



# Nebraska FFA Association

  

## Policies and Procedures Manual



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## Section I. Introduction

### *Foreword*

This manual has been developed to provide Nebraska FFA with a guide for the major FFA activities which occur throughout the year in Nebraska. FFA advisors and members should be thoroughly familiar with the contents of this manual. The contents of this manual are comprised from two sources – policies and procedures developed and approved by the Nebraska FFA Board of Directors as well as policies and procedures developed by state staff for the purpose of managing programs as a part of their Nebraska Department of Education work responsibilities.

It is the belief of the Nebraska FFA Association that agricultural education is a program consisting of agricultural coursework, a work-based learning experience (Supervised Agricultural Experience – SAE) for each student and leadership development through local FFA chapters. The policies and procedures presented in this manual are intended to maintain the high quality and standards that the Nebraska FFA Association has established. Suggestions that may improve this manual are always welcome. The manual will be revised periodically and provided to local chapters.

### *History of Nebraska FFA*

Nebraska became a chartered association of the National FFA Organization in 1928. The Nebraska Association was the 6th state admitted to the National FFA Organization after the original formation of FFA in 1928. Agricultural Education and FFA on the local, district and state levels in Nebraska is supported by the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska FFA Alumni and Supporters, the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, the Nebraska FFA Foundation and other key stakeholders of Nebraska Team Ag Ed.

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. FFA is an intra-curricular student organization and an integral part of the local agricultural education program.

### **A. Local Level**

The local chapter is organized in each school that has an agricultural education program. It is a chartered chapter of the state and national levels of FFA. Each chapter must complete an application for chapter charter.

Each local chapter selects local chapter officers. The six constitutional officers include the president, secretary, vice president, treasurer, reporter, and sentinel. Officers may be selected as specified in the local chapter constitution.

Local policies, constitution and bylaws shall not be conflict with state policies, constitution and bylaws, but may, however, be more rigorous than the state requirements.

### ***B. District Level***

The Nebraska FFA Association is organized into 12 agricultural education and FFA districts. The instructors and advisors in each district elect one teacher to serve as the district NAEA board representative and one advisor to serve as the district FFA board representative.

District activities are the responsibility of the district teachers/advisors and are organized and conducted to meet the needs of the FFA members; they are not to conflict with the state association or national organization.

District policies shall not conflict with state policies, constitution, and bylaws. District chapter lists may be found on the Nebraska FFA website. Districts shall submit to the state office their district policy manuals by September 30th of each school year. (Adopted July 2016)

### ***C. State Level***

Nebraska FFA is a chartered state association of the National FFA Organization and operates under a state constitution and bylaws developed by the membership. Operating within these articles, Nebraska FFA is governed by student members and an adult board of directors.

### ***D. National Level***

The National FFA Organization is composed of 50 state associations in addition to associations in Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. The National FFA Organization received its federal charter in 1950 under the Carl D. Perkins act and complete organizational information may be found in the Official FFA manual and on the National FFA Web site: [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org).

### ***E. Policies and Procedures Manual***

Under direction of the Nebraska FFA Board of Directors, this policies and procedures manual was created and is to be maintained with necessary and timely updates for the Nebraska FFA Association. The policies and procedures manual shall be available on the Nebraska FFA website.

## Section II. State Governing Committees and Individuals

### **A. Executive Committee**

The Nebraska FFA Executive Committee shall consist of the FFA state advisor, the state officer manager, the director of agricultural education and the state officers. The members of the Executive Committee shall be responsible for carrying out the day-to-day operations of the Association in a manner which is consistent with these Bylaws and all resolutions and policies adopted by the Board of Directors

### **B. State FFA Officers**

#### *Duties of State Officers*

The offices and their individual responsibilities are established as described in the Nebraska FFA Bylaws.

#### *State Officer Eligibility*

Nebraska FFA state officer candidates must be at least a graduating senior at the time of applying for office. Additionally, state officer candidates may be no more than one year out of high school at the time of applying for office.

State officer candidates must earn their State Degree either during the year in which they are running or must have previously earned the degree.

State officer candidates must be bona fide FFA members in good standing with their local chapter, the association, and any related entities such as the State Fair and Nebraska FFA Foundation.

#### *State Officer Selection Process*

Students interested in applying to be a state officer must submit the State Officer Application by the specified deadline to the state office. Candidates will be informed about the interview process that shall follow the written application, and candidates must be available for all segments of the interview process to advance to any following segments of the interview process. Each chapter may be represented by only one state officer candidate in any given year.

## **Section III. Financial Policies and Procedures**

### ***A. Funding Sources***

Membership dues shall be collected annually for the purpose of administering the Nebraska FFA Association programs. In addition to membership dues, registration fees may be collected for specific events. The Nebraska FFA Foundation shall serve as the primary source of additional funding.

The Association shall submit requests for funding to the foundation including an explanation of the program for which funding is being sought and a general description of the ways in which all funding of the program will be used.

### ***B. Funding Policies***

Every effort shall be made to keep registration and membership costs at a manageable amount for members. The board of directors shall offer input as requested to determine if amounts are manageable. To do so, fiscal responsibility shall be used by the state staff in making purchasing and lease/rental decisions.

