



[NEW JERSEY FFA



New Jersey FFA Association
New Jersey Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 330
Trenton, NJ 08611
Phone: 877-AgEd-FFA
www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov

New Jersey State Officer Candidate Handbook

2024

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INTRODUCTION

Every year, the New Jersey FFA Association elects student members to serve as State FFA Officers. These officers are selected on several measures of success that enable them to serve in a variety of roles. State Officers represent the New Jersey FFA Association to business and industry representatives, government officials, school administrators, teachers, students, and parents. They provide workshops to members teaching about the FFA, leadership, team work, and personal growth. They provide speeches in various settings and inspire audiences to reach for new growth. The state officers are teammates who work together and with state staff to accomplish the goals of the New Jersey FFA Association. State Officers are above all dedicated to serving the New Jersey FFA Association and its 3,159 members.

Being a state FFA officer requires both dedication and motivation. This guide serves as a resource for state officer candidates detailing what they can expect from the state officer selection process and their year of service. Also contained are key facts about the FFA, Agriculture, and American Education vital to the selection process and serving as a state officer.

THE JOB OF A STATE OFFICER

A State FFA Officer will have a multitude of responsibilities throughout the year. State Officers travel many miles and meet many people. The year is challenging, but above all, rewarding. Knowing that you have made a positive difference in the lives of FFA members and the New Jersey FFA Association is gratifying. The personal growth gained as a State Officer will be of benefit for many years to come and many of the relationships built will continue into the future. Knowing the job, role, responsibilities, and functions of a state officer can help prepare for the selection process.

Role of State FFA Officers

Upon being elected, a State FFA Officer takes on numerous roles, including:

1. Being a member of the state executive board which fulfills the specified functions of governance of the State Association.
2. Executing the State FFA Program of Activities and shall assist chapters in the execution of their Program of Activities.
3. Disseminating specific Agricultural Education and FFA information.
4. Motivating, inspiring and encouraging FFA members to participate in Agricultural Education and FFA programs to assist the member in their advancement of agricultural knowledge and development of potential leadership abilities.
5. Maintaining positive relations with members, the agribusiness sector, the public and others interested in agricultural education.

6. Projecting a positive image as a leader among American youth representing those qualities FFA members and society in general accepts as a life style role model.

Responsibilities of State FFA Officers

1. Travel to state meetings in Trenton each month.
2. Travel to FFA chapters around the state 2-3 times per month (certain times of the year).
3. Attend planning meetings in Trenton for LEAD, National Convention, State Convention, etc.
4. Assist at Career Development Events, including Fall, Spring, and Summer.
5. Participate in state activities listed on the Calendar of Events.
6. Represent New Jersey FFA Association at events of other state agricultural organizations as needed.
7. Attend SOLT, Base Camp for State Officers, State Officers Summit, and Checkpoint for State Officers #1 & #2, and Capstone, among other training obligations.
8. Chair and hold state level committee meetings.
9. Visit the state as needed throughout the year to prepare and practice speeches, greetings, workshops, etc.
10. Design and refine materials for workshops, speeches, and chapter visits on your own time.

Duties of State FFA Officers

The duties of all New Jersey FFA Association Officers are as follows:

1. Their primary duty shall be to promote and encourage participation by members and chapters in FFA activities.
2. Each State officer must be able to budget and devote time requested for carrying out the duties and responsibilities. Any State Officer who does not carry out their assigned duties and responsibilities can be requested to resign by the governing body.
3. Any state officer missing more than two FFA activities and/or executive committee member missing more than four FFA activities without an excused absence will be requested to resign. Excuses will be made directly to the State President or State FFA Advisor. They will be approved or rejected by the governing body at the meeting not attended.
4. Any officer who has not fulfilled their duties and obligations, or has violated the statutes within the state and national FFA constitutions and by-laws, and policies, or has violated any local, state, or national public law, will be subject to removal from office by the state executive board. When a violation occurs at an official FFA function, the State Advisor or a supervisory representative of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture may request an officer's resignation.
5. Follow the State Officer Commitment Form/Code of Ethics outlined in the State Officer Application.
6. Prepare and submit a monthly mileage report of official FFA business.
7. Maintain a level of correspondence with FFA members, business and industry leaders, and others. Examples of correspondence include thank you notes to business and industry leaders, replies to FFA member e-mails, notes of encouragement to FFA members, etc.
8. Perform other duties as instructed by New Jersey State Staff.

Duties of Each Office

The “job” of a state officer requires teamwork and dedication. While all state officers share in the work of the State FFA Association, each office does have certain obligations, as listed in Article III, Section E-K of the New Jersey FFA Association By-Laws and summarized below.

The Duties of the State FFA President

1. The state president will preside over the state FFA convention and monthly state association meetings.
2. The state president shall appoint all committees and may serve as an ex-official member of these committees.
3. The state president shall submit a written annual report to the House of Delegates at the State FFA convention.
4. The state president shall complete the agenda for all state meetings by the 15th of every month and submit to the State FFA Office.

The Duties of the FFA Vice-President

1. The state vice-president shall assume the duties of the president if they are absent at a meeting.
2. The state vice-president shall be responsible for the operation of all committees.

