

# Texas FFA



# Awards and Degree Handbook

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## Preface

The FFA Awards Program provides students, chapters, teachers, and individuals the opportunity to earn degrees, awards, and scholarships based on their SAE programs, involvement, and contributions within and too the FFA at the chapter, district, area, state, and national levels.

The purposes of this publication are to (1) explain the FFA degree program, (2) provide detailed information regarding the types of degrees and various awards available to members, chapters, teachers and individuals who have rendered outstanding services, (3) provide information regarding state degree check, and (4) provide important information regarding the completion of degree and award applications.

## **Section 1: FFA Degree Program**

The FFA Degree program represents a member's progress through the phases of their leadership, academic and career skill development. For members to earn and be awarded each degree advancement, they must achieve the specific constitutional requirements as outlined in the Texas FFA and National FFA constitution. The five different degree levels for members include: Discovery, Greenhand, Chapter FFA, Lone Star FFA, and American FFA.

Information for each degree can be found in their entirety in Article VI of the Texas FFA Constitution, in the National FFA Constitution or Official FFA Manual.

<https://www.texasffa.org/constitution>

<http://www.ffa.org/about/what-is-ffa/constitution-bylaws>

<https://www.ffa.org/about/who-we-are/official-manual>

## **Section 2: Active Membership**

Active Membership is defined in Article V, section (c) of the Texas FFA Constitution. To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources program. The Texas FFA Association/Texas Association of Future Farmers of America considers "secondary Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources programs" to be grades 7-12.

To retain membership, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in a least one Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the Association by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current District, Area, State and National dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the Texas FFA Association/Texas Association of Future Farmers of America.

A member may retain active membership until November 30 following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school. A member who is in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America shall be in good standing during that period of time without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces shall not be considered as elapsed time in determining the maximum period of four conventions following graduation from high school or leaving high school. Members making use of this waiver of time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advanced degrees must resume active participation within six months after completing their armed service duty, indicating such a desire by payment of dues and attendance at meetings. Members participating in an armed services program for six months shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual may retain active membership beyond his or her twenty-third birthday.

Example: A student was born on November 1, 1999 and graduated from high school on June 5, 2017. The student can retain active membership through November 30, 2020. (2017 - 1st National FFA Convention; 2018 - 2nd National FFA Convention; 2019 - 3rd National FFA Convention; and 2020 - 4th National FFA Convention). Membership will terminate on November 30, 2020.

## **Section 3: FFA Degrees**

### **Discovery Degree**

The Discovery FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level to students in grades 7 - 8 who are enrolled in agricultural science courses. To receive a Discovery Degree, members must meet the requirements as outlined in Texas FFA Constitution, National FFA Constitution or Official FFA Manual which includes paying local, state, and national FFA dues. Receipt of the Discovery FFA Degree is not necessary in order to obtain the Greenhand FFA Degree or subsequent degrees.

### **Greenhand FFA Degree**

The Greenhand FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level. To receive the Greenhand FFA Degree members must be enrolled in an Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource course while meeting the requirements listed in the Texas FFA Constitution, National FFA Constitution or Official FFA Manual. In addition to the Greenhand FFA Degree, members may receive a bronze FFA pin.

(Other requirements may be established by the chapter.)

### **Chapter FFA Degree**

The Chapter FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level. To receive a Chapter FFA Degree, members must meet the requirements listed in the Texas FFA Constitution, National FFA Constitution, or Official FFA Manual. Members must hold the Greenhand Degree to receive the Chapter Degree. In addition to the Chapter FFA Degree, members may receive a silver FFA pin.

(Other requirements may be established by the chapter.)

### **Lone Star FFA Degree (State FFA Degree)**

The Lone Star FFA Degree/State FFA Degree is the highest degree the state association can bestow upon a member. The Lone Star FFA Degree is designed to recognize students who have developed an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program throughout their FFA career. The Lone Star FFA Degree should be the ultimate goal of all FFA members. In order to receive the Lone Star FFA Degree, members must meet the minimum requirements as outlined in the Texas FFA Constitution, National FFA Constitution, or Official FFA Manual which includes holding the Greenhand and Chapter FFA Degrees. In addition to receiving the Lone Star FFA Degree certificate, members receive a gold FFA charm.

### **American FFA Degree**

The American FFA Degree is awarded to members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to FFA and made significant accomplishments in their supervised agricultural experience. The American FFA Degree is awarded at the National FFA Convention and Expo each year. The coveted American FFA Degree is awarded to less than 1% of FFA members making it the most prestigious degree and one of the organization's highest honor. In addition to the degree, each recipient receives a gold American FFA Degree key.

