



By Kendall Gonzalez

GROWING GREENHANDS

An activity book for helping first-year FFA members earn their
Greenhand FFA degree.

Vision

This document was created to assist in the process of first-year high school FFA members completing and documenting of requirements set by the National FFA Organization to earn their Greenhand FFA degree.

Upon completion of this book, students will have fulfilled all requirements and submitted the documentation required to their advisor for final approval. This book is not to take place of in class instruction.





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Table Of Contents

Your Agricultural Education

The three-ring model and your agricultural education.

05

Found it

The Official FFA Manual and The FFA Student Handbook.

07

Plan for Success

Plan your SAE.

09

I believe

The FFA Creed and you.

12

Learn, Do, Earn, Live.

How will you live the FFA motto?

13

Service Member Interview

The FFA salute

14

With the End in Mind

How will you grow in your time in the FFA?

16



The Emblem

The FFA emblem and its impact.

17

Colors and Emotions

The FFA colors and how they influence you.

19

I Pledge to..

How will you uphold the FFA code of ethics?

20

Your Official Dress

Your first set of official dress!

22

Past and Present Agriculturists

Key events in the FFA history.

23

My Chapter's Constitution

How will you become an FFA officer?

25

What do we do?

Your part of the POA.

26

Done!

Complete your application and earn your degree!

29



Your Agricultural Education

Description: To be a part of the National FFA Organization, you must be enrolled in an agricultural education class. If you are receiving this booklet, congratulations! You have completed the first step to earning your Greenhand FFA degree!

In this activity, you will replicate the 3-circle model and describe why participation in all 3 circles is needed to gain a well-rounded agricultural education. You will then refer to your course syllabus and provide a description of what you will learn in the agricultural class you are enrolled in and pick one unit you are most excited to learn about.

Instructions: The agricultural education model

1. Draw and label the 3-circle model.
2. Explain why each circle is needed to gain a complete agricultural education.

The 3-circle model:

1st circle: _____ -

- •
- •
- •
- •

2nd circle: _____ -

3rd circle: _____ -

Your Agricultural Education



Instructions: Your agricultural education class

1. Obtain a copy of your course syllabus from your advisor.
2. Using the course description and outline, describe what you will learn this year in your agriculture class.
3. Select one unit you are most excited to learn, and explain why you want learn that unit.

Name of your Agriculture Class: _____

What are you going to learn in this class?

What unit are you most excited about and why?



Found it!

Description: Learning how to utilize your resources is a skill that students will need throughout their time in high school and their adult life. Throughout this activity book, students will need access to both the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.

In this activity, students will identify where these resources are in their advisor's classroom and where they can find them on the National FFA website.

Instructions: Floor Plan

1. Draw a floor plan of your FFA advisor's classroom.
2. On the floor plan, mark where the Official FFA Manual and/or where the FFA Student Handbook can be found.

1. Draw it

Found it!

Instructions: Website Guide

- 1.Utilizing a device with access to the internet, go to FFA.org.
- 2.Create a step-by-step guide for yourself and other members to use to find both the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.

1.The Official FFA Manual

2.The FFA Student Handbook

Plan for Success

Description: As you continue to grow in the FFA organization, your supervised agricultural education (SAE) program will create more opportunities for awards and recognition at the state and national level.

In this activity, we will look at the different types of SAE programs and complete your very first foundational SAE. You will explore different career areas, that will help you decide on future SAE programs that will help you build the experience you will need to meet your future career goals. What you create here, you will be able to enter directly in your online record book on the AET.

Instructions: The SAE Types

1. Using a device with access to the internet, go to <https://saeforall.org/>
2. Click "I am new here- Tell me about SAE."
3. Define the six different types of SAE programs.

1. Foundational SAE:

2. Placement/Internship SAE:

3. Ownership/Entrepreneurship SAE:

4. Experimental, Analysis, or Invention SAE:

5. School-Based Enterprise SAE:

6. Service Learning SAE:



Plan for Success

Instructions: Your foundational SAE

Your foundational SAE will double as career exploration. In this document, you will create your plan, decide on goals for yourself, identify how much time you will spend on this project, and set learning goals.

1. Create a description for your SAE. This is the summary of your career exploration project.
2. Estimate how much of your time you will invest into this project.
3. Brainstorm what activities you will participate in during this project to meet the project learning outcomes.

1. Plan

My interest and motivation for this project are:

My project is planned to start _____ and end on _____.

My project goals are:

1.

2.

• •
• •
• •
• •

3.

My project will be evaluated/supervised by _____, which is an industry professional.

Plan for Success

2. Time Investment

I will plan to invest _____ hours per week.

My project time will vary from month-to-month, but common activities are:

1.

2.

3.

My project time relates to my career plan, which is to:

3. Project Learning Outcomes

In your own words, describe what activities you think will occur in your project that relate to your planned area of learning.

Objective 1. Summarize your Career Interest Results:

- •
- •
- •
- •

Objective 2. Build or Maintain a Resume:

Objective 3. Review Salaries of Career Investment Areas:

I Believe

Description: The FFA Creed was written by Erwin Milton Tiffany in the year 1928 as a statement of ideals for our organization. Proving to be words of inspiration, the Creed was adopted by our organization in 1930. Since its adoption, there have been a few changes, but the power of the FFA Creed still remains today.