The Duties of the State FFA Secretary

1. Keep an accurate record of all meetings.
2. Compile state convention proceedings and submit by September 1.
3. Keep listings of all committees and assignments.
4. Keep attendance at all meetings.
5. The state secretary shall complete the state minutes by the 15th of each month and submit to the State FFA Office.

The Duties of the FFA Treasurer

1. Make report of the financial situation at all state meetings.
2. Serve as a liaison between State FFA Staff and the State FFA Executive Board concerning the state FFA budgets.
3. Help prepare the audit of all financial materials and records.

The Duties of the FFA Reporter

1. Prepare news releases for state FFA events.
2. Prepare newsletters and other forms of communication to chapters, officers, and advisors.
3. Encourage chapters to have an active public relations program.
4. Serve as photographer and recorder for state FFA activities.

The Duties of the FFA Sentinel

1. Have official paraphernalia present and properly positioned at all meetings.
2. Arrange all meeting rooms for the best comfort and efficiency of the meeting.

The Duties of the FFA Parliamentarian

1. Provide parliamentary advice at all meetings, conferences, and the State FFA Convention.
2. Give parliamentary procedure demonstrations at Leadership Training Conferences and state meetings.
3. Assist Secretary and Reporter in correspondence and communications.

State Officer Year at a Glance

The following activities are what a state FFA officer will participate in throughout their year of service. Being a state FFA officer does require other activities not listed here, including additional training and work sessions as necessary. Thus, dedication and commitment are required as a State FFA Officer. State Officers schedule chapter visits based on best times between their schedule and that of the chapter they are visiting. Activities that a state officer may be asked to participate in or may choose to participate in include the Summer Career Development Events (*July*), Eastern Regional FFA Career Development Events (*September*), National FFA Convention (*October*), NJ Agriculture Convention (*February*), FFA Week events (*February*), Dairy Judging CDE (*April*), Agriscience Fair (*April*), and CDEs at Eastern PA FFA Day (*April*). In the chart below are activities that all state officers will participate in.

Monthly State Association Meetings	First Monday of every month
Monthly Work Sessions	Third Monday of every month
State Officer Leadership Training	First weekend in June (after the state meeting)
NJ FFA Alumni & Supporters Golf Tournament	One day in June
Base Camp for State Officers	Three days in June
State Officer Summit	Five days in July
Checkpoint for State Officers #1	Three-Four days in July
Leadership Experience and Development Conference	Thursday night, Friday and Saturday in October
Checkpoint for State Officers #2	One-Two days in November
Fall Career Development Events	Third Thursday in November
State Officer Banquet Speech Workshop	Friday in January
State Officer Candidates School	Saturday in January
Advocacy and Legislative Leadership Day	Thursday in February
State FFA Officer Fuel Up Retreat	Three-Four days in February
National FFA Week	Week in February- State Officers will have various activities to attend
NJ FFA Horticultural Expo and Floral Design Career Development Event	Two days in March
Spring Career Development Events	Thursday in April
State FFA Convention	Five days in May

Qualifications of a State FFA Officer

Degree: Candidates must hold at least the Garden State FFA Degree at the time of election (Candidates can be receiving their state degree at the same convention that they are running for state office).

Membership: State Officers must be an active member during their year of service and must be on their home chapter's roster.

Measures of Success: State Officers are of sound character; influence others through positive actions; understand team dynamics; develop effective tools of communication; demonstrate professionalism; manage time effectively; develop clear messaging related to FFA, Agriculture and Education; serve as an advocate for agriculture and FFA; display strong conversation skills; exhibit strong public speaking skills; and deliver successful workshops.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Travel Reimbursement

Throughout their year of service, state officers will be expected to travel up to several thousand miles for state meetings, chapter visits, and other state association business. To be reimbursed for mileage, state officers need to submit mileage records due at the beginning of each month, detailing the previous month's travel. Officers will be reimbursed on a variable rate, based on total mileage of all the officers. Reimbursement will occur mid-year, in December, and in June, at the end of the year of service.

State Officer Materials

State officers will be given various materials to help make their year of service successful. Since state office requires a large amount of driving, each officer will be given a membership to the Allstate Roadside Assistance if they do not already have one (or something comparable). Also, to help in scheduling, each officer will be given a time management tool to use. Officers will also receive business cards for providing contact information. Each state officer will be given various workshop materials, including a portable flip chart, post-it notes, and various other items. State Officers will also be provided with a USB key for use during the year containing sample workshop planning materials and templates. Other materials that state officers may receive include thank you notes, inspirational books, conference t-shirts, etc. For chapter leadership conferences and activities held by the state association, the state office will make available markers, tape, pencils, scissors, paper, glue-sticks, post-it notes, etc.

Officer Dress

When representing the New Jersey FFA Association, officers are always expected to be neat and reputable as to not discredit the association. Official FFA dress is required at all official FFA events, unless otherwise stated. When not in official dress, but at an official event, state officer dress should include khakis and a New Jersey FFA polo/button-up shirt. At the beginning of the state officer year, each officer will be given a New Jersey State Association FFA jacket, a New Jersey FFA polo, and a New Jersey FFA button-up. Also provided are State FFA degree chains and charms, if needed. Officers should always ensure their dress is clean and ironed to give a neat appearance.

