

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.