For this activity, you will select a paragraph of the Creed that find the most inspiration in, write it in your own words, and reflect on what your future in agriculture might look like.

Instructions: The FFA Creed

1. Select one paragraph in the Creed and write it in the space provided.
2. Describe why you selected the paragraph you did. What inspired you? Were you able to personally relate to it?
3. In your own words, rewrite the same paragraph.

1. Paragraph _____

2. What inspired me...



3. Paragraph _____ in my own words:

Learn, Do, Earn, Live.

Description: The FFA Motto is a short 12-word statement that provides inspiration for students to live by.

Learning to Do,
Doing to Learn,
Earning to Live,
Living to Serve.

For this activity, describe how you will participate in each line of the motto.

Instructions: The FFA Motto

1. For each line of the motto, describe what you will do to live the FFA motto. Each line will have prompts to give you ideas.

1. Learning to Do.

What are you going to learn in your classes (not just your agriculture classes) in your future?

2. Doing to Learn.

What activities, LDEs, CDEs etc. are you participating in to help you learn? What are they helping you learn?

3. Earning to Live.

What careers are you working toward? Is your SAE helping you earn money currently? What experience are you gaining?

4. Living to Serve.

How will you give back to your community? Will you become a volunteer coach? Will you work to improve something in your area?



Service Member Interview

Description: From a young age, many of us are able to recall being taught the Pledge of Allegiance and how to recite it to start our school days. As FFA members, we utilize the pledge to end out meetings. The FFA is rich in tradition and strives to teach its members about citizenship in our organization and our country.

For this activity, you will reach out and interview a military service member or veteran from your community to learn about their time and experience in the service, and what they learned about the Pledge of Allegiance during their service.

Instructions: Interview

1. Find a military service member in your local community. If you need help, reach out to your advisor to help connect you with someone.
2. Carefully read through the interview questions before conducting your interview, and add or change any as you see fit.

1. What is your name and rank?

2. What branch did you serve?

3. Are you currently active duty? If not, when did you retire?

• •
• •
• •

4. The FFA is built on many traditions, tell me about some from your time in the service?

• •

Service Member Interview

5. In the FFA, we use the Pledge of Allegiance as our organizations salute. Can you tell me what the pledge means to you as a service member?

6. What does citizenship mean to you?

7. What is something that you think FFA members should know about the service?

• •
• •
• •
• •

With the End in Mind

Description: There are a variety of events, competitions, and conferences that are offered through out the National FFA Organization. These activities are used to help in achieving the FFAs mission, which is to “make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.”

In this activity, you will consider the activities you will participate in this year, and how they will help you grow in your leadership, yourself as a person, and how those activities will help you reach your future career goals.

Instructions: The Mission

1. Using a device with internet access, go to <http://www.nmffa.org/activities.html>
2. Read through the different activities and events available to you as a New Mexico FFA member.
3. Select two activities for each section of the FFA mission and describe how they will help you grow as a member.

1. Develop your Premier Leadership

2.Your Personal Growth

- •
- •
- •
- •

3. Achieve your Career Success

The Emblem

Description: The FFA emblem is easily one of the most recognizable emblems in the agricultural industry. Adopted in 1928 during the first national convention, the emblem has remained unchanged for nearly 100 years.

In this activity, you will name all the parts of the emblem and what they represent. You will then read a article from the New FFA Horizons, and theorize what the FFA emblem could have looked like.

Instructions: Parts of the FFA Emblem

1. List and explain all six parts of the FFA emblem.





1. Read the article "Whats In an Emblem" From the *FFA New Horizons* magazine found at the end of this book.
2. Using the article, draft an alternate example of what the FFA emblem could have looked like if other symbols had been used for the emblem.
3. Compare your emblem and the FFA emblem. Explain why you think the emblem has not changed since its creation.

Using the emblem, compare it to the FFA emblem. What did you change, and why?

- •
- •
- •
- •

Colors and Emotions

Description: Have you ever wondered why brands use certain colors for their marketing? Why you might be drawn to use one brand over another? The use of colors in marketing of brands is a carefully considered process used to to impact how we interact with companies in our everyday lives.

Today, you will identify the colors of the National FFA Organization, and how they influence those in and out of our organization.

Instructions: The Colors

1. List the two National FFA colors and what they represent.
2. Describe the emotions that you feel when you see the National FFA colors.
3. Describe what emotions those outside of the organization would feel.

1. The FFA Colors



2. What Emotions Arise?

1. Using the color emotion guide, identify two emotions for each National FFA color that you feel when you think of the organization. Explain why.

• •
• •
• •
• •

2. Using the color emotion guide, identify emotions that the National FFA organization would want those outside of the organization to feel when looking at the colors.

I Pledge to...

Description: Being a part of the National FFA Organization makes you a part of a professional agricultural youth organization. The FFA Code of Ethics helps remind members of how they should conduct themselves, as they are a reflection of the organization, their chapter, and their school.