American FFA Degree: <https://www.ffa.org/participate/awards/american-ffa-degree>

**Per Texas FFA Policy 26.4 (g), a maximum of 45 hours from a foundational SAE will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements for advanced FFA degrees above the Chapter Degree.**

<https://www.texasffa.org/policy>

Degree	Discovery	Greenhand	Chapter	Lone Star	American
For all degree levels, students must be dues paying members at the local, state and national level and must submit degree specific application <b><i>(Per policy 26.4 (g), a maximum of 45 hours from a foundational SAE will be counted toward degrees above the chapter degree)</i></b>					
<b>AFNR Semesters/Membership</b>	Enrolled in AFNR courses for a portion of the year while in 7-8 grade	Enrolled in AFNR Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed at least two semesters of AFNR instruction at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level</li> <li>Currently enrolled in AFNR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed at least four semesters of AFNR instruction at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level</li> <li>Member for at least two years (24 months) at time of receiving degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have been an active member for the past 3 years (36 months)</li> <li>Have completed at least 3 years (540 hours) of AFNR instruction, OR have completed the equivalent of 360 hours of AFNR instruction and one full year of enrollment in postsecondary agricultural program, OR have completed the program of agricultural education offered in the secondary school last attended.</li> </ul>
<b>Supervised Agricultural Experience</b>		Have satisfactory plans for an SAE	Have an approved SAE and developed plans for continued growth in SAE	Have an approved SAE	Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding SAE, through which the member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial & financial expertise
<b>Community Service (CANNOT be duplicated as paid or unpaid labor/hours through a service based SAE)</b>			Participated in at least 10 hours of community service	By April 1 of year degree is received, participated in at least 25 hours of community service within at least 2 different community service activities	Participated in at least 50 hours of community service within at least 3 different community service activities
<b>Chapter Program of Activities</b>	Be familiar with chapter POA	Demonstrated knowledge of the chapter POA	Participated in the planning and conducting of at least 3 official functions of POA	Participated in the planning and completion of the chapter POA	
<b>Speech/Group Discussion</b>			Effectively lead group discussion for 15 minutes	6-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or FFA	

Degree	Discovery	Greenhand	Chapter	Lone Star	American
<b>Parliamentary Law Procedures</b>			Demonstrated 5 procedures	Demonstrated 10 procedures	
<b>\$ earned/hours worked combination</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earned &amp; productively invested at least \$150 or have worked at least 45 hours in excess of scheduled class time</li> <li>Combined hours (x 3.33) and dollars must equal or exceed the number 150</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earned &amp; productively invested at least \$1,000 or worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time.</li> <li>Combined hours (x 3.33) and dollars must equal or exceed the number 1000.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earned at least \$10,000 and productively invested \$7,500, OR</li> <li>Earned &amp; productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time.</li> <li>Combined hours (x 3.56) plus dollars earned and invested must be equal to or greater than the number 10,000.</li> <li>Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet minimum requirements for this degree</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in one local FFA chapter activity outside scheduled class time</li> <li>Knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership &amp; entrepreneurial opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learned &amp; explained the FFA Creed, Motto &amp; Salute</li> <li>Described &amp; explained the meaning of the FFA emblem &amp; colors</li> <li>Demonstrated knowledge of FFA Code of Ethics &amp; proper use of the FFA jacket</li> <li>Demonstrated knowledge of history of the organization &amp; the chapter constitution &amp; bylaws</li> <li>Access to or personally own a copy of the Official FFA Manual and FFA Student Handbook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received the Greenhand FFA Degree</li> <li>Shown progress toward individual achievement in the FFA Award program</li> <li>Satisfactory scholastic record</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received the Chapter FFA Degree</li> <li>Serving as officer, committee chairperson, or participating member of a major committee</li> <li>Satisfactory scholastic record certified by AFNR instructor and principal/superintendent</li> <li>By April 1, completed 10 activities above the chapter level in 3 out of 6 different categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have received the State FFA Degree</li> <li>Have a record of satisfactory participation in activities at chapter and state level</li> <li>Graduated high school at least 12 months prior to the national convention at which degree is to be granted</li> <li>Have a record of outstanding leadership abilities and community involvement and have achieved a high school scholastic record of "C" or better as certified by principal or superintendent</li> </ul>

## Section 5: Star Awards

The Texas FFA Star Award program is designed to recognize the most outstanding production, agribusiness, placement and agriscience based Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program at the local, district, area, and state levels. The Texas FFA recognizes star winners in the four divisions at the greenhand, chapter, state, and American degree level. Applicants must demonstrate fulfillment of minimum requirements of the degree level corresponding to their award and meet the criteria of the division in which they are applying. In addition to the levels, each star applicant will apply within a specific division that fits his or her SAE. Members may apply for recognition in only one division per year. **Complete Star Application requirements and procedures can be found in Policy Handbook 26.6 here: <https://www.texasffa.org/policy>**

### Star Award Selection Process

Star awards are recognized at the local, state and national levels. After winning at the local level, members may apply to compete at the district and area levels. All applications qualifying for competition at the state level must be declared eligible by their respective areas. At the State Degree check, applicants will interview with a panel of judges and applications will be reviewed by qualified area representatives. Final interview and application scores will be ranked and overall results will determine the State Star Award Finalists. All Star Award finalists will be recognized on stage during the Texas FFA Convention and will receive a Star Award Finalist plaque. The state winner in each star division will be announced onstage and will receive Star Award Winner plaque in addition to a \$1000 Texas FFA Award Scholarship. To be declared a state winner, all Star Award applicants must meet the qualifications as outlined in Texas FFA Policy 26.6.