Officer Correspondence

It is important for state officers to maintain relationships with those they meet throughout the year, including members, advisors, business leaders, school administrators, and government officials. Thank-you notes, notes of encouragement, and congratulatory notes are a must for state officers. State officers should send thank you notes to conference presenters and sponsors for SOLT, Base Camp, State Officer Summit, and Checkpoints. After chapter visits, state officers should send thank you notes to chapters and any administrators they meet. Thank you notes should be sent within one to two weeks of an event. State Officers should be generous in sending thank you notes.

Team Communication

Communication among the state officer team and with state staff will promote the success of the state officer team. Each officer should check and respond to their e-mail and voicemail on a regular basis. Officers should strive to be in contact with state staff approximately once a week in order to receive help with work, highlight events they have attended, or address concerns they have. State officers should also strive to maintain open communication with their team prior to each month's state meeting.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selecting state FFA officers is a challenging process. The selection process is based on all eleven measures of success which are evaluated by the state nominating committee. The state nominating committee is comprised of six highly qualified FFA members selected from a pool of applicants – two committee members from each region. The state officer selection process is conducted in a way to ensure each candidate is evaluated fairly.

According to **Article VI, Section A** of the New Jersey State FFA Constitution,

“The elected offices of the New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel, and Parliamentarian.”

Article III, Section B of the New Jersey FFA Association By-laws states,

“All State Officer Candidates will be reviewed, evaluated and recommended for state office by a designated nominating committee, which shall consist of 6 delegates, two delegates from each FFA Region in New Jersey as stated in Article VII, Section A. The nominating committee process shall be coordinated and advised by the state executive committee chair, an alumni officer, or the State Advisor, and an additional state executive committee member when possible. The State Officers shall be elected annually from members holding the Garden State FFA Degree. A member may be an officer not more than two times. Once a member is elected president, they may not hold state office again, but may become chairperson of the executive committee. All state officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the delegates at the annual convention. In the case of an officer vacancy, the state executive board may reorganize its officer structure from existing officers. The state executive board may also fill any vacated position by opening an application process to all members who meet the minimum qualifications to hold a state office. Applications would then be reviewed by the board and positions would be filled by a majority vote.”

Information on the national process:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/v/Library/folder/136375694596>

Scoring of candidates will be based on eleven measures of success as described at the “Effective Officer Competencies” and referenced below.

Officer Measures of Success

There are eleven state officer measures of success that exist as defined by National FFA. Each state officer candidate is scored on these eleven measures. These measures are necessary for a successful state FFA officer. They are adapted from the State Officer Continuum, where they are used to guide the training state officers receive through their year of service.

Is of Sound Character
<i>A person of sound character displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful and has a positive outlook on life.</i>
BUILDERS:
Communicates true self with tact
Displays high integrity; does the right thing
Shows respect and empathy towards others
Assumes responsibility for personal actions
Focuses attention and credit on others before self
Acts appropriately in given situations, using appropriate language and mannerisms

Influences Others Through Positive Actions
<i>A person of influence demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships and growing the organization</i>
BUILDERS:
Identifies opportunities to encourage others to achieve their full potential
Makes decisions with consideration of the larger group (team, organization, etc.)
Delivers feedback in manner that affects positive change
Has positive contact with and encourages all members of the group
Modifies behavior in order to operate as a positive role model
Demonstrates an optimistic attitude

Understands Team Dynamics
<i>A person who understands team dynamics demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values varying personality styles, works to be inclusive in the process and is willing to put others above self.</i>
BUILDERS:
Leverages the strengths and personality style of team members to capitalize on team
Takes responsibility for undesirable team outcomes
Can manage team dynamics with professionalism, producing positive results
Flexes personal communicate style to best communicate with the personality styles of others
Has an awareness of personality styles of self and others
Takes responsibility for own tasks in a group setting while respecting the work of others

Develops Effective Tools of Communication

A person who has effective communication tools demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication clearly while remembering others' diversity of opinion.

BUILDERS:

Makes the presentation meaningful by using real-world examples to which the audience can relate

Plans the right amount of time to spend on key points and activity components

Considers others' point of view and experiences when planning presentations

Chooses words and phrases in examples and stories that are vivid, precise and clearly explained

Has clearly defined relevant objectives and outcomes appropriate for the audience

Constructs a clear and logical structure for presentations

Asks clarifying questions of audience needs prior to presentation development

Demonstrates Professionalism

A person who demonstrates professionalism is appropriate at all times and abides by the code of conduct and ethical living agreement.

BUILDERS:

Challenges others to demonstrate adherence to codes of conduct and ethical living

Demonstrates appropriate behavior for the situation

Uses mature language and mannerisms

Understands that different situations require varying levels of professionalism

Operates in accordance with codes of conduct and ethical living

Manages Time Effectively

A person who manages time effectively has time management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks.