#### *Check Cashing Policy*

Checks from the Nebraska FFA Association are written to FFA chapters, companies, vendors, and individuals for the purposes of paying for a good or service, reimbursing a payment, or providing a cash award received. It is the policy of the Nebraska FFA Association that checks must be cashed by the recipient within 60 days of issuance. Checks will include the statement "Void after 60 days" to inform recipients of the practice and policy. (Adopted Summer 2017)

#### *Past Due Chapter Invoices*

Chapters with invoices past due, exceeding 45 days from the date of the invoice issued, will be considered not in good standing and as a result will not be eligible to register for or compete in state level events until the invoice is reconciled. (Adopted June 2019)

## **Section IV. Nebraska Agricultural Education Minimum Program Qualifications for FFA Chapter Participation**

### ***A. Agricultural Education Minimum Program Qualifications for FFA Chapter Participation***

Agricultural Education provides instruction through an integrated, intra-curricular model of direct instruction in the classroom and laboratory, experiential learning through a student's Supervised Agricultural Experience, and leadership development through student participation in FFA. This structure provides students the opportunity to be successful in any of the career pathways within the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Career Field.

#### *Minimum program qualifications include:*

1. A local FFA Chapter must have a Nebraska Department of Education certified agriculture-endorsed teacher.
  - a. If a Certified Agricultural Education teacher is not available, and the school hires a non-endorsed instructor on a provisional basis, the teacher must complete their endorsement within three years of assuming the duties of the Agricultural Education teacher. The teacher must provide evidence of enrollment in a certification program and yearly progress toward his/her endorsement.
2. The Nebraska certified agricultural education instructor at the school of their employment shall be the official FFA advisor.
3. The school shall provide a minimum of one program of study AND a minimum of four different semester offerings of agricultural courses; enough courses shall be offered in order that students will have the opportunity to enroll in a minimum of one agricultural course each year in grades 9-12 for a comprehensive program. Nebraska Department of Education-recognized Career Academies must offer coursework for grades 10-12.
4. New programs will be allowed up to three years before being required to offer a complete program of study for the purposes of FFA good standing status. (Adopted November 2016)
5. A budget is to be developed by the teacher and supported by the school to facilitate appropriate instructional strategies aligned to the Programs of Study offered by the school.
6. The agricultural education instructor must be allowed paid time for curriculum development, SAE supervision and management, and FFA administration.



7. Every student shall have a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program that allows the student to attain technical skills. The SAE can be classified as exploratory, placement, entrepreneurship, school- based enterprise, service learning, or research and each student shall maintain a record of experience.
8. A minimum of ten members should appear on the FFA roster.
9. The FFA chapter shall meet all requirements to remain an active chapter in good standing.

Should an agricultural education program not meet the above requirements, a school district may pursue one of the following options, as defined in Section V. Nebraska FFA Chapter Policies and Procedures:

1) Probationary Status 2) Discontinued Status, or 3) allow local students to enroll in distance education from an established Nebraska Agricultural Education program and certified teacher, allowing students become members of that FFA chapter.

### ***B. Agricultural Courses Required for FFA Membership***

Only students enrolled in at least a one semester credited agricultural education course that appears on the student's official high school transcript are eligible for FFA membership for that school year.

Courses allowed for FFA membership include Nebraska Department of Education recognized Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources courses taught by:

1. A Nebraska certified teacher with an Agricultural Education endorsement.
2. A Nebraska certified teacher with a provisional Agricultural Education endorsement who is actively taking coursework toward full endorsement.
3. Emergency Certification: A teacher with a Nebraska transitional teaching permit with an Agricultural Education endorsement who is actively taking coursework to complete the certification.
4. A teacher with a career education permit who is actively taking coursework to complete the certification.

*Expanding FFA membership to students enrolled in content aligned, non-AFNR Courses*  
(Endorsed February 2022)

1. Rationale: Some courses contain content alignment with AFNR courses. (Example: Welding is also taught by a Skills and Technical Sciences teacher.) Students may be interested in these AFNR-related areas, but do not have the opportunity to take the course from the local agricultural education teacher.

2. Students who are enrolled in the STS Welding course are allowed to become FFA members, based on these criteria:
  - a. The welding course would supplement courses being offered in the current AFNR programming and would not serve as a substitute for the other minimum program qualifications for FFA membership.
  - b. the endorsed agricultural education teacher, who manages/teaches the rest of the program including serving as the FFA advisor, is involved in the process and accepts this expanded membership option for their chapter.
  - c. the endorsed agricultural education teacher, in collaboration with the instructor for the welding course, would participate in professional development to ensure integral components of the FFA and SAE are maintained.
  - d. a formal letter indicating that expanded FFA membership is being offered in a local program is submitted to the state FFA advisor.

## Section V. Nebraska FFA Chapter Policies and Procedures

### ***A. Probationary FFA Chapter Status***

FFA is considered intra-curricular and is therefore tied to the instruction that students receive as part of their agricultural education coursework. Schools that cannot find and/or hire a certified agricultural education instructor may be issued probationary status for an FFA chapter for up to one year, given that the school meets the requirements outlined in the Application for Probationary FFA Chapter Status. (See Appendix.)

### ***B. Discontinued FFA Chapter Status***

FFA is considered intra-curricular and is therefore tied to the instruction that students receive as part of their agricultural education coursework. In the event a local agricultural education program is discontinued, its chartered FFA chapter may officially operate for a period not to exceed three years (36 months) from the date of discontinuance, provided proper supervision is given by a person having the approval of the local school district's administrator and the FFA State Advisor. The chapter's charter will be terminated at the state and national level at the end of the three-year period if a local department of agricultural education is not in operation in the school at that time. No new FFA membership will be added during this time. Note: If a school had previously entered Probationary Status and did not fulfill the requirements to re-enter active status, the 36 month Discontinued Status shall begin from the beginning date that the school entered the probationary period.

### ***C. Provisional FFA Chapter Status***

FFA is an intra-curricular component of an agricultural education program and is therefore tied to the instruction that students receive in the classroom and within their Supervised Agricultural Experience programs. Occasionally schools that wish to add the FFA component of a local school program may propose new methods to meet the requirements to have an FFA chapter. The school may submit their proposal for review to the State Director of Agricultural Education to receive temporary, Provisional Status of an FFA chapter. (See Appendix.)