The State Star winner in each of the Star Award divisions will be eligible to participate in the National FFA Star Awards program. A preliminary scoring of all Star applications will take place prior to the National FFA convention to decide four national finalists in each division that will proceed to the final selection round. The four national finalists will interview at the National FFA Convention & Expo and will be recognized onstage followed by the announcement of the National Star Winners in each division.

### Star Degree Levels

- **Star Greenhand Degree** applicants must apply in their first year of membership in which a high school credit is earned.
- **Star Chapter Degree** candidates must apply during the membership year following the first membership year of high school instruction.
- **Star Lone Star (state) and American Degree** candidates must apply during the same membership year that his or her respective degree application is submitted for consideration. More information on American Star Awards can be found here: <https://www.ffa.org/participate/awards/american-star-awards>

### Star Division Criteria

- **Star Farmer** recognizes students with SAEs that involve ownership/entrepreneurship in production agriculture. This includes the production of animals, grain crops, tree production (fruit & nut only), etc.
- **Star in Agribusiness** recognizes students with SAEs in agricultural sales, services or other non-production entrepreneurial endeavors. All horticulture enterprises fall under agribusiness even if they are production oriented. \* **Raising and selling animals of any species is production agriculture and does not fit the agribusiness category.**
  - Examples of Agribusiness SAEs: Lawn Mowing Service, Pet Sitting Service, Ag. Marketing Service, Animal Photography Business
- **Star in Placement** recognizes students with paid or unpaid employment SAEs.
- **Star in Agriscience** recognizes students with SAEs which are aimed at developing higher order

scientific knowledge and skills. Agriscience SAEs are researched based and may be placement, entrepreneurship, or experimental.

## **Section 6: Proficiency Areas and Descriptions**

SAE programs form the basis of proficiency award programs. They are planned, practical activities conducted outside of regularly scheduled class time that help students develop and apply agricultural knowledge and skills learned inside the classroom. Proficiency awards are an outgrowth of a member's SAE enterprises and recognize skill development and career-based competencies in related award areas. With 235 unique careers, creative members and a dynamic industry opening new opportunities in agriculture constantly, not all SAEs will qualify in a proficiency area. Proficiency award areas do not define SAEs, but provide recognition to members exploring and/or becoming established in specific agricultural career pathways.

Agricultural proficiency awards are available to all FFA members enrolled in high school agricultural education courses. Members can apply for specific proficiency areas while in high school or be out of high school for no more than one year. If graduated from high school, the member must have completed at least three full years of instruction in agricultural education courses. At a minimum, to be eligible for a Texas FFA Proficiency Award, applicants must have one full calendar year of SAE records. Due to national judging standards, all financial records must be closed on December 31. Achievements described in the resume after December 31 may be included since the December 31 closing dates affects only the financial portion of the application. Applications not reflecting a full year (12 months) of records or containing hours or dollars related to the proficiency area shall be disqualified. **Complete Proficiency application requirements and procedures can be found in Policy Handbook 26.7 here: <https://www.texasffa.org/policy>**

### **Proficiency Award Selection Process**

Proficiency awards are recognized at the local, state and national levels. After winning at the local level, members may apply to compete at the district and area levels. All applications qualifying for competition at the state level must be declared eligible by their respective areas. At the State Degree check, applications will be reviewed by qualified area representatives and will be ranked as either bronze, silver or gold. State Proficiency award winners will be recognized on stage during the Texas FFA Convention and will receive a plaque and a \$1000 Texas FFA Scholarship. To be declared a state winner, all Proficiency applicants must meet the qualifications as outlined in Texas FFA Policy 26.7.

State winning applications are eligible to compete in the National FFA Agricultural Proficiency Awards program and will receive a rating of National Finalist, Gold, Silver, Bronze, Participant or Disqualified. Four National Finalists are selected for each of the award areas and will go on to compete to be the National Proficiency Award winner. At the National FFA Convention & Expo, all National Finalists will be interviewed and recognized onstage followed by the announcement of the National Proficiency Winner.

### **Proficiency Award Application Details**

All Texas FFA Proficiency Award applications are required to be connected to AET records, therefore all applications must be generated through the student's AET account. Applications generated from the National FFA Application Center will not be considered for review at any level.