BUILDERS:

Effortlessly adapts to changes in schedules and logistics

Always helps direct the group in completing necessary action planning steps to accomplish task completion

Completes multiple tasks with competing deadlines regardless of the circumstances

Handles both small and large tasks by breaking down large tasks into more management components

Utilizes a time management tool and monitors time effectively

Starts and competes projects independently

Develops Clear Messaging Related to FFA, Ag and Education
<i>A person who has clear messaging can deliver consistent, clear messages related to FFA, agriculture and education.</i>
BUILDERS:
Adjusts messages about FFA and agricultural education based on the audience's point of view or needs
Explains the relationships among FFA, Departments of Education and the industry of agriculture (if applicable), career and technical education, funding sources, and the issues connecting them
Articulates information related to current issues and trends impacting agriculture locally and globally
Explains the mission of FFA, the agricultural education model, opportunities for youth within FFA, and the ability of FFA to develop leadership

Serves as an Advocate for Agriculture and FFA
<i>A person who serves as an advocate for agriculture and FFA is someone who represents, upholds ideals, and advocates the FFA brand and the agricultural industry.</i>
BUILDERS:
Recognizes the appropriate time to take action as an advocate for agriculture and FFA
Demonstrates a strong sense of ownership of the role as an advocate for agriculture and FFA
Seeks to discuss agriculture and FFA and to make connections to initiatives and interests of others
Uses and is able to cite correct and valid sources of information to support statements about agriculture and FFA
Speaks with passion, emotion, interest and insight about agriculture and FFA
Respects others' points of view

Displays Strong Conversation Skills
<i>A person who has strong conversation skills has meaningful conversations and is able to create proper conversation starters while maintaining conversations, being articulate and asking relevant questions.</i>
BUILDERS:
Always employs strategies to learn about others and find common ground
Effortlessly connects and transfers between conversations and discussions
Listens for understanding and asks clarifying questions in conversations
Demonstrates a genuine interest in others
Attracts others with an enjoyable presence and an optimistic attitude
Recalls information from conversations

Exhibits Strong Public Speaking Skills

A person who exhibits strong public speaking skills is someone who can develop and deliver effective speeches, workshops, curriculum, welcomes, and reflections to specific target audiences.

BUILDERS:

Speaks authentically with comfort and ease

Fully captures the audiences' attention in an engaging speech

Uses relevant examples that are effective, logical and original

Speaks with appropriate volume, tone and pace for venue and audience

Communicates ideas clearly, with strong organization

Eye contact and gestures are effective and purposeful

Delivers Successful Workshops

A person who can deliver successful workshops is effective and engaging while delivering workshops to various audiences.

BUILDERS:

Incorporates a wide variety of techniques to accommodate multiple learning styles and adjusts accordingly to meet student needs

Proactively seeks feedback and uses it in a constructive manner

Suggests post-workshop activities that apply key points

Values preparation and makes time to practice prior to the event

Consistently addresses and checks students' understanding throughout workshop

Emphasizes key points through activities and discussion in a workshop setting

Generates audience buy-in by finding common ground and building rapport

OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVIEW ROUNDS

The rounds for the nominating committee process are as follows:

Writing Exercise – 60 minutes

This round will happen online one week prior to the State FFA Convention. All candidates will have 60 minutes to complete a writing exercise which places them in a situation they may encounter as a state officer. Possible writing assignments include (but are not limited to) a blog post, magazine article, written testimony relating to the National FFA Delegate process, etc. The writing exercise will be based off of a list of topics which will be published for all candidates. Candidates are encouraged to understand each topic well. However, the exercise will also require candidates to demonstrate an understanding of how that particular topic relates to all themes (agriculture, FFA, and American education).

Social Media Exercise – 60 minutes

This round will happen online one week prior to the State FFA Convention. All candidates will have 60 minutes to demonstrate how they would utilize social media as a state officer through prompted scenarios. Candidates will be given the social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) and the scenario they are expected to utilize it for and will be asked to create a post based on that that scenario. Candidates can expect 2-5 scenarios that must be completed. This round will be a simulation and not conducted using actual social media platforms to protect candidates' privacy and the integrity of the process.

Media Interview – 3 minutes, Pre-Recorded

Throughout a state officers' year of service, they may engage in newspaper, radio or TV interviews. Prior to the official start of the State Officer Selection Process, state officer candidates will be given a series of media-type questions to record themselves answering. Videos should be one take, no longer than 3 minutes, should not include any filters or graphics, and if being filmed on a smartphone, should be done horizontally (landscape). Videos will be due at 11:59 pm on the day questions are issued. The focus of the Media Round is on the candidate's demonstration of FFA and Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Education knowledge and self-promotion while conducting a media interview. This round will not be scored. The answers candidates provide in this round will be used for evidence during deliberations only.

Personal Round 1 (6:1) – 4 minutes, 3 questions

In this introductory round, candidates will have four minutes to answer three questions posed by the nominating committee. Questions will be in the realm of "tell us about yourself", "why have you decided to run for state FFA office", etc. Additionally, candidates can expect one question posed by the committee to be in direct relation to something from the candidate's application.