### ***D. Distance Education***

While not ideal due to the nature of the hands-on application of agricultural education, schools may partner with another program that offers courses via synchronous or asynchronous instructional delivery model. Should students at the distance location wish to participate in FFA, the two school districts must formalize an agreement for the coordination

of the FFA chapters and members. Students of the distance location would become members of the school originating the instruction and must adhere to all stipulations of membership, including course and SAE requirements. If a school receives distance instruction from more than one school, all students must be members of the same FFA chapter. The distance teacher must be a Nebraska Department of Education certified agriculture-endorsed teacher and will serve as the FFA advisor.

### *Distance Education Implementation for Schools without a Certified Agricultural Education Teacher*

As defined in Federal legislation and the National and Nebraska FFA Constitution and By-Laws, the FFA is an integral part of the instructional program of agricultural education. Along with the FFA component, the SAE must be maintained to have a balanced program of agricultural education.

Distance education is providing opportunities for students who do not have agricultural education programs in their schools to receive instruction with the potential option for FFA membership through the school originating the instruction. The following policies were adopted to ensure a quality educational experience for all agricultural education students and to provide opportunities for distance education students.

1. Students who are enrolled in an agricultural education course taught via distance education by a certified agriculture instructor currently teaching in Nebraska should conduct a Supervised Agricultural Experience program and are eligible for FFA membership.
2. Each school operating an agricultural education program via distance education shall designate/employ an Ag Ed/FFA coordinator. This coordinator shall be responsible for monitoring SAE programs, conducting local FFA activities and communicating with the agricultural educator providing the instruction to enhance the agricultural education curriculum.
3. A school receiving agricultural education via distance education may provide FFA membership to their students in one of the following two ways:
  - a. Students may join the FFA chapter of the school providing the distance education. Both schools must agree on a set of policies and procedures for representation, participation, and supervision. A school that receives distance education courses from more than one school with a certified agricultural education instructor must “declare” which chapter will be the one for FFA membership. A school may not have members in a chapter from whom they do

- not receive distance agriculture courses.
- b. The school may enter Provisional FFA Chapter Status, if eligible. (See Appendix, Provisional FFA Chapter Status Application.)
- 4. SAE supervision visits may be conducted by the instructor of the host school if the summer contract allows. The local coordinator should accompany the instructor on these visits.
- 5. The distance education course(s) must appear as a credited course on the student's official high school transcript.

#### *Receiving Distance Courses in Established Agricultural Education Programs*

1. When supplementing with distance education, a minimum of 50% of the agricultural education courses offered must be taught locally by a certified agricultural educator.
2. All distance education courses offered for credit in an established program shall be approved by the local agriculture instructor.
3. In an established program, a signed agreement between students taking distance education and the local agriculture instructor should identify regular meeting times during the semester that he/she is receiving distance instruction to address the FFA and SAE components of their program.
4. In an established program, the local agricultural education teacher will serve as the student's FFA advisor; the student maintains their membership as part of the local chapter.
5. Approved distance education courses for established programs include:
  - a. Dual Credit AFNR-based courses from Nebraska postsecondary institutions (note: these must appear on the local transcript as high school credit)
  - b. Synchronous or asynchronous courses provided by a current Nebraska certified and endorsed agricultural education teacher

#### ***E. Chapter in Good Standing Items***

All Chapter in Good Standing items are due to the state office by September 30th, with membership dues payment due on November 15th. Chapter in Good Standing Items include:

1. Membership Roster
2. Teacher and School Demographic Information
3. POA and Budget (entered and completed in the AET) (adopted July 2016 to take effect in September 2017)
4. Updated Chapter Constitution and By-Laws (only if changes were made over the



previous school year)

#### 5. Membership Dues Payment

Chapters missing information and/or payments will be designated as “not in good standing” only until they have rectified the situation. Members of chapters not in good standing are considered ineligible for all FFA activities above the chapter level until the chapter re-enters a good standing status.

## Section VI. Nebraska FFA Membership

### **A. Membership Eligibility**

The membership and eligibility policies of the Nebraska FFA Association have been approved by the delegates to the annual FFA State Convention and by the Nebraska FFA Board of Directors. These policies govern the district and state levels of the organization. Local policies shall not conflict with the state association but may be more restrictive.

### **B. Dues**

National dues for individual membership are \$7 and Nebraska dues for individual membership are \$11. For a student to be a member of FFA, dues must be paid in their entirety to the state. Local chapters may determine how students will pay dues and if and how much local dues shall be collected. Schools participating in the chapter affiliation program must declare their affiliation with the state office and their members will be recognized as members of an affiliate chapter.

FFA membership consists of national and state dues, or affiliate dues, as well as local dues, when applicable. Members are not able to join FFA at only the local or state level(s). (Adopted November 2016)

### **C. Active Membership**

Any student who is regularly enrolled in a secondary agricultural education program is entitled to become an active member of their local chartered FFA chapter. Secondary agricultural education programs shall be defined as grades 7-12. To retain membership during high school, the member must:

1. Be enrolled in at least one unit of instruction in a credited agricultural education course taught by a Nebraska-certified and endorsed agricultural education teacher that appears on the student's secondary transcript during the school year and maintain a Supervised Agricultural Experience program. Students enrolled in a spring-semester agriculture course, as verified by the local agriculture teacher, may become members during the fall semester of that academic year. Members may retain their active membership until November 30th following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduating from high school or leaving high school;
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership and participating in other organized activities of the chapter;
3. Pay all current local, state, and national dues by the date established by the chapter.