In this activity, you will explore how you will participate in upholding the FFA Code of Ethics.

Instructions: The Colors

1. List all eleven code of ethics.
2. For each of the codes of ethics, describe what you will do to uphold that standard.

1. The Ethics

Example:

Ethic 1: Develop my potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.

I will participate in CDEs, LDEs, and maintain a SAE during my time in FFA.



I Pledge to...

1. The FFA Code of Ethics continued...

Continue writing the ethics and how you will uphold each ethic.



Your Official Dress

Description: Getting your first set of official dress is a moment to remember! The blue corduroy has been worn with pride since 1933 by millions of FFA members. The FFA jacket is easily one of the most easily recognizable symbols of the organization.

In this activity, you will create your very first set of official dress, personalizing it with your name, state, and chapter name. You will also consider important rules that help maintain the integrity of the blue corduroy.

Instructions: Your Official Dress

1. In the Official FFA Manual, pick what you consider to be the three most important rules while wearing the FFA jacket and write them here.
2. Follow the instructions for the official dress foldable.
3. Follow the instructions at the bottom of this page to create a pocket to place your official dress foldable.

Rules for Wearing the FFA Jacket:

1.
2.
3.

Your Official Dress

Follow the instructions at the bottom of this page to create a pocket to place your official dress foldable.

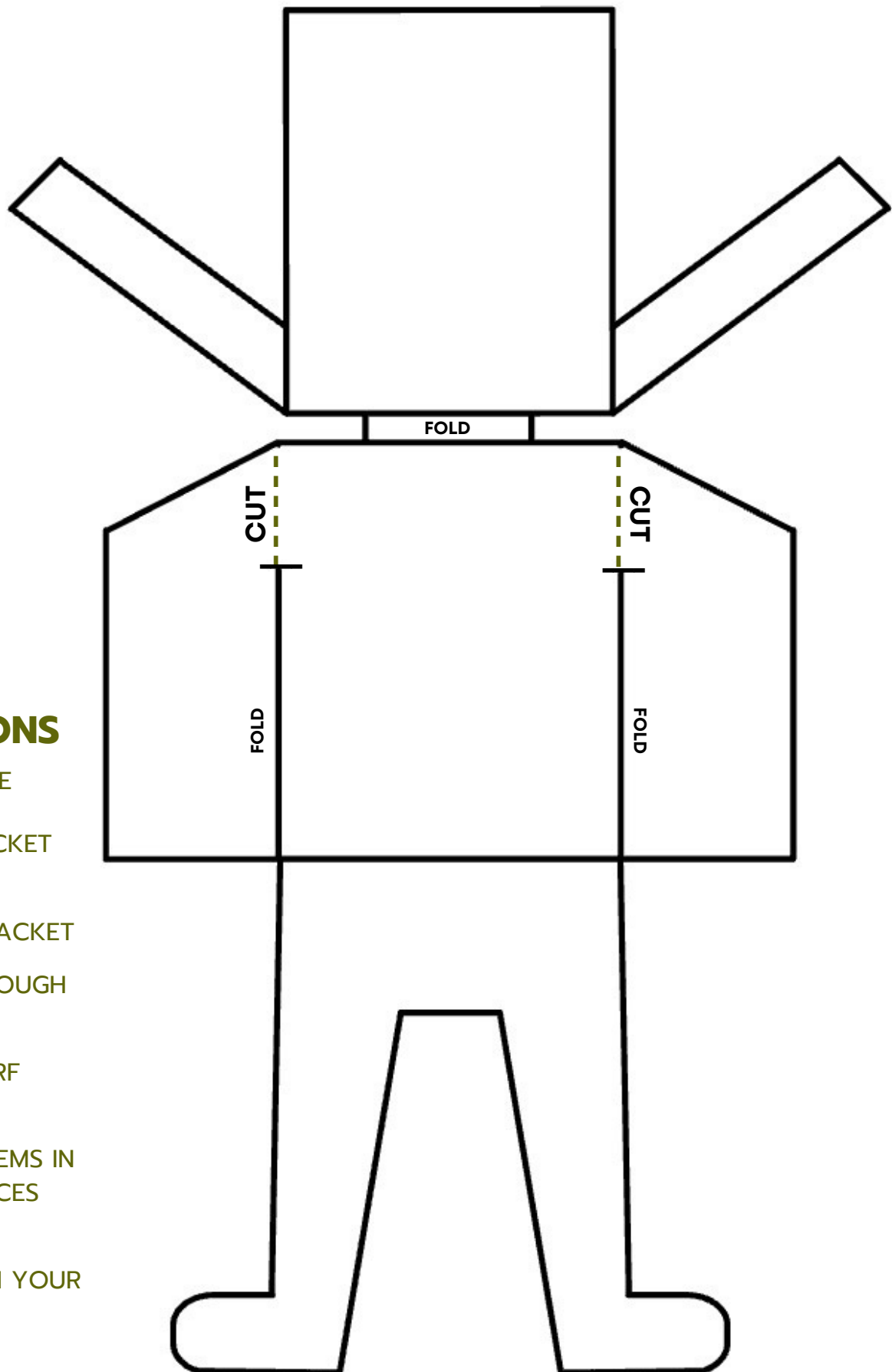
Cut

Glue

Fold

Glue

Offical Dress Foldable



INSTRUCTIONS

1. CUT OUT TEMPLATE
2. CUT SLITS INTO JACKET FOR THE SLEEVES
3. FOLD SHIRT INTO JACKET
4. FEED SLEEVES THROUGH JACKET
5. DRAW TIE OR SCARF ONTO SHIRT
6. DRAW BOTH EMBLEMS IN THE CORRECT PLACES ON THE JACKET
7. PERSONALIZE WITH YOUR NAME, STATE, AND CHAPTER NAME
8. COLOR BOTH SIDES OF FOLDABLE

