFA Degree recipient
- **Chapter Star Farmer** – awarded to the chapter member who has an outstanding SAE in production agriculture and has demonstrated the most involvement in all areas of the chapter's activities.
- **Chapter Star in Agricultural Placement** – awarded to a chapter member who has an outstanding SAE in agribusiness or production agriculture and is actively involved in all areas of the chapter.
- **Chapter Star of Agriscience** – awarded to the chapter member with outstanding natural resources or agriscience-based SAE that is active in all areas of chapter activities.

State & National Level Star Awards

Star Farmer, Star Agriscience, Star Agribusiness, Star Agricultural Placement

Applicants who have applied for the State FFA Degree will be eligible to apply for the State Star Awards. The top finalists will be invited on stage at the state convention. Winners from each category will advance to compete on a national level.

Grant/Scholarship Opportunities

There are many opportunities the ND FFA Foundation has for North Dakota FFA Chapters and FFA members. Below are just a few of the programs that could help your chapter with your community service projects, gain insight into farm safety, and help your members obtain leadership skills. For applications and more information visit www.ndffaoundation.com

ND Ag in the Classroom Mini Grants - Due Sept. 1st (up to \$500 per project – \$10,000+ per year)

Blue Jackets Bright Futures - Due Oct. 1st

Beginning SAE Grants – Due Nov. 15th (\$10,000)

Expansion SAE Grants - Due Nov. 15th (\$10,000)

Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship - Due March 15th (up to \$20,000 given out in full or partial scholarships)

Ag Education & Production Ag College Scholarships-- Due January 23 (\$16,000)

The ND Ag in the Classroom Mini-Grants: The North Dakota Ag in the Classroom Council is offering grants up to \$500 to groups or individuals sponsoring programs or projects that promote agricultural literacy. A total of \$10,000 will be awarded. Grants may be awarded for less than the full amount requested, based upon the discretion of the granting committee and the funds available. The proposed project must be targeted at young people from 5-18 years of age and should enhance student knowledge of the contribution made by agriculture. Proposed projects or events designed to reach large groups of students will be given preference, as will those that involve innovative approaches to promoting agricultural literacy.

Ag in the Classroom Mini Grants - due September 1st

<https://www.ndffaoundation.com/ag-in-the-classroom-grant-application/>

Blue Jackets - Bright Futures (ND FFA Jacket Fund): A group of former FFA members has donated funds to be used for new FFA jackets for FFA members who currently don't own one. If you know of a fellow FFA member who could use a jacket, please encourage them to fill out an application. * **For best formatting, complete on a computer or laptop***

FFA Jacket Application – due October 1st

<https://www.ndffaoundation.com/blue-jacket-bright-futures-application/>

SAE Grant Program

Beginning and Expansion SAE Grant Program (Bakk Farm funds): Beginning Grants are for 8th and 9th grade FFA members to develop an SAE project. Expansion Grants are for 10th and 11th grade FFA members to start or expand an existing SAE project. Applicants can earn up to \$1,000. *All SAE grants must now be applied for via the National FFA application using the member's AET account. Visit with your advisor about this opportunity or log on to your account at TheAET.com*

Beginning & Expansion SAE Grant Program Applications - due November 15th

<https://www.ffa.org/participate/grants-and-scholarships/sae-grants/>

College Scholarships for Ag Education & Ag Production Majors: If you are going to college and majoring in Ag Education planning on teaching in ND or planning on a career in production agriculture, please consider filling out our application for a college scholarship.

Ag Education & Ag Production Al Geise College Scholarship – due January 23rd
<https://www.ndffaoundation.com/applications-1/>

Washington Leadership Conference Scholarships: Are you interested in taking your leadership skills to the highest level? Have you ever thought about how you can influence others to lead? Do you have what it takes to make a positive impact in your local community? If you have ever asked these questions of yourself, then the Washington Leadership Conference is just for you. Located in our nation's capital, the Washington Leadership Conference is a five-day event that trains FFA members to make a positive impact in their school, local community, state and country. The conference focuses on the following areas: problem-solving, relationship building, living with character, developing an attitude of serving others. The ND FFA Foundation has several scholarships for members.

Washington Leadership Conference scholarships - due March 15th
<https://www.ndffaoundation.com/wlc-scholarship/>

*For more information on any of these grant and scholarship opportunities visit www.ndffaoundation.com or call the FFA Foundation office at 701-224-8390.

Careers in Agricultural Education

Agricultural education teaches students about agriculture, food and natural resources. Through these subjects, agricultural educators teach students a wide variety of skills, including science, math, communications, leadership, management, and technology.

Some of potential jobs for someone graduating with a degree in agricultural education could be:

- High School Agriscience Teacher
- Ag Literacy Coordinator
- Agricultural Education Professor
- Farm Business Management Instructor
- 2-year Technical College Agriculture Instructor
- Adult Agricultural Education Instructor
- Young Farmer Instructor

These are just a few of the opportunities available to students with a degree in agricultural education for more information on preparing and advising your student on how to become an ag education instructor visit www.naae.org/teachag.

How can I support ND FFA?

So how can you as a parent help support the ND FFA?

- Join your local FFA alumni or start one if there isn't one.
- Volunteer to chaperone or help coach a CDE team.
- Help raise funds to support FFA youth activities.
- Volunteer to become a judge at District Leadership or State CDEs
- Donate to your local chapter and/or the state FFA Foundation
- **Thank you for your support of the North Dakota FFA!**

Resources:

National FFA Organization Association
The National FFA Student Handbook
The Official FFA Manual