A member who is in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America shall be in good standing during the period of active service

without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces shall not be considered as elapsed time in determining the maximum period of four national conventions following graduation from high school or leaving high school. Members using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advanced degrees of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service, indicating such a desire by paying of dues and attending meetings. Members participating in a six-month armed service program shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual, however, may retain active membership beyond their 23rd birthday.

#### ***D. Home-Schooled Students***

Home schooled students may participate in FFA if they are enrolled in at least a semester long course taught by a certified/endorsed agricultural education teacher from a school district offering a complete agricultural education program in Nebraska. This credited course must appear on the student's transcript. Students must be members of the local chapter from which they are receiving instruction. Participating students shall also maintain an active Supervised Agricultural Experience program. An agreement between the local school district and the participating home school student and his/her guardians is required for participation that outlines the expectations for all parties. The local agriculture teacher/FFA advisor may have additional requirements for participation.

#### ***E. Middle School***

Any seventh or eighth grade student who is enrolled in an agricultural education course will be eligible for membership in the Nebraska FFA Association. The decision about what constitutes an agricultural education course will be made by the local agriculture instructor.

Middle school FFA members are eligible to participate in district, state, and national level competitive events and award programs depending on availability of middle-school specific programs and what the local instructor feels is in the best interest of the local program.

Middle school members are allowed to exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair, FFA Division providing that they are on the chapter's roster and that they are in good standing with the Nebraska State Fair. They may also exhibit at county/local fairs if the fair rules allow.

Middle school members are allowed to complete SAE records to contribute towards high school SAE awards applications if the following requirements are met while maintaining records in middle school:





1. Full state, national, and local dues are paid
2. An Agricultural Education course as recognized by NDE is completed for each year of membership and collected records
3. Only up-to-date years of membership may be used, meaning that a member cannot pay back dues to add middle school records to a high school awards application if membership was not while the student was a middle school member.

2020 – first year that 8th grade records may be included for award application evaluation as a freshman student

2021- first year that 7th grade records may be included for award application evaluation as a freshman student

2025 – first year that members may submit up to 7 years of SAE records in an awards application as a high school graduate

(Middle School records for applications, adopted November 2018)

## Section VII. Degrees and Applications

### A. *State Staff Review/Printing of Applications and Degrees*

State staff shall have the ability to review and print any applications and degrees generated through the FFA Degree/Application Manager.

### B. *Nebraska State FFA Degree*

#### *State Degree Qualifications*

The FFA State Degree is the highest degree the Nebraska FFA Association may bestow upon a member. FFA members must submit two years (24 months) of consecutive SAE record books, complete the FFA State Degree application and meet all minimum qualifications as well as earn a passing score of at least 70% on a State Degree assessment to be awarded the FFA State Degree. The state degree may be earned at any state convention after meeting qualifications and occurring prior to the fourth national convention following the student's graduation from high school.

#### *State Degree Requirements*

The following items must be met for State FFA Degree Candidates:

1. All items the Nebraska FFA State Degree Candidate Checklist must be answered "Yes" for the candidate to qualify for the degree.
  - a) Candidate must have been an active FFA member for at least the immediate past 24 months
  - b) Candidate must hold the Greenhand and Chapter FFA Degrees.
  - c) Applicant must have completed at least two full years/four semesters (360 hours) of agriculture classes, or all of the agriculture classes offered at the school last attended.
  - d) Candidate Inventory Statements – Placement (most will have none) Entrepreneurship – ensure accurate inventory numbers with complete descriptions
  - e) Non-cash income and expense must be balanced
  - f) Accuracy Check for the Balance Sheet & Growth must be "Met."
  - g) Candidate has a record of at least 25 hours of community service in at least two different activities.
  - h) Student must qualify for the degree with earnings, productively invested and hours.
    - i. A student must have productively invested at least \$1,000 and must show SAE earnings of at least \$3,000

- or*
  - ii. A student must have productively invested at least \$3,000 and must show SAE earnings of at least \$1,000
  - or*
  - iii. A student must have productively invested at least \$1,200 and must show SAE earnings of at least \$1,200 and must show that [(3.56 factor x quantity of unpaid hours) + value of productively invested assets] = at least 5,000 and must show that [(3.56 factor x quantity of unpaid hours) + SAE earnings] = at least 5,000.
  - i) Candidate must have performed at least 10 procedures of parliamentary law.
  - j) Candidate must have presented at least a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or FFA.
  - k) Candidate must have participated in planning and completing the chapter Program of Activities.
  - l) Candidate must have earned at least 500 points for FFA activities.
  - m) Candidate must have earned at least 150 points for FFA activities above the chapter level.
2. Using the FFA application in AET, Checklist of Minimum Qualifications are MET.
  3. All electronic signatures and approvals must be obtained.
  4. A minimum of two years of consecutive records for a comprehensive SAE which correlates to a current proficiency award area and must accompany the application, all in the AET.
  5. Interview and pass the State FFA Degree Assessment with a minimum of 70%.
  6. All record book components included on the Nebraska FFA State Degree Candidate Checklist must be included.
    - a) Agricultural Science Courses
    - b) FFA Offices (must have been an officer or served on a committee)
    - c) POA Committees
    - d) Journal (minimum leadership points and service hours are verified in the State Degree application)
    - e) SAE Summary (must have the following for each experience)
      - i. SAE Plan (SAE agreements)
      - ii. Journal – Experience related
      - iii. Annual Review
      - iv. Operating Expense (if entrepreneurship SAE)
      - v. Income and Expense Related to the SAE

- vi. Profit/Loss Report
- vii. Non-Current/Capital Inventory (if applicable)
- viii. Profit/Loss Statement (combines all experiences and years)
- ix. Balance Sheet (combines all experience and years)

A motion passed at the July 2015 board meeting rescinded a previous motion granting FFA members in second year active chapter status the ability to apply for and earn the FFA State Degree based on compliance with the National Constitution. The exception to this is if a student was first part of an established chapter and has a completed set of 24 months of consecutive records for their SAE.