Page left intentionally blank for FFA official Dress foldable

Past and Present Agriculturists

Description: Since the establishment of the Future Farmers of America in 1928, our organization has grown and changed, just like the agricultural industry continues to grow and adapt to meet the needs of the public. It is important for members to know how our organization started and how changes have been made to continue to allow growth in our organization.

In this activity, you will read about two key events that changed our organizations membership and how it shaped the organization you know today.

Instructions: Recapturing a Lost Culture

1. Read the article titled "Recapturing a Lost Culture" from the *FFA New Horizons* magazine found at the end of this book.
2. Discuss your reaction to the article.
3. Summarize the article in a storytelling format.

1. New Farmers of America and Future Farmers of America

1. What surprised you about this article?

2. How do the events of this article affect your membership today?



3. How do the events of this article effect the membership of those around you?

4. Summarize this article using the format below so that you may share this story with others.

The other day I was reading this article and I learned....

My Chapter's Constitution & By laws

Description: A chapter's constitution and by laws are a written set of procedures, principles and objectives that help the organization run smoothly and consistently. It is important for members to understand the chapter's constitution so they understand how the organization runs and can enact change as needed.

In this activity, with the help of your advisor, you will find your chapter's constitution and review the process for becoming a chapter officer to help you prepare for growth in leadership.

Instructions: The Rules

- 1. With the help of your advisor, print your chapter's constitution and bylaws.
- 2. On the next page, staple those documents to serve as a reference.
- 3. List the procedures for becoming a chapter officer.

1. Running for Office

List the procedures for becoming a chapter officer.

- •
- •
- •
- •

If you could run to be an officer, which position would you run for? Why?

What do we do?

Description: The program of activities, or POA, serves as a road map for FFA chapters for the year. The POA emphasizes growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture through 15 carefully thought out and planned activities. It is important that all members are aware of their chapter's POA so that they may become active members of their chapter.

In this activity, you will review activities that your chapter has planned for the year and explore how they fit into their chapters POA.

Instructions:

1. Read the provided quality standard provided from each division and the example activities.
2. Identify activities that your chapter participates in that align with the quality standards.
3. Brainstorm how you help with the planning and conducting of one of the activities that your chapter does.

1. Quality Standards

Growing Leaders: Leadership

Description	Example Activities	Our Activities
Activities that help the individual develop technical, human relations, and decision-making skills to grow leaders.	Leadership conferences, public speaking events, new member mentor programs, leadership camps, chapter officer leadership trainings, state and national conferences.	

I can help plan and participate in the activity _____ by:

What do we do?

Building Communities: Human Resources

Description	Example Activites	Our Activities
Activities conducted to improve the welfare and well-being of members and citizens of the community.	PALS (Partners in Active Learning Support), special populations involvement, cultural awareness and diversity programs, set up a community garden, and food/toy drives.	

I can help plan and participate in the activity _____ by:

Strengthening Agriculture: Agricultural Literacy

Description	Example activites	Our Activities
Activities that help consumers become better informed about the production, distribution, and daily impact of food, fiber, and fuel.	Food for America, Agriculture in the Classroom, educating consumers about hunger, agriculturally related educational events, and food link activities.	

I can help plan and participate in the activity _____ by:

Done!

Description: Congratulations! You have made it to the last task that you will need to complete to earn your Greenhand FFA degree. For this final task, you will complete a written application, submit it to your advisor by either a date they determine or at least one month before your end-of-the-year banquet. You will also make a journal entry in your chapter's online record book recording your success!

Instructions: Last step

1. Consult your advisor to determine when your written application is due.
2. Fill out your written application.
3. Submit your application and this book to your advisor on time.
4. Log onto your AET record book and create a journal entry to record your completion!

My Application is due by: _____

AET Journal Entry

In your journal entry, discuss activities completed in this book, how you completed them, and when you completed this process. Take a picture of your completed application and attach it to the journal entry.





Done!

Greenhand FFA Degree Application

As you complete each of the following requirements for the Greenhand FFA Degree, place a check in the box and write the date on the line to the right.

