

FFA mission, vision, beliefs and values

THE FFA MISSION

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.

THE FFA VISION

The National FFA Organization envisions a future in which:

- All agricultural education students will discover their passion in life, and build on that insight to chart the course for their educational, career and personal future.

The National FFA Organization collaborates with teachers, state leaders and others to deliver an integrated program of agricultural education that:

- increases understanding of, and respect for, agriculture
- encourages students to explore opportunities
- supports their discovery of natural talents and interests
- offers meaningful activities in which they can apply their skills and talents

Therefore, the National FFA Organization will:

- Make local agricultural education teacher success its primary focus, through model programs and activities that generate local program success.

- Reaffirm its commitment to the integrated agricultural education delivery model as a synergistic way of delivering academic, technical, professional and youth development content. Within this model, further improve for local students the role of experiential learning, the depth of personal engagement and the breadth of participation opportunities.

- Promote the widespread use of community based planning and support to develop environments that make the integrated agricultural education model successful.

- Develop stronger programs and support for state leaders of agricultural education.

- Offer programs and activities that are attractive to all students of all ages (middle school through college), diverse backgrounds and broad career interests in the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources industry.

FFA BELIEFS

We believe that ...

- Students need an environment and experiences that promote their personal growth...

- The discovery of personal talents, skills and interests leads to personal growth.

- Academic, technical, career and life skills and values can be learned.

- All students need to be accepted, experience success and be confident in themselves.

- Teachers educate and provide personal growth opportunities for individual students.

- Classroom, experiential and group activities are complementary learning methods.

Within a supportive community, all students can...

- Recognize the benefits of their various communities and actively serve them.

- Appreciate and embrace individual differences and varied experiences.

- Accept the responsibility for making wise choices about the course of their lives.

- Discover that career work can be inherently valuable and rewarding.

- Strive to achieve worthy, challenging goals.

- Build strong leadership skills.

- Develop positive attitudes and the courage to seek and find meaning in life.

- Integrate their educational, career and personal worlds into a meaningful whole.

This foundation will lead to a lifetime of personal growth and service ...

- Agricultural careers provide opportunities for individuals and benefits to society.

- Lifelong connections within the greater agricultural community create value for all.

- Active participation in civic life promotes citizenship and patriotism.

FFA VALUES

• Self awareness • Learning • Career Success • Integrity • Personal Growth • Service • Achievement • Agriculture • Self-confidence • Diversity • Leadership • Community • Teaching • Responsibility • Optimism • Citizenship

FFA Creed

I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds - achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm, or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny.

I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agriculturists to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the product of our toil.

I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining; in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so - for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me.

I believe that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task.

FFA Fun Facts

- Today (2008), there are 507,763 FFA members, aged 12-21 in 7,439 chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

- 41% of FFA members are female; women hold more than 50% of state leadership positions.

- 77% of our membership is Caucasian; 17% is Hispanic and 4% is African-American.

- 89% of FFA members are in grades 9-12; 6% are in grades 7-8; 5% are high school graduates.

- 27% of FFA members live in rural, farm areas; the remainder live in rural non-farm (39%), urban and suburban areas (34%).

- FFA chapters are in 11 of the 20 largest cities, including New York, Chicago and Philadelphia.

- The top five membership states are California, Texas, Georgia, Oklahoma and Ohio.

- The 75th National FFA Convention was host to 51,338 members, advisors and supporters.

Education

- More than 11,000 teachers deliver an innovative, cutting-edge and integrated curriculum to students.

- 92% offer agriscience; 71% offer advanced agriscience and biotechnology; 59% offer agricultural mechanics; 49% offer horticulture; 43% offer animal science; and, 24% offer environment-related In 2001, 59% of qualified agricultural education graduates pursued teaching as a career; over 35 agriculture programs closed due to lack of a qualified teacher and 365 agriculture teachers teach in more than one school; 23% of teachers have five or fewer years of teaching experience.

- The shortage of qualified agriculture teachers is the greatest challenge facing FFA and agricultural education.

Career Exploration

- Members participate in a hands-on work experience allowing them to apply knowledge learned in class.

- Collectively, FFA members earn \$4 billion annually through their hands-on work experience.

- Members participate and learn advanced career skills in 45 national proficiency areas based on their hands-on work experience ranging from food science and technology to agricultural communications to wildlife management to production agriculture.

