

UPDATE

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U.S. Department of Education

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 1: Washington Leadership Conference registration begins
March 14-17: PAS Conference, Idaho Falls, Idaho
March 21: National Agriculture Day
March 18-24: National Agriculture Week
March 31: T-shirt Design Contest Entries due
June 15: American Degree applications due
July 15: Agri-Entrepreneurship applications due
July 15: Proficiency applications due
July 20-26: National Board of Directors and National FFA Foundations Trustees meeting, Washington D.C.

LATEST NEWS FROM FFA

National Agriculture Week is March 18-24, 2007

American agriculture is responsible for providing the necessities of everyday life...food, fiber and fuel. To honor the hardworking people of the nation's agriculture industry, The Agriculture Council of America coordinates National Agriculture Day, sponsored by Archer Daniels Midland Company and John Deere.

The National FFA Organization is proud to support events in Washington, D.C. This year the organization will conduct a rally on Thursday, March 15, on the patio of the USDA Whitten Building to generate excitement about National Agriculture Day and increase awareness of agricultural issues. Attendees will include key members of Congress; industry leaders; FFA members from neighboring states including Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; and various trade associations. Members of 4-H, Agriculture Future of America (AFA) and Skills USA will also participate.

The focus of the rally is "The Future of Renewable Energy and Agriculture in America" and will kick off with welcome remarks at 3 p.m. from Beau Williamson, national FFA president, and comments from the Honorable Mike Johanns, United States Secretary of Agriculture. Other leaders from the United States Department of Energy and the Renewable Fuels Association have been invited to address this topic as well.

The National Agriculture Day Luncheon will be held March 15 at the National Press Club with veteran farm broadcaster Orion Samuelson as Master of Ceremonies. More than 250 industry leaders, congressional dignitaries and media are anticipated to attend the event. For more information, visit [the News, Media and Awards](#) page at ffa.org.

New and Improved Version of LifeKnowledge® Now Available

LifeKnowledge (LK) just got better! LK Online has many new features including online access for teachers and students and automatic program updates. Additionally, a precept indicator will measure students' levels of

achievement and provide immediate feedback to assess strengths and potential growth areas. An online coaching guide includes more than 275 activities to help integrate LK into existing classroom, FFA and SAE activities. All of the original features of LK will remain, including 257 lesson plans, integration and planning tools, and learning modules.

To subscribe to LK Online, call FFA at 888-332-2668, fax 800-366-6556 or visit www.ffaunlimited.org. The program will also be available in the 2007–2008 Core catalog. When ordering LK Online, reference item number LK-07.

National FFA Board of Directors Meeting Held

The National FFA Board of Trustees, along with the National FFA Foundation Board, held their meeting in Indianapolis during the first full week of February. For information on what motions were passed, please see the attached meeting summary. The next board meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., in July.

Nominations Open for National FFA Officer Nominating Committee

Nominations for individuals to serve on the National FFA Officer Nominating Committee are now being accepted. Any member of Team Ag Ed may submit names of qualified individuals. Submissions must be completed on a common nomination form available through MyFFA. You must be a registered MyFFA user (register on www.ffa.org). Please include the contact information for the nominee and a short statement supporting the nomination. Nominations will be accepted through Aug. 4.

Name a Conference Room!

You and your chapter can be a part of the new FFA Merchandising Center! The new merchandising facility will open this summer and house the FFA Merchandise Operations Division, which includes the merchandising, licensing and customer and distribution services departments. There will be two conference rooms in the new 36,000-square foot facility, and we want your help to name them. Brainstorm with your chapter on what you think the names should be. Send us your suggested name, along with a 500-word essay on why this name would be a good fit for the conference rooms and how it relates to agriculture.

All essays should be postmarked by Friday, April 27. Send your entries to Kristy Meyer, 6060 FFA Drive, PO Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960 or e-mail kmeyer@ffa.org. The new names will be announced on the May broadcast of *FFA Today!* So start thinking, brainstorming and writing. You could put your touch on the new Merchandise Center!

Watch it!

Don't miss the March 19 episode of *FFA Today!*, which airs at 7 p.m. Eastern (6 p.m. Central) on RFD-TV. This episode features:

- National Agriculture Week
- A visit with FFA chapters in San Antonio, Texas
- An Agriscience feature
- National FFA Week highlights
- Updates on FFA programs and events

SCHOLARSHIPS

Opportunity Awaits!

National Honor Roll (NHR) was developed to give recognition to high school and middle school students who have attained outstanding academic success and to provide customized service as they apply to college. NHR is a sponsor of the FFA Collegiate Scholarship program. In addition, NHR has other scholarship opportunities available to FFA members. Contact Laura Passarella, 516-593-0555, ext. 144, or via e-mail, lpassarella@nationalhonorroll.org, for details.