NAME: _____ Date Submitted: _____

CHAPTER: _____ Due Date: _____

Requirement for Degree

Date Completed

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am enrolled in an agricultural education program. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have submitted my SAE program plan to my advisor or I will print a copy of the application and attach my SAE Program Plan prior to submission. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have learned and explained the meaning of the FFA Creed, motto, salute and FFA Mission statement. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have described and explained the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have demonstrated a knowledge of the FFA Code Of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have demonstrated a knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws and the chapter program of activities. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I personally own or have access to an Official FFA Manual and the FFA's Student Handbook. | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I will submit a written application or electronic application for the Greenhand FFA Degree. | _____ |

Having met these requirements, I hereby submit this application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

Member's Signature: _____

Date: _____

FOR CHAPTER USE

I/We have reviewed this application and certify that the candidate has met the requirements and will be awarded the Greenhand FFA Degree.

Chapter President or Chapter Membership Committee Chairperson

Date: _____

Chapter Advisor

Date: _____

What's In an Emblem?

 ffa.org/ffa-new-horizons/ffa-emblem-history/

Bev Flatt

January 9, 2023



The FFA emblem is one of the most iconic images in the agricultural industry and dates back nearly 100 years. However, the creation of this emblem is shrouded in both history and mystery. While the current emblem features five icons representing the history, goals and ambition of the National FFA Organization, other symbols were considered throughout the years and could have changed everything from the patches on FFA jackets to the words spoken during opening ceremonies.

One alternative icon considered was the horn of plenty. According to the ancient Greeks, baby Zeus was cared for and fed by Amalthea when he broke off one of her horns. This horn began to emit a constant supply of food for him. For these reasons, the horn of plenty became the symbol of prosperity, wealth and abundance.

Strong academic programs are a cornerstone to successful FFA chapters. This academic angle was meant to be represented by the lamp of knowledge. The lamp of knowledge is derived from the ancient Egyptian lamp, the same symbol used for the genie lamp in Disney's Aladdin. With an eternal flame of knowledge, the lamp often symbolizes academic excellence.

What's In an Emblem?

Long before the steel plow became popular, many farmers used a spade in their fields. The original FFA emblem was inspired by a young farmers' organization in Denmark called *Landøkonomisk Rejsebureau*, which showcased an owl sitting on top of a spade. While there is very little collective symbolism with a spade, it is often associated with hard work.

Once it was decided to move forward with a plow instead of a spade, another major point of contention was whether the plow should be sitting on top of the ground or be in the ground. A plow as an object (sitting on top of the ground) represents the reaping of life. But the significance of plowing (in the ground) represented receiving truth.

One part of the emblem that is often overlooked is the eagle at the top. In early FFA history, the eagle was left off in preference for a simple circular image. Once the trademark of the emblem was secured, the eagle became a permanent feature. However, the debate continued regarding the number of arrows in the eagle's grasp. An original proposal recommended 13 arrows to represent the original colonies. However, this design led to an infringement issue with the National Seal. There was further confusion depending on who manufactured items with the FFA emblem. If you look through your FFA memorabilia, you can see some emblems with three arrows and others with five arrows.

Like any living organization, the symbolism and iconography used to represent the National FFA Organization is ever-changing. While it has been decades since the emblem was last modified, there may come a day when additional changes are made to continue to represent the vastness and great diversity represented by the world's largest agricultural youth organization.

Recapturing a Lost Culture

 ffa.org/the-feed/recapturing-a-lost-culture/

Bev Flatt

January 7, 2022



“I keep records of receipts and disbursements just as Washington kept his accounts — carefully and accurately. I encourage thrift among the members and strive to build up our financial standings through savings and investments. Booker T. Washington was better able to serve his countrymen and posterity, because he was financially independent.”

While the majority of FFA members can recite the first two sentences of this quote from memory, the third is less familiar. These words have not been spoken in an official agricultural education meeting since the New Farmers of America (NFA) and the Future Farmers of America (now National FFA Organization) became one organization more than 50 years ago.



Four members of the North Carolina Association

While labeled a merger in 1965, the NFA of New Farmers of America (NFA) attend state was basically absorbed by FFA. At the time, convention (c. 1950). both organizations were independently successful in honing leadership skills and providing professional development opportunities

Recapturing a Lost Culture

for young men in agriculture. Since combining, however, the number of Black Americans who benefit from activities in FFA and agricultural education has decreased drastically. Many of the traditions, history and culture of Black agricultural education have been erased or forgotten.

With recent research by Antoine Alston, Ph.D., professor and associate dean at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and Dexter Wakefield, Ph.D., professor and associate dean of academic programs at Alcorn State University, more is known about the experiences of former NFA members.

“If you think about the age of a former NFA member or even NFA teachers today, they would be more than 75 to 80 years old,” says Alston. “Our time to learn from these early, Black agricultural leaders is running out. If we don’t capture their experiences and their memories now, it may soon be lost to history.”

Understand the History



Entertainment was provided during most chapter, state and national NFA meetings.

The roots of NFA can be traced back more than 140 years to Booker T. Washington, an influential educator, author and civil rights leader.

In 1880, Washington, the son of former slaves and an advocate for black progress through education and entrepreneurship, established an agricultural class for Black boys in his one-room school in Tuskegee, Ala. Beginning in 1896, the segregation of races in educational establishments was instituted under the “separate but equal” doctrine created by Plessy v. Ferguson, a U.S. Supreme Court case in which the Court decided that racial segregation

Recapturing a Lost Culture

laws were constitutional as long as the facilities for each race were equal in quality. It would remain in practice by the United States for the next 70 years, and ultimately led to the creation of similar but separate organizations like NFA and FFA.