### *State Degree Denials and Appeals*

Should a student be denied their State Degree, the district review committee must complete the State Degree Denial form for each candidate not qualified for the degree. The reason for the denial must be clearly defined. District FFA Board representatives must retain a copy of the denial form and provide the denied student a copy of the form. The FFA Board representative must communicate the reason for denial and explain the appeal process to the advisor(s) of all denied applicants.

If an application is denied, no changes or additions to the record book or degree application may be made after the district review and interview process.

A denied candidate may choose to appeal the denial by submitting the State Degree Denial form along with supporting information to the state office no later than five days following the district review. All appeals will be considered during a spring FFA Board of Directors meeting prior to the state convention.

### **C. Record Books**

All record books, State Degrees, Star Applications, and Proficiency Applications must be submitted using AET. (adopted July 2016)

The American Degree application shall be locked to the AET record system beginning with the 2020 application. (adopted July 2016)

### **D. Nebraska State Star**

#### *State Star Qualifications and Eligibility*

FFA members who have outstanding SAE programs may apply to be a State Star in one area: Production, Agribusiness, Placement, or Agriscience at the time of completing the FFA State

Degree application, but only up to one year out of high school. Candidates must meet all the qualifications and requirements of the State FFA Degree.

Only nationally recognized SAEs, based on the National FFA Proficiency Award list, may be applied toward the Star awards. All items on the State Star Qualification Checklist must be marked "Yes" for a candidate to be eligible.

#### *Star Award Program Areas*

**Star in Production:** The SAE consists of an entrepreneurship program in production agriculture; the student must own and/or operate their program. Only entrepreneurship SAE information will be considered for Star in Production.

**Star in Placement:** The placement SAE may be in production agriculture, agribusiness or directed lab that is not agriscience based. This placement does not have to be a paid position, although the applicant must have enough earnings and investment from their SAE to qualify to receive the FFA State Degree. Only SAE placement information will be considered for Star in Agricultural Placement.

**Star in Agriscience:** The SAE program is research/experimentation or science based. These may be entrepreneurship or placement experiences. Placement experiences need not be paid positions, but the student must have enough earnings and investments from their SAE to qualify to receive the FFA State Degree.

**Star in Agribusiness:** The SAE program is entrepreneurial and is not production agriculture. The student owns and operates a non-production agriculture-based business. Only entrepreneurship SAE information will be considered for Star in Agribusiness.

#### *Star Award Program District Selection*

Each district may nominate two Star candidates per area, and/or 10% of the applicants in that area – whichever is greater. Districts are not required to send applicants in each area. If a district does not have candidates worthy of Star consideration, they should not forward those applications to the state level. Following the district selection of Star candidates, candidates may revise and edit their record books and applications based on the feedback received during the district review.

### *Star Award Program State Finalist Selection*

Applications and books submitted to the state review after district recommendations will be evaluated by a committee and narrowed down to 24 star finalists. There will not be a designated number of star finalists for each area. For instance, one year there may be eight Production finalists, six Placement finalists, four Agribusiness finalists and six Agriscience finalists. The next year, there most likely would be a different number of finalists in each of the respective areas.

### *Star Award Program State Winner Selection*

The 24 finalists identified by the review committee in the state finalist selection process will be invited to interview during FFA State Convention. The evaluators will select one Star in each area. All 24 finalists will be recognized on stage at the state convention and Star winners will be announced from the group of finalists.

### *Star Award Program Scoring*

A rubric shall be provided by the association for districts to use and for the state review committee to use.

## **E. Proficiency Awards**

### *Proficiency Awards Program Eligibility*

Nebraska FFA members may apply for district and state-level proficiency awards through their first year after graduation from high school. Members who are two or more years out of high school are no longer eligible to participate in the proficiency award program. Students must be bona fide FFA members in good standing with their local FFA chapters.

Proficiency applications must have two calendar years of records with their application in order to compete on the National level.

First year members may apply for a proficiency award using records beginning on June 1. If a first-year member applies, the on-line award application will show "Not Met" due to fewer than 12 months of records, which shall be allowed and overlooked during the evaluation of the application. While a first-year member may qualify as a Proficiency Award State Finalist, they may not win the proficiency area with fewer than 12 months of records.

### *Proficiency Award Program Areas*

Proficiency areas, both nationally qualifying and Nebraska only, shall be posted on the Nebraska FFA website and updated annually once state staff receives the national list from National FFA.

### *Proficiency Award Program Limitations of Nebraska-only Proficiency Areas*

Proficiency areas that are not recognized within the National FFA proficiency award areas may not be used in the State Star application or the American Degree application and are not eligible for any national recognition. Nebraska-only proficiency award areas may be used for the following: Greenhand Degree, Chapter Degree, State Degree, and State Proficiency Award Program.

### *Proficiency Award Program Local and District Review*

Proficiency applications shall be reviewed at the local level prior to being submitted to the district level review.

Each district shall host their district review at a date and location determined by the district which provides ample time for the applications moving to the preliminary state review to be submitted in AET by the deadline of the current review year. Proficiency applications may be revised and edited between the district and preliminary state reviews.

Districts may submit the top three gold rated applications in each proficiency award area to the preliminary state review. Applications being forwarded to the state for state-level reviews should be of gold quality. Districts should not forward applications that are not of gold quality. All applications to be reviewed during the preliminary state review must be submitted in AET by the state deadline of the review year.