One-on-One (1:1) – 5 minutes, 5 questions

Over the course of thirty minutes, candidates will have an opportunity for a one on one conversation with each committee member. The purpose of this round is for the committee to develop rapport with candidates and get to know them, as well as have an opportunity for evaluation of targeted indicators for measures of success through structured questions. Each conversation will last no longer than five minutes, with two minutes given for committee members to score in between.

Facilitation (6:1) – 20 minutes to prepare, 10 minutes to deliver

This round focuses on a candidate's ability to influence through facilitated presentation in front of a virtual audience. Candidates will have twenty (20) minutes to plan, prepare, and organize their presentation. Candidates will be provided with instructions that provide specific content objectives for their presentation. Following their preparation time, candidates will have ten (10) minutes to engage with the virtual audience, with the nominating committee observing. This round is strictly observation only and no questions will be asked.

Representation Round (6:1) – 5 minutes to deliver (pre-recorded), 5-minute conversation

This round focuses on a candidate's ability to advocate for agriculture, FFA, or American education. Prior to the official start of the State Officer Selection Process, candidates will be given a piece of a pre-written speech based on an assigned topic. Candidates will have three days to prepare, practice, and record their delivery of the assigned speech. During the State Officer Selection Process, candidates will have a five (5) minute follow-up conversation with an industry representative. The committee will evaluate the candidates' ability to advocate and articulate facts and key messages regarding the agriculture industry, FFA, and American education.

Personal Round II (6:1) – 10 minutes, undetermined number of questions

This final round of the process gives both the candidates and the committee one final opportunity to ask or answer any questions they feel are pivotal to making their final decision. The structure of this round, including room setup, number of questions asked, and what is asked, is highly autonomous and is largely at the discretion of the nominating committee. Candidates will have ten (10) minutes to answer the committee's questions and articulate anything else they feel the committee should know. **This round will not be scored.** The answers candidates provide in this round will be used for evidence during deliberations only.

Materials found in the National Officer Selection Process Handbook may be used and/or modified for state use.

PREPARING FOR THE SELECTION PROCESS

The best way to prepare for the state officer selection process will vary with each candidate. Some will spend time memorizing flash cards, while others will be well-prepared simply reading from various sources. Regardless of how a candidate prepares, there are certain areas which a candidate should be knowledgeable about. Below are basic knowledge areas that every candidate should be comfortable with, however candidates should not be intimidated by the length of the section.

FFA Basic Knowledge

The role of FFA in Agricultural Education

In 1950, the 81st Congress of the United States, recognizing the importance of the FFA as an integral part of the program of vocational agriculture, granted a Federal Charter to the FFA. In 1998, the 105th Congress of the United States reviewed and passed technical amendments. This shows through the revisions as Public Law 105-225. Public Law 105-225 is a revision of Public Law 81-740 which reflects technical changes.

The FFA organization is one of three components of agricultural education. FFA is a tool to help teachers teach and students learn about agricultural education. It motivates students to excel in the classroom and in their supervised agricultural experience. Thus, the three components of an agricultural education program are *classroom/laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience and FFA*.

The FFA provides students with dynamic ways to learn about agriculture and leadership, as well as opportunities for self-improvement. Just as an agriculture teacher uses a classroom or laboratory to teach hydroponics or agricultural mechanics, he or she also uses the FFA to teach leadership and motivate students to set high goals and work to achieve those goals. With this comes satisfaction and recognition for a job well done. The FFA is integral to the instruction having its origin and roots as a definite part of the high school curriculum in agricultural education. An outstanding FFA chapter, under *the guidance of an advisor (agricultural instructor)* and a challenging program of activities, enriches the instruction in agriculture.

FFA Mission Statement

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.

Premier Leadership

Personal Growth

Career Success

The FFA Vision

Students whose lives are impacted by FFA and agricultural education will achieve academic and personal growth, strengthen American agriculture and provide leadership to build healthy local communities, a strong nation and a sustainable world.

Grow Leaders

Build Communities

Strengthen Agriculture

The FFA Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Evolve

As we evolve our programs and experiences to grow the leaders required to feed, fuel, clothe and sustain the world, our guiding principle is to provide more students with authentic workplace experiences as employees or entrepreneurs by:

- Re-envisioning national-level programs and events that are aligned with AFNR industry competencies and standards while ensuring that they are relevant to today's youth
- Expanding equitable opportunities for all students to develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through FFA experiences and opportunities.
- Providing new activities and experiences that authentically reflect both communities' needs and the needs of the agriculture, food, and natural resources industry.

Engage

As FFA continues to develop the next generation of leaders in an increasingly interconnected, diverse world, we have the opportunity and responsibility to foster the mindsets and skills in our members that enable them to create a fair, diverse, and inclusive industry by:

- Increasing representation from underrepresented and marginalized populations (UMP) in FFA membership and FFA leadership at all levels.
- Designing and implementing strategies for the development and continued growth of an inclusive culture through all National FFA-delivered experiences.
- Proactively developing inclusive and focused opportunities in underserved communities
- Strengthening partnerships to implement equity, diversity, and inclusion strategies across FFA's national, state, and local delivery systems.