Later, passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 — barely 50 years removed from the end of slavery — provided funding to states for vocational and agricultural education. Dr. H.O. Sargent was soon appointed as the first federal agent of vocational agricultural education for special groups, which included Black, Hispanic and Native American citizens. He was widely accepted by Black agricultural educators, and under his leadership, Black agricultural education expanded and many Black teacher-trainers were awarded fellowships for graduate studies.

Understand the Journey

In 1927, Sargent teamed up with G.W. Owens, a teacher- trainer at Virginia State College, to draft the first constitution and bylaws for New Farmers of Virginia, an organization for Black agriculture students. That same year, 400 New Farmers of Virginia members from 18 chapters held a state rally to create more interest in the vocation of farming, encourage cooperative effort among agricultural students and develop rural leadership.



An NFA member and member of the Logan Boar Association from Concord, N.C., shows his boar as a part of his swine project in 1941.

From 1927 to 1935, plans for the national NFA organization took shape and it was officially formed Aug. 4, 1935, at Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Ala. From then on, an emblem comprising a plow, owl, rising sun, open boll of cotton, American eagle and the words “NFA” and “Vocational Agriculture” graced the black-and-gold jackets of NFA members across the country. Active members earned degrees as the Farm Hand, Improved Farmer, Modern

Recapturing a Lost Culture

Farmer and Superior Farmer, and they would compete in events such as dairy farming, farm electrification and public speaking. A quartet contest was held to develop a greater appreciation for music, including traditional Black spirituals.

NFA operated autonomously from its inception in 1935 until 1941. During this time, NFA grew to consist of 1,004 chapters in 12 states and more than 50,000 members. In 1941, the U.S. Department of Education — which didn't employ a single Black person to represent NFA — brought NFA under its own authority, removing authority from the NFA leaders of that time. NFA leaders recognized the need to secure leadership positions in education departments to support their interests at the local, state and national levels. Over the next two decades, NFA leaders made repeated attempts to gain representation.

Meanwhile, momentum for “separate but equal” legislation began to slow. In addition to other court cases, in 1954, the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* struck down the doctrine of “separate but equal” and ordered an end to school segregation. Individual states enacted desegregation legislation and, as a result, five of the 17 state NFA associations in existence at the time merged with their state FFA associations.



NFA National Board of Trustees in 1956

Understand the Losses

While desegregation was a milestone, the way in which it was carried out ended up hurting the Black community. As schools began to merge, the resulting agriculture programs couldn't support two agriculture teachers; more often than not, Black teachers lost their jobs to white teachers. In other cases, Black teachers were demoted from being a vocational agriculture

Recapturing a Lost Culture

teacher to a lower category, leading to smaller salaries and reduced opportunities. Leadership positions were largely given to white individuals, leaving Black students and teachers unrepresented.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. While the implications of this act would desegregate all schools and school-based activities, it also led, through a merger with FFA, to the end of NFA and the culture built around it. The merger was ultimately one-sided, as NFA gave up its name, charter, constitution, bylaws, awards, emblem, jacket, Creed, flag, banner, colors, financial assets and adult leadership. Meanwhile, FFA gave up nothing — not even a single seat on its board of directors.

“The events around the NFA/FFA merger were a federal mandate from the U.S. government,” says Wakefield. “There was a feeling that this merger was inevitable and not such a bad idea, but there was an expectation that Black students would be provided equal opportunities in all positions and activities. It did not happen.”

These long-lasting impacts are still felt today. In 1965, more than 52,000 young men were members of NFA. Today, just 36,000 FFA members identify as Black, which accounts for only 5% of membership.



An NFA member gathers eggs as part of his poultry supervised farming practice.

But Alston says not all of NFA disappeared.

“While there was significant loss, there are a lot of NFA activities that still exist as a part of FFA today,” says Alston. “The challenge has been around access. It’s all about resources when it comes to being an effective organization. Decades ago, resources were a barrier

Recapturing a Lost Culture

when agricultural education membership [costs] went from 5¢ in the NFA to 50¢ in FFA. Back then, it was typically not feasible for students who did not have financial resources to receive an award in the FFA.”

In his research, Alston heard from one NFA advisor who said, “We lost a lot; lost some great opportunities. [We] should have kept the vision of NFA, and we would be better off. We lost our camp; lost employment. We lost so much, [which] still impacts [us] today.”

The Black community began experiencing a decline in representation in agriculture, as some Black teachers and leaders were pushed from their positions. Black students, in turn, lacked role models in the field; those students who wanted to pursue agricultural careers were encouraged to choose other pathways.

“Today, even students who have [financial] resources [to pursue careers in agriculture] are being told to choose another career pathway,” says Alston.

Wakefield adds, “Underrepresented students are traditionally unaware of the potential of success in the agriculture field of study” because they’re encouraged to pursue other careers, instead.