### *Proficiency Award Program Preliminary State Review*

Student applications earning a first, second or third gold rating in the district review may submit their respective application to the preliminary state review. Applications will be evaluated in the proficiency area in which it was submitted. Applications cannot move areas at the preliminary state review. If the application is in the incorrect area, it will not advance to be a state finalist, nor will it have the chance to move to the correct area.

### *Evaluation Teams*

During the preliminary state review, teachers, pre-service teachers, industry representatives and others shall be divided into teams of three or four to evaluate designated proficiency award areas. A certified agriculture education instructor must be part of each evaluation team.

Evaluation teams shall be determined prior to the evaluation process and no teachers shall evaluate in areas in which they have students competing. Prior to the evaluation, all evaluators must attend the in-service and instruction provided by a board representative, a teacher who has attended national judging or state staff. Expectations must be clearly identified for evaluators.

Evaluation teams shall rate (gold/silver/bronze) the applications and rank the top 5 golds and provide their results to the identified review team for additional review. All proficiency applications held in the top four or five at the preliminary state review shall be awarded a gold.

Each district must have an FFA Board representative present at the review and have three additional qualified representatives at the review to ensure a fair and equitable process.

### *Review Team*

The review team shall consist of teacher representatives according to district rotations. Two districts from the previous year will remain as representatives for a second year as the rotation moves around the state. The rotation schedule is as follows:

<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
District 7	District 1	District 2	District 3
District 8	District 2	District 3	District 6
District 1	District 5	District 5	District 10
District 12	District 8	District 10	District 11
<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>	<b>2030</b>
District 4	District 3	District 4	District 4
District 6	District 6	District 6	District 7
District 9	District 10	District 9	District 9
District 11	District 11	District 11	District 12

Those proficiency award applications earning a top five gold rating from the review team shall be submitted to the review team for a final review. The review team shall ensure the following:

- State ranking is written on the results sheet turned in by evaluation team
- Review the top 4-5 applications to secure they are of high quality



- Meet with evaluation teams if information is missing or incomplete in an area

### *Final State Review*

Students with an application ranked in the top three golds shall be invited to participate in an interview at the state convention to determine the final proficiency award rankings.

Record books may be available to the candidate during their final state review interview for the purpose of reference only. No scoring may be affected by a student having or not having their record books at the final review, and the record books may not be used by the judges during the final review.

Proficiency applications must be supported by state-approved SAE records that may be reviewed by state staff or district FFA board member(s).

### ***F. National Chapter Application***

The National Chapter Application shall be reviewed by a selection committee at the state level prior to the annual state convention to rate (gold/silver/bronze) and select the national-qualifying applications. A maximum of 10% of the previous year's programs may be selected for national competition. The application may include information from March 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous school year through the last day of February of the current school year. (Adopted July 2016)

### ***G. Chapter Recognition Awards***

Chapters may be recognized during the annual state convention for their achievements in the following categories through Model of Excellence Awards:

- Growing Leaders
- Building Communities
- Strengthening Agriculture

(Adopted July 2018, to replace previous chapter awards with the Model of Excellence Awards to reflect awards given at the national level.)

### ***H. Plagiarism Policy***

The state FFA staff will run a plagiarism report through The AET for Proficiency, Agriscience Fair, Star, State Degree, and National Chapter applications. It will screen all applications and



match it to other applications in The AET. The report will flag 50 consecutive characters, which is about 3-4 sentences, and link it to the application with the same pattern.

The results of the report will be reviewed by 5 people consisting of state FFA staff and representatives from the FFA Board of Directors who do not have a member included on the report. Applications flagged as plagiarized may be disqualified or dropped rating/ranking levels. (Adopted November 2021)

## **Section VIII. Career Development Events**

### ***A. Selection of National Competitor***

The state-level winner shall be selected as the team or individual to represent Nebraska at the national level of competition in those areas that directly align between Nebraska FFA and National FFA. In those areas where there is no direct correlation, the following shall be used:

1. Selection of National Competing Dairy Handler

The top Senior Dairy Showman FFA exhibitor shall be named as the Nebraska representative in the National Dairy Handlers CDE.

2. Selection of National Competing Forestry Team

The highest placing team competing at the State Envirothon event, which also meets the following requirements, shall be named the national-qualifying team to represent Nebraska at the National Forestry competition. The team must consist entirely of students who are enrolled in at least one semester of an agriculture course during the respective current school year and be current FFA members.

(Adopted July 2016)

## Section IX. Leadership Development Events

### A. Eligibility

A student is eligible to participate in a Leadership Development Event per the individual rules of the respective LDE. Students winning a state-level LDE that has a comparable national-level event shall be named as the Nebraska representative for the respective event. Once a student wins a specific Leadership Development Event at the state level, they may not compete in the same event at the state level again in the future.

Students may compete in any one individual LDE and any one team LDE each year. A student may not compete in multiple individual or team events in the same year.

Students competing in Leadership Development Events must be bona fide FFA members and they and their chapter must be in good standing with the Nebraska FFA Association.

### *LDE Eligibility Exception*

Should a national qualifying team or individual be unable to compete in their respective competitive event at the national level (for various reasons), the agriculture instructor of the respective team or individual may ask the FFA Board of Directors if the team or individual may be allowed to compete again at the state level, even though they previously won the state event. This policy follows the NAEA CDE Committee's CDE Eligibility Exception Policy in order to keep LDE and CDE policies aligned.

Timeline: Agriculture instructors requesting an exception to the eligibility rules must submit their request via writing to the FFA State Staff by November 15th of the respective competitive event year.

Situations that warrant exceptions:

1. Nationally qualifying student(s) qualified in multiple National FFA CDEs or LDEs.
2. Nationally qualifying student(s) experienced death of a family member that caused them to miss the National FFA CDE.
3. National qualifying student(s) experienced a medical emergency prohibiting them from competing in the National FFA CDE.
4. Other similar situations occurred that were out of the control of the contestant(s).

