

FFA and Agricultural Education in North Carolina - Quick Facts



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 motto is: Learning to Do; Doing to Learn; Earning to Live; Living to Serve



FFA members, who may enter the workforce directly from high school or pursue higher degrees through technical schools and four-year universities, are preparing for careers in agricultural marketing, processing, communications, education, horticulture, production, natural resources, forestry, agribusiness and other diverse agricultural fields.

Federally Chartered

FFA was organized nationally in 1928 in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1950, Congress granted FFA a federal charter, making it an integral, intracurricular part of part of public agricultural instruction under the National Vocational Education Acts. The North Carolina Association was chartered in 1929.

Structure

FFA operates on local, state and national levels. Student members belong to chapters organized at the local level. Agricultural educators serve as chapter advisors. Chapters are organized under the North Carolina FFA Association, headed by the state advisor and the state FFA coordinator. The state association conducts programs, leadership conferences, career development events, provides recognition to students, conducts the state convention, and provides resources and support to agricultural teachers and FFA advisors. FFA is supported by several partner groups including the NC FFA Alumni, the NC FFA Foundation, NC Agriculture Teachers' Association, as well as businesses and industries.

NC FFA Membership

- Today there are 16,633 FFA members, aged 12-21 in 230 chapters across North Carolina. Members can be found in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands
- Females represent 39% of membership in North Carolina; however, females hold more than half of state, regional, and chapter leadership positions
- 86% of FFA members are Caucasian, 7% are African-American and 6% are Asian, Native American or Hispanic.
- 91% of FFA members are in grades 9-12, 6% are in middle school, and 2% are high school graduates.
- 27% of FFA members live in rural farm areas, 40% live in rural nonfarm areas, 14% live in small towns, and 17% live in urban/suburban areas.
- FFA chapters are in some of the largest cities in NC including urban schools in Charlotte, Fayetteville, Raleigh and Greensboro.

Membership

FFA membership has grown to 16,633 in 230 chapters across our state. FFA is a diverse organization, operating in rural, urban, and suburban schools. Students aged 12-21 enrolled in agricultural education programs are eligible for membership. Nationally, there are 523,309 members in 7,487 chapters.



Science, Business and Technology

The organization changed its name in 1988 from Future Farmers of America to the National FFA Organization to reflect its evolution in response to expanded agricultural opportunities encompassing science, business and technology in addition to production agriculture.



Education

- Four hundred teachers deliver innovative and integrated curriculum to students in 286 programs
- In 2009-2010, there were more than 44,000 students taking agriculture classes in North Carolina.
- 92% of agricultural education programs offer agri-science, 71% offer biotechnology, 59% offer agricultural mechanics, 49% offer horticulture, 43% offer animal science and 24% offer environmental-science courses
- The shortage of qualified agricultural teachers is the greatest challenge facing FFA and agricultural education.

Career Preparation

The agricultural education program provides a well-rounded, practical approach to learning through three components: classroom education in topics such as plant and animal sciences, forestry, biotechnology, agrimarketing, etc.; hands-on supervised agricultural experience such as starting a business or working with a company; and FFA, which provides leadership opportunities and tests students' agricultural skills.



Programs and Activities

Local, state and national FFA programs and activities help members develop public speaking skills, conduct and participate in meetings, manage financial matters, strengthen problem-solving abilities and assume civic responsibilities. Degrees earned at all levels recognize members' increasing accomplishments.



Student Leadership

FFA is a student-led organization, meaning members elect their own officers and plan and conduct activities with supervision from their chapter advisors. A team of six state officers are elected each year, and play a key role in planning the state convention and other events. They travel nearly 15,000 miles during their year of service advocating for agricultural education and representing the FFA association.

Headquarters

Since 1996, the North Carolina FFA Association has been headquartered at North Carolina State University within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education.



NC FFA Center

Since 1928, the FFA Center at White Lake has provided students with outstanding leadership and recreational experiences. Summer programs include leadership and personal development conferences. During the center's 82-year history, more than 130,000 students have had the experience of a lifetime. The NC FFA Center is one of the oldest FFA camps in the nation.



FFA Foundation

The North Carolina FFA Foundation works with business and industry, organizations, and individuals to recognize FFA achievements and to support activities at the state, regional and local level. The foundation raises nearly \$1.5 million annually to support FFA activities and operates under the auspices of the North Carolina Agricultural Foundation, Inc., a non-profit, charitable and educational foundation.

FFA Alumni

Alumni members support state and local activities through numerous activities including a chapter grant program and the silent auction at state convention. Alumni membership is open to anyone who supports FFA. In North Carolina, more than 1,100 members in 45 affiliates support state and local programs.



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- Members participate in and learn advanced career skills in 47 national proficiency areas based on their hands-on work experiences in horticulture, mechanics, animal science, agriscience, and crop production areas. More than 300 students in North Carolina submitted proficiency applications last year.
- More than 2,800 FFA members participate in 42 career development events to be challenged by real-life hands-on tests of skills that prepare them for career success.
- Students are actively involved in leadership development as they attend regional and state workshops and conferences. Annually, more than 1,800 attend workshops presented by state and regional officers.



Industry Support

- Agriculture is the state's largest employer with more than 22% of the workforce involved in some area of the industry. Agricultural Education prepares students for more than 300 careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.
- In 2009, more than 475 sponsors provided more than \$1.5 million for FFA activities and scholarships.

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