MERCHANDISING

Official Jacket Try-on Sets: Now Available

Not sure what size jacket you need? Ease your mind for only \$25 (the outbound shipping cost) and order a full set of jackets for your students to try on and find the perfect fit. It's simple! Go to www.ffaunlimited.org and order the SAM-SET for \$1000 plus shipping. Keep the jackets for two weeks, then pack them up with the provided ARS return shipping labels and call UPS for pick-up. Upon return, your account will be credited the initial \$1000 leaving only the \$25 shipping cost to be paid by you.

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED

The 6th Annual T-shirt Design Contest Entries Are Due March 31

Encourage your local FFA chapters to get creative and submit a design in the 6th Annual FFA T-shirt Design Contest. Entries are due March 31. Winning designs will be featured on t-shirts sold in the 2007-2008 National FFA Blue catalog and on ffaunlimited.org. The winning chapters will earn 50 percent of the gross profits on the shirt's catalog sales for one year. Through fall 2006, the six winning chapters from the 2005-2006 contest had earned more than \$14,000. This year's winners are on a record-setting pace! See the 2006-2007 winners in this year's National FFA Blue catalog on pages 23-24. Click here for [Details and Applications](#). For more information, contact Dawn Sharp, merchandise buyer, dsharp@ffa.org.

2007 State Convention Merchandise Sales Program

This is a great opportunity to make extra money for your organization and play a key role in your state's convention by providing FFA merchandise to attendees. In the days ahead, you will receive a contact data sheet, our suggested merchandise assortment and a how-to manual that includes recommendations on how to have a successful convention. The assortment includes the best of the best from the 2006-2007 Blue and Gold catalogs. Merchandise selected will be billed and invoiced at a flat 25 percent discount. Return of unsold merchandise is not encouraged and will be subject to a 25 percent restocking fee per item. Early placement of orders is critical. Please allow a minimum of 10 business days to process your order. If you are interested in this sales program or have any questions, please contact Dawn Sharp, merchandise buyer, 317-802-4271 or dsharp@ffa.org.

Shipping Cap for State Association Orders

State association orders for convention plaques, awards, medals and trophies will have freight charges "capped" at \$200 this year for orders exceeding \$1,500 in cumulative total. This freight cap provides a means for states to submit portions of a total convention order as needs are determined, as winners are selected, as recipients are identified or as state chapter awards are decided as opposed to

holding all awards for a large, single order closer to the convention date. By placing partial orders earlier, this allows for more engraving and production time, award processing and validation of ordered item receipt.

To qualify, all award orders must be shipped to the same address within three months prior to the state convention date. The only items eligible to qualify for this special offer are plaques, awards, medals and trophies.

On each state order, please note the following: "Part 1 of state convention order" or "Part 2...", etc. Rush award orders placed two weeks or less prior the convention date will be charged standard or expedited shipping and are not covered under the freight cap promotion. Contact Sheridan Gilchrist, sgilchrist@ffa.org, for details.

Don't Miss WLC!

It's time to start planning for the Washington Leadership Conference. The 2007 conference dates are June 5-10, June 12-17, June 19-24, June 26-July 1, July 10-15, July 17-22 and July 24-29. Registration prices are: Student \$575, Advisor Double \$610, Advisor Single \$805, Advisor Guest \$1,000 and Room Only \$500. Advisors will not be asked to choose between an option A or option B package. Visit the [Washington Leadership Conference](#) program page for updates. Registration began March 1. Please contact Cindy Hefner, 317-802-4256 or chefner@ffa.org, for registration questions.

Looking for a Few Good Judges

The National FFA Organization is accepting nominations for judges for the Agricultural Proficiency Awards, Stars, Agriscience Awards and National Chapter Awards at the 2007 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis. The Agricultural Proficiency and Star Awards judging will take place Thursday, Oct. 25. All judges will be invited to an awards luncheon that day. The Agriscience Awards will be judged Wednesday, Oct. 24 and Thursday, Oct. 25. National Chapter Awards will be judged Wednesday, Oct. 24. We are not able to cover any expenses for the judges. Submit nominations on the attached form and mail to Rosalie Hunsinger, National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960. You can also fax your nominations to 317-802-5255.

Get Your American Degree Handbooks

The American Degree Handbook is available on the American Degree home page. The book has been divided into sections, which will allow you to view the section you need rather than downloading the entire handbook. For details, visit the [American Degree](#) program page.