Understand What Is Possible

“We must address the tough topics of our past to help our organization create an accessible and inclusive future,” says James Woodard, National FFA Advisor and chair of the National FFA Board of Directors. “FFA is made up of more than 700,000 members, each with their own unique history, heritage, interests and vision for the future. We honor and respect the differences among us that make us stronger.”



NFA members show beef cattle at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (c. 1950).

Recapturing a Lost Culture

Learning what happened in 1965 may inspire members to take action and ensure the NFA culture is not lost. What could this look like? Movements start at the grassroots level with members and chapters. Perhaps members can initiate a scavenger hunt through the NFA archives. Or chapters can invite community members who were students during segregation to share their experiences or become an honorary chapter member. Maybe members will find inspiration in the former NFA talent programs and host a quartet competition. Chapters may look to supplement copies of the Official FFA Manual with additional historical material on NFA to ensure the past is not forgotten. Start small now, then think bigger.

Regardless of the actions members are inspired to take or the emotions processed, recognition of the NFA perspective is a step to reevaluate a decades-old absorption and turn it into a true merger — making FFA an organization for all.

Understand Our Potential

For one FFA member in Tennessee, a gap in a history lesson led to a drastic shift in the way NFA history is taught at his school.

During a class lesson, Malachi Johnson raised his hand to challenge his class on why there wasn't more information regarding the history of the New Farmers of America (NFA). The question went unanswered, and members of the Scotts Hill FFA Chapter have made it their mission to research NFA and build a more robust history lesson. Throughout the process of finding the hidden history of this organization, the chapter made a rare discovery — the jacket of a former NFA member, which now hangs proudly in their classroom.

Today, Scotts Hill FFA has a Human Resources Committee; members of the committee are conducting interviews with original members of NFA chapters.

These interviews will be compiled into a documentary, allowing the voice of former NFA members to be heard by all. Follow along with these FFA members as they journey through NFA history on their [chapter Facebook page](#).

This year, Okmulgee FFA is celebrating its 70th anniversary. The chapter was founded as an NFA chapter at Dunbar High School in Okmulgee, Okla. in 1951. In honor of the anniversary, chapter officer LeAundre Delonia sat down with former NFA members Leman Lewis and Charles Williams to talk about their years in NFA . Watch the video [here](#).

PRESERVING THE PAST

The National FFA Organization is helping to fund the NFA Archives project in 2022 to ensure these important perspectives are not lost.

Antoine Alston, Ph.D, and Dexter Wakefield, Ph.D, are also creating an NFA pictorial to document the history of NFA through photos.

The Fight for Female Membership

 ffa.org/ffa-history/the-fight-for-female-membership/

Bev Flatt

February 15, 2019

It's been 50 years since the 1969 National FFA Convention when women gained full membership. Let's celebrate the decades of courage, diligence and relentlessness that paved the way.

In 1942, D. Gilson was a successful member of the Port Royal FFA Chapter in Pennsylvania by every definition. Gilson was an engaged agricultural education student, led successful projects on the family farm, and received the chapter's coveted Carpentry Award as a senior.

When the United States entered World War II, Gilson temporarily left college and worked as a welder, using the skills

developed growing up on a farm and in school. After the war, Gilson completed

college and went on to become a teacher and farmer. Unfortunately, you won't find the successes and stories of Dorothy Gilson-Baker (D. Gilson), or thousands of other women like her, among any national archives. It wasn't until 1969 that women were officially allowed membership into the National FFA Organization. However, in the 50 years since the formal acceptance of female membership, women have become an integral part of the organization. Women have achieved significant milestones, and they continue to shape the future of agricultural education and the industry of agriculture.

The push for female membership wasn't an effort led during a single business session of a single National FFA Convention. Rather, it was a feat that required incredible energy and efforts that began more than 30 years earlier. In the morning session of convention on Oct. 23, 1935, a Massachusetts delegate, Alfred Vaughan, was the first official member to broach the subject that women be allowed full membership at the national level. However, the question of female membership during this convention was resolved as follows:

"That when officially found that any State Association in a Future Farmers of America has girl members on its rolls, such State Associations shall be denied participation in all national Future Farmer of America contests and national F.F.A. awards. And no funds from the national treasury shall be available to such State Associations for the purpose of transporting



Evadale, Texas, member Chrystal McDaniel poses
agricultural mechanics classes in high with the 3 millionth FFA jacket.

The Fight for Female Membership

delegates to the national conventions until such time as the names of the girl members are removed from the official rolls of the State Association and local chapters in accordance with the constitution."

— *Eighth National Convention Proceedings Report*

For the next 30 years, state and local chapters integrated female membership at varying levels. Some females enrolled in agricultural education classes but were not allowed to become FFA members. Some women were added to rosters using initials that didn't reveal their gender, like Dorothy Gilson-Baker. And other females were identified as "social ambassadors" for the chapter and received the coveted Sweetheart jacket.

If at First You Don't Succeed ...

The issue received little attention until the 1964 National FFA Convention. During the 37th convention, Paul Miller from Connecticut proposed an amendment to open national membership to women. Despite Miller moving to accept the amendment and a second by Irving Torres of Puerto Rico, the motion was defeated once again. Despite the amendment's initial defeat, the delegates succeeded in bringing the topic back into the spotlight.