Empower

Our mission remains the same: make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. The greatest difference FFA makes is rooted in local, regional, and state experiences. That's why the strategic planning task force made it a priority to EMPOWER state and local leaders with the support and resources to deliver on our collective mission by:

- Supporting states by identifying and operationalizing capacity-building shared solutions.
- Supporting teachers and local program success
- Building support for agricultural education and FFA among local influencers: administration, school boards, guidance counselors, science instructors, and parents.

Values of the FFA to its members

- FFA creates interest in agriculture.
- Students learn to be leaders.
- Members find themselves and develop confidence.
- FFA provides group activities in which members develop tolerance, understanding and learn to work together.
- Members develop initiative and learn to accept responsibility.
- Students may plan and work on activities they like and that are of value to them in a strong school organization that has high prestige.
- It provides an opportunity for students to learn to express themselves and take part in public speaking.
- Members learn to buy and sell cooperatively, finance their activities and practice thrift
- FFA planned activities provide for recognition of achievement.
- The members' interest in improving their school and community is increased, resulting in pride and better citizenship.

Questions to Know About the National FFA Organization & New Jersey FFA Association

Knowing the following will enhance your effectiveness as a State Officer. Italicized text indicates where information can be found for a particular question.

1. How does involvement in the FFA organization enhance a student's agricultural education?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)
2. Why was the FFA organized?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)
3. What are some unique features of the FFA?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)
4. What are the main values of the FFA to?
 - a. A. The community
 - b. B. The home
 - c. C. The school
 - d. D. Our nation
 - e. Internationally
 - f. The advisor
 - g. The member
 - h. To each member*(Student Handbook, Official Manual)*
5. If a supporter of the FFA, who is also a supporter of the 4-H asks you, "What is the difference between the FFA and the 4-H?" how would you respond?
(FFA.org and 4-h.org)
6. Relative to the administration of the FFA, know the following:
(Student Handbook, Official Manual, NJ FFA/Ag Ed Programs Directory)
 - a. What and who is the State FFA Executive Board?
 - b. What and who are the Program Leader for Agricultural Education/State FFA Advisor and State FFA Specialist?
7. What is the relationship of the State Executive Board to?
 - a. State staff, including the State Advisor and State FFA Specialist
 - b. The state association
 - c. Chapter officers
8. What are the specific duties of a state FFA officer?
(NJ State FFA Officer Application)
9. Referring to the Official FFA Manual what are your responsibilities to:
 - a. Groups or persons in the state FFA association?
 - b. Groups or persons in the local FFA chapter?

10. With reference to the major agricultural organizations:
 - a. Be familiar with several organizations such as:
 - NJ Farm Bureau (<http://www.njfb.org/>)
 - NJ State Board of Agriculture (<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sboa/sboa.htm>)
 - NJ Department of Agriculture (<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/>)
 - b. Be clear on the work each organization does for youth.

11. It is essential that you have a good understanding of or know the following:
(Student Handbook, Official Manual, www.ffa.org)
 - a. The history of the FFA.
 - b. The purposes of the FFA.
 - c. How the organization operates.
 - d. A program of activities and how it is developed.
 - e. The essentials of good officer training on the local and state levels.
 - f. Leadership training programs.
 - g. All ceremonies for FFA meetings and degrees.
 - h. The National FFA Center, FFA Supply Services, FFA New Horizons Magazine.
 - i. Parliamentary Procedure.
 - j. National FFA Week and other public relations programs.
 - k. FFA Mission Statement
 - l. FFA Emblem

12. How is the FFA financed?
 - a. Program Affiliation Fees
 - b. New Jersey Department of Agriculture
 - c. New Jersey Department of Education
 - d. New Jersey FFA Foundation
 - e. New Jersey FFA Alumni & Supporters Association

13. What are good guidelines for planning and conducting a program of activities?
(National FFA Program of Activities Resource Guide)

14. What is the cost of Program Affiliation and what benefits do members get with their membership?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)

15. What international opportunities are available to FFA members?
(FFA.org)

Questions to Know About the State and National FFA Foundation, Inc.

The State/National FFA Foundation greatly benefits FFA members. Information about the National FFA Foundation can be found in the Student Handbook, Official Manual, www.ffa.org, and Your knowledge of the following is essential:

(Student Handbook, Official Manual, www.ffa.org)

16. When was the National FFA Foundation, Inc. organized?
17. What are the purposes of the Foundation?
18. How is the State Foundation administered?
19. How is the State Foundation financed?
20. The publications below are sponsored by the National FFA Foundation. Who do these publications serve?
 - a. FFA Advisors . . . Making a Difference (*Advisors*)
 - b. Convention Proceedings (*Advisors, FFA Members, State Staff, etc.*)
 - c. The FFA New Horizons (*Students, Advisors, Alumni Members, etc.*)
 - d. Alumni Newsletter (*Alumni Members*)
 - e. Student Handbook (*Students, Advisors*)
 - f. Advisor Handbook (*Advisors*)
 - g. Bright Ideas (*State FFA Officers*)
 - h. FFA Pulse (*Advisors, Alumni, Members, Supporters*)
21. What are the National FFA Foundation and NAAE funded programs that recognize outstanding Agriscience activities for teachers and for students?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)
22. The National FFA Foundation funds National FFA Career Development Events and awards.
(Student Handbook, Official Manual, Career Development Event Bulletin)
 - a. How do these events relate to local instruction in agriculture?
 - b. How do these events differ from proficiency awards programs?
 - c. What do career development events test?
 - d. What is done to keep these events current with new procedures and standards in the industry?
23. The National Proficiency Awards Program recognizes individuals in most agriculture/agribusiness areas.
(Student Handbook, Official Manual, Proficiency Handbook, Career Development Event Bulletin)
 - a. How should proficiency awards relate to Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs?