- According to the student magazine readership study, 87% of our students are interested in learning about career exploration, 81% about college preparation and 81% about technology.

- Through 23 national career development events, such as public speaking, environment and natural resources and meats evaluation and technology, FFA members extend and test their industry knowledge in a variety of career fields.

Industry Support

- Agriculture is the nation's largest employer, with more than 22 million people working in some phase. FFA prepares members for more than 300 careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.

- National FFA Foundation has raised more than \$132 million for the National FFA Organization since 1944.

- 1,900 sponsors provided more than \$8.7 million for FFA and agriculture programs and activities in 2003.

- FFA scholarships have awarded more than \$22 million.

- 1,500 students of agricultural education benefited from FFA Scholarships in 2004.

- The FFA National Agricultural Career Show covers 260,000 square feet and attracts more than 300 exhibitors.

More Statistics

General Agricultural Statistics Average Annual Employment Opportunities for College Graduates in the Food and Agricultural Sciences, United States, 1995-2000:

- Marketing, Merchandising and Sales Representatives 14,353

- Scientists, Engineers and Related Specialists 13,922

- Managers and Financial Specialists 5,613
- Communication and Education Specialists 5,295
- Social Service Professionals 4,862
- Agricultural Production Specialists 3,873

Today's Farm

- Agriculture is the nation's largest employer with more than 22 million people working in some phase - from growing food and fiber to selling it at the supermarket.

- There are 2.19 million farms in the United States. The average size of U.S. farms in 1999 was 432 acres.

- There are 165,102 farms operated by women in the United States.

- Individuals, family partnerships or family corporations own 99% of U.S. farms with fewer than 10 stockholders. Non-family corporations own only 0.4% of America's farms and ranches.

Consumers

- Americans spend 10.9% of their income on food, the lowest percentage in the world. India spends 51.3%, Mexico spends 24.5%, South Africa spends 27.5%, Japan spends 17.6%, Italy spends 17.2% and the UK spends 11.2%.

- It takes about 40 days for most Americans to earn enough money to pay for their food supply for the entire year. It takes that same American 124 days to earn enough money to pay federal, state and local taxes for the year.

- The annual per capita consumption of Americans is: 204.5 pounds of milk, 196.8 pounds of flour and cereal products, 186.5 pounds of fresh vegetables, 131.8 pounds of fresh fruits, 115.6 pounds of red meat, 65 pounds of poultry, 65.3 pounds of fats and oils, 28 pounds of cheese, 18.9 pounds of rice and 244 eggs.

International

- The United States provides food at a lower cost, as a percentage of income, than any other country in the world. We produce sufficient surplus to be the nation's leading exporter.

- The United States produces 46% of the world's soybeans, 41% of the world's corn, 20.5% of the world's cotton and 13% of the world's wheat.

- The United States exports \$49.1 billion in agricultural products annually and imports \$37.5 billion. Asia (not including Japan, China or East Asia) imports the most (\$10.5 billion) and Russia imports the least (\$46 billion).

Economy

- The American farmer regains 20¢ of every dollar in agricultural products sold, 39¢ goes to labor, 6¢ goes to taxes and interest, 8.5¢ goes to packaging and the remainder goes to fuel, electricity, transportation, advertising, etc.

- Farm receipts total \$208.2 billion dollars each year; most is meat animals (\$46.917,000), least is tobacco (\$2,308,000).

Technology and Environment

- A growing number of farmers and ranchers are using computers and modern technology; 90.7% use a computer, 87.4% own a cellular telephone, 51.3% communicate by fax, 72.2% have access to the Internet and 24.5% make online purchases using e-commerce.

- As of May 2000, farmers enrolled 31.4 million acres of their land in the Conservation Reserve Program to protect the environment and provide habitat for wildlife. Farmers and ranchers provide food and habitat for 75% of the nation's wildlife.

- Erosion rate by water on U.S. croplands has been reduced by 24% in the last 18 years.

- Only 2 labor hours and one acre of land is required to produce 100 bushels of corn, with farmer using a tractor, 5-bottom plow, 25-foot plow, 25-foot tandem disk, planter, 25-foot herbicide applicator, 15-foot self-propelled combine and trucks.

All information gathered from the American Farm Bureau Federation, "Farm Facts" booklet, updated 2000.





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