In January of 1966, an Ad Hoc FFA Organization Study Committee was formed demonstration in 1980. to review various impacts

of membership. The following August, the National FFA Board of Directors proposed constitutional changes based on this committee's work, including the recommendation to remove the word male from the constitution. During the morning and afternoon business sessions on Oct. 13, 1966, delegates took part in intense debate and discussion on multiple sections of the ad hoc report. By the end of the convention, the delegates accepted all recommendations of the committee except for two, one of which was to drop the word male from the constitution.



Sharon Staley of the White River FFA Chapter in Washington, models the first official girl's FFA jacket.



Women members participate in a horticulture

The Fight for Female Membership

Changing Times, But No Changes

During this time, the Vietnam War continued to rage overseas, Apollo 4 launched into space and Twiggy made her fashion debut. The climate and culture toward women's rights throughout America continued to shift, as well, and in 1967, the Affirmative Action Policy was expanded to cover discrimination based on gender.

As political and legal environments adapted and changed, the National FFA Organization sought legal counsel for the obligation to accept females as members on the national level. Despite receiving the 1979-80 national officers included Elin Duckworth of Arizona (back row, left).

Excluding females from membership was discriminatory, amendments could not be made to the constitution that year. Instead, the delegates of the 40th National FFA Convention were informed of the legal ruling concerning female members, instructed to take the information back to the local level, explore the situation and return to Kansas City in one year with the views of the members in order to provide appropriate discussion.

At that time, approximately 3,300 females were enrolled in vocational agricultural classes nationwide and an increasing number of states accepted women as members. By many accounts, acceptance of female members was inevitable during the following convention.

On Oct. 17, 1968, Donald Shinn from New Jersey declared on the business floor, "Any student who is regularly enrolled in vocational agriculture is entitled to become an active member of any chartered FFA chapter." The motion was quickly seconded by Richard Posthumus from Michigan, yet only a smattering of applause followed. The motion was defeated.

Yet, the spirit of the motion was not to be ignored. Howard Schrinar from Wyoming immediately stood before the delegate body and moved that each state appoint a committee to explore membership for women. Massachusetts once again made its stance known with a second from Donald Bridges. But again, the motion was defeated.



The 1977-78 national officers included Peg Armstrong of Iowa (back row, left).

The Fight for Female Membership

Breaking Ground in 1969

Finally, one year later, on Oct. 15, 1969, Paul Bankhead of California moved and Robert Craig of Michigan seconded once more to strike the word male from the constitution. The motion carried.

On the morning of Oct. 17, Johnny Holland from Tennessee stood before the delegation and read the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, we, the delegates, to the Forty-Second annual convention have voted to allow all students of vocational agriculture to become members of the FFA;

"WHEREAS, we therefore have expressed our belief that all individuals are created equal and should have equal opportunities;

"WHEREAS, we also feel that only those who have competed on an equal basis and earned national recognition should be highly honored at our national convention; be it therefore

"RESOLVED, that we, the delegates, gathered here today, feel that the introduction of the first active female members to participate in the national FFA activities and the atmosphere and publicity thus associated with these events, be recognized as over-dramatized presentations and should not be taken as precedence set for following female participation, that instead FFA members, girls boys, should be treated and honored equally."
and

John Comegys from Delaware seconded the adoption of the resolution. The motion carried by a two-vote margin.

More than 12,000 days had passed since the initial idea was brought before the organization to the final acceptance of female FFA members.

The Aftermath

Since 1969, women have served as convention delegates, national officers and even been named as the American Star Farmer. Nearly half of all FFA members are women, and females hold approximately 50 percent of state leadership positions. In fact, if you peek into the archives once more, you might find a familiar name. Dorothy Gilson-Baker's legacy continues through her granddaughter Libby Baker-Mikesell, the 2016-17 Pennsylvania state president.



Prior to full membership, women were selected as "Chapter Sweethearts." Here are Texas FFA sweetheart Martha Banks and Texas FFA president David Risinger in 1954.

The Fight for Female Membership

The Female FFA Pioneers

It was 1969 that marked the first official year for female membership into the National FFA Organization. However, the following 50 years truly revealed just how much of an impact women could have in the organization. While names like Alfred Vaughan, Paul Miller and Donald Shinn are remembered for their contribution toward achieving female membership, there are countless other names today that inspire women who wear the blue jacket. Some of those names include:

Anita Decker and Patricia Krowicki



Just one year after female membership was secured, Anita Decker from New York and Patricia Krowicki from New Jersey served as the first female delegates at the 43rd National FFA Convention.

Julie Smiley



The Fight for Female Membership

In 1976, Julie Smiley from Washington became the first woman to serve at the national level as the western region vice president. Since then, more than 80 women have been elected to the National FFA Officer Team.

Karlene Lindow



Karlene Lindow shattered another glass ceiling for women in FFA in 2002 when she was named the American Star Farmer. She raised hogs in Chili, Wis., and her jacket now hangs in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

Jan Eberly



In 1982, Jan Eberly (seated lower left) from California was elected to serve as the first female national FFA president.