- b. How do proficiency awards differ from Career Development Events in what's measured or tested?
 - c. Can a student win more than one proficiency award at the national level?
 - d. How do the proficiency awards program relate to the American FFA Degree Program?
 - e. How can this program be used in local recruitment efforts?
24. National Chapter Award Program:
(Student Handbook, Official Manual)
- a. What is the purpose of this award program?
 - b. What types of awards are presented?
 - c. How are the national winners selected for each award?
25. If you are asked to present Foundation awards at a State Convention, what important points should you emphasize in your remarks?
26. What would you do as a state officer to increase the understanding of the State and National Foundation?
27. How would you increase the number of FFA award winners who take the time to write thank you letters to sponsors?
28. If you had three minutes to explain the importance of FFA to a corporate president, what would you say?

Questions to Know About the State and National FFA Alumni

The FFA Alumni Association consists of former members and others interested in supporting the agricultural education program/FFA. Knowing the following will enhance your effectiveness as a state officer. Information can be found in the Student Handbook, Official Manual, www.ffa.org, FFA Alumni Manual.

29. When was the National FFA Alumni Association chartered? State Alumni?
30. What is the relationship of the FFA Alumni Association to the National FFA Organization/New Jersey FFA Association?
31. Why was the FFA Alumni organized?
32. How is the Alumni financed?
33. What is a life membership?
34. Where would an FFA member find information on the FFA Alumni?
35. What are some major National Alumni activities?
 - a. Scholarships to the Washington Leadership Conference
 - b. Sponsor of workshops during the National Convention
36. What are possible state and local Alumni activities?
37. What are the Alumni events and awards program?
 - a. Outstanding Affiliate Award
 - b. Outstanding Achievement Award (recognition of Alumni members)
 - c. Legion of Merit Award (membership promotion award)
38. How do you organize or charter a local affiliate?
39. Does a member of a local FFA Alumni Affiliate have to be a member of the State and National FFA Alumni Association?
40. Who can be an alumni member and what can they do for the FFA?
41. Do you have to be a former FFA member to be a member of the Alumni?

Questions to Know about American Education and Agricultural Education

42. What are the three components of agricultural education?
(Student Handbook, Official Manual, SAE Handbook)
 - a. Classroom Instruction
 - b. Supervised Agricultural Education
 - c. FFA Organization

43. How do the three components of agricultural education work together to form a well-rounded, strong program?
44. How many Agricultural Education programs are in New Jersey?
(NJ FFA/Ag Ed Program Directory)

45. What is the Smith-Hughes Act and what was its role in establishing agricultural education in public schools?

46. What is the Perkins Act and what is Perkins funding used for?

47. What are NAAE, NASAE, AAAE, the National Council for Agricultural Education, and NJAAE? How does each of these organizations influence the direction of agricultural education?

48. What efforts are being done to recruit and retain agriculture teachers?
(www.naae.org)

49. What is the largest problem facing agricultural education today?
(www.ffa.org)

50. What are Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education (STEM), National Quality Program Standards?

51. Who is the US Secretary of Education?

52. Who is the New Jersey Commissioner of Education?

Fundamental Questions to Know About Agriculture

53. Who is the New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture?
54. Who is the US Secretary of Agriculture?
55. What role does the NJ Department of Agriculture have? The US Department of Agriculture?
56. What do the following Agricultural organizations do: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Farm Bureau, National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS)?
57. What are the greatest risks facing agriculture today?
58. What is the Farm Bill?
59. How does biotechnology affect the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource industry?

New Jersey Agriculture Facts

- Food and agriculture are New Jersey's third largest industry, behind pharmaceuticals and tourism, bringing in billions of dollars in revenue to the state.
- In 2015, the state's more than 9,000 farms generated cash receipts of about \$1 billion.
- The nursery/greenhouse/sod industry remained the leading commodity group, followed by fruits and vegetables, field crops, equine, poultry and eggs and dairy.
- Retaining productive, taxpaying farmland is critically important to all New Jersey residents since agriculture is the largest single source of the scenic vistas we all enjoy throughout the year.
- Productive farmland covers nearly 720,000 acres.
- Farmers in the Garden State produce more than 100 different kinds of fruits and vegetables for consumers to enjoy either fresh or processed here in New Jersey and elsewhere in the Northeast, in Canada and in many countries around the world.
- Nationally, New Jersey is one of the top 10 producers of blueberries, cranberries, peaches, tomatoes, bell peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, apples, spinach, squash, and asparagus.
- In addition, growers also produced hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of specialty crops that added a unique flavor to the Garden State's bounty.
- Vineyards, for example, are a growing segment of the industry, enabling the state's 47 vintners to develop a wide variety of award-winning New Jersey wines.
- Fish and seafood are also a valuable commodity with tons of bluefish, tilefish, flounder, hake, shellfish and other species harvested annually. With its catch sold here at home and in foreign markets around the world, the commercial fishing industry adds another \$133 million to the value of agriculture in New Jersey.