Situations that will not warrant exceptions:

1. Nationally qualifying student(s) chose to participate in an athletic or other school

activity instead of the National FFA event.

2. Nationally qualifying student(s) chose, with their control, to not compete at the National FFA event.
3. Nationally qualifying member(s) of a team event chose to not compete at the National FFA CDE, thus not having a full team to compete at the National FFA event and thus preventing the team from competing at the national level.

### **B. LDE Revisions**

Regarding revisions to Leadership Development Events:

1. There shall be no changes made to a LDE after September 1st and before the respective state-level LDE.
2. The LDE superintendent, state staff and/or the FFA Board of Directors will review the LDE and provide recommendations to the FFA Board of Directors. This may occur at any time, initiated by one of the individuals listed in this policy.
3. The FFA Board of Directors will have the power to act on necessary changes to a given LDE.
4. The LDE superintendent and/or state staff shall be responsible for arranging meetings and informing the agriculture instructors and FFA members of the respective LDE changes prior to September 1st of the respective year.
5. LDEs will be reviewed annually by the FFA Board of Directors, and/or an ad hoc committee, and/or State Staff.
6. By June following a given state convention, the proposed rule changes shall be presented to the FFA Board of Directors for action at their annual summer meeting.
7. By September 1st following a given state convention, state staff shall inform FFA members and agriculture instructors of the approved LDE change(s) and post revised rules and guidelines on the Nebraska FFA website.

### **C. Number of District and State LDE Competitors**

Each district shall be allowed to determine the number of competitors per school per event at the district level. Each district shall send a maximum of three teams or three individuals from the district event to the state event. (Adopted July 2022)

### **D. Required Processes**

#### *Reading of Standard LDE Rules*

Standard competition room protocols shall be developed and read prior to each LDE competitor's demonstration/presentation to ensure fair demonstration/presentation room

environments for all competitors. This process shall occur at both the district and state level events, with the protocol being determined and developed by state staff and/or LDE superintendent.

#### *Alignment to National Rules*

All state-level LDE rules shall be aligned to the national-level rules of the respectively comparable event. Modifications shall be approved by the FFA Board of Directors.

#### *Projectors for Agricultural Demonstration LDE Presentations*

Projectors shall be provided by the state event as often as possible for state-level Agricultural Demonstration presentations. No other LDEs allow for use of visual aids. (Adopted July 2022)

### **E. Recording of LDEs**

#### 1. State LDEs

- There will be no state association hired media that record the LDE event in its entirety.
- The use of tripods or devices that are larger than a handheld recording device (i.e. a cellphone) are prohibited.
- As a public event with an audience present, individual competitors must realize that audience members may be recording their LDE presentation. The FFA Association and the FFA Board of Directors will not monitor the use of recording devices.

#### 2. District LDEs

- Recording of LDEs at the district level is at the discretion of the district.

## **Section X. Middle School Programming**

### ***A. Quiz Bowl Participant Quantity***

The FFA state staff shall have the authority to determine the number of middle school Quiz Bowl teams allowed to register and compete at the state convention. FFA membership is a requirement for students to participate in Quiz Bowl.

### ***B. People in Ag Poster Event Participant Quantity***

The FFA state staff shall have the authority to determine the number of middle school student presentations/posters allowed to register and compete at the state convention. FFA membership is a requirement for students to participate in People in Ag Poster Event.

### ***C. State Convention Chaperones***

Each chapter choosing to involve middle school students in the state FFA convention programming shall be required to send at least one adult chaperone to remain with the middle school student group representing their chapter.

## Section XI. State Fair

### *Relationship between Nebraska FFA Association and Nebraska State Fair*

The Nebraska State Fair annually hosts an FFA division for livestock shows and static exhibits at the Nebraska State Fair. The Nebraska State Fair invites members of the Nebraska FFA Association to participate in these shows to demonstrate products from their agricultural classroom or SAE program work. The FFA division of State Fair shows and exhibitions is exclusive to active Nebraska FFA members, as determined by local, state and national membership policies. The shows are organized, managed and operated by the Nebraska State Fair FFA superintendent and FFA division superintendents.

Nebraska FFA members exhibiting at the Nebraska State Fair must be in good standing with the Nebraska FFA Association. Members exhibiting livestock must also have completed YQCA certification for the current year.

For specific rules and regulations surrounding the Nebraska State Fair events, those with inquiries should review such materials on the State Fair page on the Nebraska FFA website and those located at [www.statefair.org](http://www.statefair.org).

### **A. Nebraska State Fair Membership Verification and Eligibility**

To exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair – FFA division, exhibitors must be dues paying members and meet all membership requirements.

#### *Current and Incoming Members*

If a current FFA member is on the previous school year's roster, that individual does NOT need to be early added to upcoming year's roster prior to exhibiting at the State Fair in the current year.

Any incoming new member, including 7th and 8th grade members, MUST be early added to the upcoming school year's chapter roster between August 1-15th to exhibit. This rule applies to any new member, including high school grades.

Incoming 6th graders are NOT allowed to exhibit in the FFA division of Nebraska State Fair.



### *Out of School Members*

Out of school FFA members are eligible to exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair through the fourth state fair after high school graduation, which aligns with national FFA membership requirements. Example: for the 2022 State Fair, an out of school member could have graduated in 2022, 2021, 2020, or 2019.

An out of school member who was on the previous school year's membership roster does NOT need to be early added to the upcoming year's roster prior to the current year's State Fair. If that member is eligible to exhibit in future years, they should be added to the chapter roster that fall.