Application Update

The checklist for both the Proficiency Entrepreneurship and Placement applications has been corrected to read:

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2. Applicant has included his/her e-mail address, **Cover** page, **Line 5**.
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Previously this line asked for the Social Security number, which is no longer required.

State CDE Plaques Available

Don't forget to order plaques for your state's CDEs. Orders must be submitted at least 30 days prior to your presentation using the state plaque order form found on the **State Guide**. For information, contact Aimee Wright, 317-802-4288 or awright@ffa.org.

National FFA Alumni Washington Leadership Conference Scholarships

Each year the National FFA Alumni Association raises funds at the silent and live benefit auctions held during the national FFA convention to help students attend the Washington Leadership Conference. States and local Alumni affiliates receive scholarship monies based on their FFA Alumni membership.

Information packets and required documentation were mailed to designated state leaders in January. To learn about the specific rules that may apply, leaders are encouraged to visit www.ffa.org/alumni.cfm for further details. Because individual state associations determine how the scholarships are awarded, local leaders are asked to contact their state representatives to understand how students can apply for a National FFA Alumni WLC scholarship. Questions concerning National FFA Alumni WLC scholarships should be directed to alumni@ffa.org.

National FFA Alumni State Leaders Conference

Mark your calendars so that you can attend the 2007 National FFA Alumni State Leaders Conference July 10-15 in Portland, Ore.! All FFA Alumni members are invited to attend. Additional information will be available at www.ffa.org/alumni.cfm in the months to come or contact alumni@ffa.org for further details.

Supervised Agricultural Education Internship Available

The National FFA Organization is seeking applications from qualified individuals interested in an eight-week summer internship at the National FFA Center in Indianapolis. The internship will start on or shortly after June 4, 2007, and will end Aug. 4. Applications are due by April 1. For more information, see **Job Opportunities**.

2007 All-USA Teacher Team

Nominations are open for the 2007 All-USA Teacher Team, *USA TODAY's* recognition program for outstanding K-12 teachers. Up to 20 individuals and instructional teams will be featured in the newspaper as representatives of all outstanding teachers. Winners not only have their photographs published and their accomplishments noted in the newspaper but also receive trophies and share \$2,500 cash awards with their schools. (Each teacher receives \$500. An individual winner receives \$500 with \$2,000 to the school; each member on a team of four receives \$500, with \$500 to the school.) Teachers can be nominated by anyone willing to put in writing why they are outstanding; nominees must complete the form explaining how they achieve their success. Nominations are due April 30, 2007. For forms and more information, go to <http://allstars.usatoday.com>.

Paid Internships!

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is looking for a few outstanding senior and graduate-level college and university students to work in their overseas offices to promote U.S. agricultural interests through the International Agricultural Internship

Program (IAIP) for summer 2007. Each semester (fall, spring and summer), the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), one of the four U.S. government foreign service agencies, places about 10 students in their overseas offices. These students have excellent analysis, marketing, writing, language and organizational skills and experience in international agricultural trade policy issues, commodity and market analysis and organizing trade events. The paid internships last 10-16 weeks. Eligible students must be U.S. citizens majoring in a business or science related agricultural field, such as agricultural economics, economics, finance, business or marketing, international studies or relations, law or in a biotechnology program. The fall 2007 application deadline is April 3, 2007 and the spring 2008 application deadline is Aug. 18, 2007. For more information about FAS internship programs, please click on <http://www.fas.usda.gov/admin/newjobs/newjobs.html> or e-mail internships@fas.usda.gov.

USDA is also looking for about 20 outstanding college and university students to work in their Washington, D.C., offices to promote U.S. agricultural interests through the Summer Internship Program (SIP) for summer 2007. The USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, one of many agencies participating in USDA's SIP, hires and pays students for a variety of positions for about 10 weeks each summer. They are looking for candidates to fill the following positions: agriculture assistants, marketing specialist assistants, international trade assistants, management analyst assistants, information technology assistants and public affairs assistant. The applications will likely be due in mid-February. Please check the site below for updates on the application process. For details on the SIP, e-mail dawn.ferguson@usda.gov.

REFERENCE LINKS

- [LifeKnowledge®](#)
- [Washington Leadership Conference](#)
- [Chapter T-Shirt Contest](#)
- [New Century Farmer Program](#)
- [American Degree Program](#)
- [Agricultural Proficiency Awards](#)
- [National PAS Organization](#)

UPDATE is available online [Click Here](#)

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 Agricultural Education Mission Agricultural Education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities. Educational materials are developed by FFA in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

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Visit www.ffa.org for more information