*Information compiled from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture website
<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/about/overview.html>*

Other Questions You May Encounter While Serving as a State Officer

1. How have you benefited from serving the organization as an officer?
2. What is the difference between the FFA and 4-H?
3. A student's parents do not want their son/daughter to enroll in agricultural education. What advice do you give?
4. What should an officer or member do when they see an FFA member smoking in public while wearing the FFA jacket? When the jacket is improperly worn?
5. What should you do after receiving an award from the Foundation?
6. How do chapter members utilize all the opportunities provided by the FFA?
7. What kind of training did you receive as a chapter officer?
8. How do you prepare your speeches? Where do you get your ideas?
9. What do chapters do that have the most successful chapter banquets?
10. A member has just been defeated in running for chapter office, what advice do you give them?
11. How can chapter officers be positively encouraged to learn their parts for FFA ceremonies?
12. What is parliamentary procedure and why is it used?
13. What advice would you give a Greenhand who wants to become a state officer?
14. What are the characteristics of a good FFA officer?

Questions to Know About Yourself

Being yourself during the nominating committee process is the best way to be elected as a state officer. The following questions are areas that you may want to reflect on before entering into the officer selection process.

1. What is the first impression you make when you meet someone?
2. What are your beliefs?
3. Can you effectively relate your knowledge, skills and experience to a topic being discussed?
4. How well do you work in a team situation
5. What is your greatest accomplishment?
6. Can you accept and grow from criticism?
7. What are your working habits?
8. What are your best talents and how do you use them every day?
9. What do you hope to accomplish in the future? As a state officer?
10. As you look back over your experiences in the FFA, why did you join the organization and what has it meant to you?
11. Why are you running for State FFA Office?
12. What qualities in others do you admire?

References

The following are other resources that are helpful for preparing for state FFA office.

1. Internet
 - a. NJ FFA Home Page: <http://www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov/ffa.htm>
 - b. National FFA Home Page: www.ffa.org
 - c. NJ Farm Bureau Home Page: <http://www.njfb.org/>
 - d. American Farm Bureau Home Page: <http://www.fb.com>
 - e. NJ Department of Agriculture Home Page: <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/>
 - f. United States Department of Agriculture Home Page: <http://www.usda.gov/>
 - g. USDA History of Agriculture site: <http://www.usda.gov/history2>
 - h. New Jersey Department of Education: www.nj.gov/education/
 - i. United States Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/>
 - j. CASE: www.case4learning.org
2. FFA New Horizons Magazine
3. FFA Student Handbook and Official FFA Manual
4. Proficiency Award Handbook
5. FFA Alumni Manual
6. NJ Agricultural Education/FFA Directory
7. NJ FFA Officer Application
8. NJ Agricultural Fact Sheets
9. Career Development Event Handbook
10. SAE Handbook
11. Chapter Planning and Recognition Handbook
12. Roberts Rules of Order
13. Leadership and Personal Growth References
 - a. *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Stephen Covey
 - b. *21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader* by John C. Maxwell
 - c. *Developing the Leader Within You* by John C. Maxwell

State Office Candidate Development Form

I consider the following five focus areas as skills and required knowledge needed for my personal development and preparation in seeking State FFA Office:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Outline up to three specific activities, exercises, or practices per month you would organize to develop the five focus areas you identified from above for your personal development and preparation:

March Proposed Activities/Exercises	April Proposed Activities/Exercises	May Proposed Activities/Exercises
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

Name 5 resources/people I would seek to use in my preparation for State FFA Office and why?

Resource/Person (Person/Activity)	How will this resource/person assist me in preparation?

IS STATE OFFICE FOR ME?

What plans do you have after high school? College?



What do I need??

Are there more opportunities beyond state office?

What about school?

If you want to be a state officer, you'll need the following:

- *Your Garden State FFA Degree (You are eligible if you have already earned your degree or if you will be receiving it at the convention you plan to run)*
- *A reliable form of transportation (You'll be doing a lot of traveling)*
- *Strong time management skills (You will be very busy)*
- *A willingness to work hard, be a dedicated team member, and strive for continuous improvement and success!*

The experience of State FFA Office is not an opportunity to miss!

For more information, you can always talk to your chapter FFA advisor or one of the current state officers.

How can State Office work for your life?

- *Your education is important! You can find a college or technical school in New Jersey (or close by) and still serve as an officer. You could also take basic classes at a community college, as a state officer, and later transfer those credits.*
- *Working and being a state officer provides a win-win situation for you and your employer. Your time as an officer helps develop you into a mature and professional employee.*
- *Career opportunities often arise for state officers because of their leadership position!*