If an out of school member is in their last year of eligibility, they may exhibit at the state fair without additional membership requirements.

See the current year's Nebraska State Fair Entry Information Book for more information.

## Section XII. Supervised Agricultural Experience

### ***A. Definition***

The Nebraska FFA Association recognizes the definition of SAE as defined by The National Council for Agricultural Education (The Council).

### ***B. Clarification for Purposes of Nebraska FFA Awards and Recognition***

All agricultural inventory owned by a student may be utilized in Nebraska FFA for SAE records, awards and recognition programs – including those inventory items utilized for recognition in other organizations.

Example: A student exhibiting in a 4-H show may count that inventory item (plant, vegetable, animal, equipment, etc.) in their SAE records and for the purpose of pursuing FFA awards.

## Section XIII. Judge Expectations and Contract

### *Expectations of Judges of Nebraska FFA Events*

(Adopted: July 2016)

Nebraska FFA event judges are independent volunteers. They are not the employee of any Nebraska FFA chapter or district, nor are they the employee of the Nebraska FFA Association. No benefits consistent with employment are available to volunteer judges for chapter, district, or state-level events.

Judges of local, district, and state events are asked to read and understand this document. Judges are asked to then sign this document to indicate their understanding of and commitment to adhering to the requirements of judges of FFA events.

1. All judges of Nebraska FFA events at the chapter, district, and state levels shall sign this contract.
2. Judges must honor contracts regardless of inconvenience.
3. Judges shall not provide unwarranted, derogatory news media releases, postings on social media or blogs, or interviews regarding students, schools, chapters, districts, or other judges involved in the event which they are judging.
4. A judge must consider and acknowledge conflict of interest prior to committing to judging an event. If there is any doubt as to whether a judge should engage in an event, he or she should excuse himself or herself from the event. Conflict of interest may exist in any of the following scenarios (or others like them):
  - a) A judge is scoring in an area outside his or her expertise
  - b) A close family member or friend is involved in the competitive event as a participant
  - c) A judge is connected to the school which the student competitor is representing
  - d) A judge is a coach or former coach of the student competitor
  - e) A judge can answer "yes" to this question: Is there anything that may prevent me from objectively evaluating the event or student I am to evaluate?
5. Judges are to remember that they are assisting FFA chapters for the purpose of growing students as leaders and agriculturalists.
6. Judges' opinions of students' work are important, and judges must remember that they



are judging high school students. Judges must provide educationally appropriate written comments and critiques. Judges must use the critique sheets provided in their respective event(s) to inform competitors about their areas of strength and weakness in the respective event. Wording of all statements must be constructive and helpful.

7. Judges should not, at any time, communicate during the judging about any competitor to any person outside of their respective judging team. Judges shall maintain discretion amongst the judging team when individual rankings are required.
8. Judges are to be knowledgeable of and adhere to all event-specific rules.
9. Judges must never comment on student performances through social media outlets and/or to the general public. This includes contacting parents, friends, relatives, or teachers of the student(s) involved.
10. Judges must keep their personal feelings or biases about topics, methods, arguments, students, teachers, or schools out of the evaluation of the student and event.

Name of Event(s) being Judged:

Date of Event(s):

Level of Competition:      Local                                  District                                  State

I agree that I understand the rules of the event as well as those of serving as a judge. I agree to adhere to these judging rules and to demonstrate the utmost level of professionalism and confidentiality in the events I judge.

Printed Name of Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Name of Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix

### Application for Probationary FFA Chapter Status

Received on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Approved      \_\_\_ Denied

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Director of Agricultural Education

Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Please briefly describe the circumstances of the chapter's need for Probationary Status:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check each of the boxes below, indicating that your school district will meet the requirements in order for your FFA chapter to be granted probationary status.

- The school will identify a school employee who can serve as the FFA interim coordinator/advisor. A community member may also be selected to serve as an FFA coordinator in conjunction with the advisor. (Due to the State Director within 20 days of this application.)
- FFA members are enrolled in an agricultural course, either locally or via distance. Each member must enroll in a minimum of one semester class to be eligible for the year of membership. Please attach a list of offered courses, the terms they are offered and the teacher and location of instruction. These courses must be approved by the state office.
- A minimum of ten FFA members appear on the roster. (Due through FFA membership by September 30<sup>th</sup>.)
- The school publicly intends to hire or employ a certified, or provisionally permitted agricultural education instructor the following school year. It is recommended that the school district advertise the opening for semester hire. Advertisement of the position is expected no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

The school district will fulfill the above requirements for Probationary FFA Chapter Status.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This policy is endorsed by the Nebraska FFA Association Board of Directors, June 2012.



**Application for Provisional FFA Chapter Status**

Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

Initiating School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Desired Length of Provisional Status \_\_\_\_\_ years

Briefly describe the circumstances of the school's need for Provisional Status in relation to the minimum program qualifications of having an agricultural education program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail the school's plan to address the minimum program qualification deficiency during Provisional Status.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The school district will fulfill the above requirements for Provisional FFA Chapter Status.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This policy is endorsed by the Nebraska FFA Association Board of Directors, June 2012.

Received on _____
____ Approved      ____ Denied
_____ State Director of Agricultural Education



**Application for Discontinued FFA Chapter Status**

Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Year(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Received on _____
___ Approved      ___ Denied
_____ State Director of Agricultural Education

Briefly describe the circumstances of the school's need for Discontinued Status.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the curricular offerings in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources that the school intends to continue.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Identify who will serve as the FFA Coordinator during the Discontinued Status period:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Local Position Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*The school district understands the terms of Discontinued Status and will fulfill all FFA chapter management requirements during this period.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This policy is endorsed by the Nebraska FFA Association Board of Directors, June 2012.