Students can compete for awards in 47 areas ranging from agricultural communications to wildlife management. There are four types of proficiency awards which include:

- **Placement (PL)** proficiency awards are given to those whose SAEs are related to employment, apprenticeships, or internships at an agribusiness or agriculture-related organization



- **Entrepreneurship (EN)** proficiency awards are given to those whose SAEs are related to ownership of an agribusiness or agriculture-related enterprise
- **Combined (PL/EN)** some proficiency award areas are not split into entrepreneurship and placement, applicants can combine both placement and entrepreneurship records if both are included in the SAE
- **Agriscience Research (RE)** proficiency awards involve planning and conducting an agriculturally based scientific experiment based on hypothesis and the use of the scientific methods of investigation on the hypothesis

As members develop their SAE they may engage in enterprises or activities of many types, which qualify in different proficiency award areas. When a member's SAE qualifies in multiple proficiency areas only the activities, goals, descriptions, earnings/hours, duties and accomplishments that qualify in the proficiency area in which they are applying can be included in the application. For example: A member with an SAE which includes raising fish to sell to pet stores and employment by a landscape maintenance company has one enterprise that will qualify in the Specialty Animal Production proficiency area and one that qualifies in the Landscape Management proficiency area. When applying for a proficiency award in the Landscape Management area nothing about the fish raising enterprise should be included in the application. Do not discuss the fish raising enterprise in answers to questions, do not include inventory, earnings, skills, etc. from the fish enterprise in the landscape management application.

## Proficiency Award Resources

Proficiency award handbooks, rules, FAQs and tips to help complete a competitive application can all be found on the National FFA Organization website at: <https://www.FFA.org/participate/awards/proficiencies>

## Assistance with Proficiency Area Determinations

When choosing the appropriate award area to apply in review ALL of the proficiency area descriptions below. If in doubt or you have questions regarding the correct area to apply in please contact your state staff and/or national FFA staff with a detailed description of the SAE enterprise. The National FFA Organization SAE Education Specialist can assist in area determinations. To contact national FFA for a proficiency related inquiry please email [proficiency@ffa.org](mailto:proficiency@ffa.org).

## Proficiency Award Areas

**Agricultural Communications – (EN/PL):** Includes programs in which a student is placed at a newspaper or other agricultural print (such as magazines) facilities to obtain training and practical experience in writing and publicizing in preparation for a writing communications career. Programs may also be at radio and TV stations, fair media rooms, or other businesses requiring speaking skills and knowledge of agriculture. The student may also own and produce an agriculture related broadcast or show. This area also includes any use of or development of new technology (such as websites and blogs) aimed at communicating the story of agriculture.

**Agricultural Education – (EN/PL):** Relates to education and extension, including, but not limited to, youth mentoring, agricultural education departmental assistants, PALS mentors and student coordinators, developing and conducting informational materials and presentations for civic organizations and school-aged youth, and students who are involved in SAEs surrounding educating the public about the broad topics of agriculture, agriculture education and FFA.

**Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication – (EN/PL):** Involves the design and construction of agricultural equipment and/or structures, and/or selection of the structural materials, and/or implementation of plans for utilizing concrete, electricity, plumbing, data communication cable systems, heating, ventilation, and/or air conditioning into agricultural settings. May also include the development of new and emerging

agricultural technologies such as engineering, remote sensing, precision agriculture, ag-robotics and other new technologies not covered by a more appropriate area.

**Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise or business involving the repair and maintenance of agricultural equipment (including lawn equipment) and/or structures, including agricultural power systems including mechanical, electrical, chemical, wind, solar and/or water power.

**Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance – (PL):** Student works for an employer involved in the repair and maintenance of agricultural equipment (including lawn equipment) and/or structures, including agricultural power systems including mechanical, electrical, chemical, wind, solar and/or water power.

**Agricultural Processing – (EN/PL):** A student owns an enterprise or works for a business of assembling, transporting, processing, fabricating, mixing, packaging and storing food and nonfood agricultural products. Programs could include processing meat, milk, honey, cheese, raisins and other dried fruits, maple syrup and/or other food processing. Non-food products could include by-products processing such as meat, bone, fish and blood meal, tallow, hides; processing of wool and cotton, making compost, cubing and pelleting of forages, producing bird seed and other pet foods. *Note: Processing of non-food forest products is no longer part of the agricultural processing area. See: Forest Management and Products.*

**Agricultural Sales – (EN):** Student owns the enterprise or business, not covered in a more appropriate proficiency award category, could include enterprises such as the sales of feed, seed, fertilizer, agricultural chemicals, agricultural equipment, machinery or structures. Enterprises could also include the merchandising (which is buying an item with the sole purpose to resell it in a short time frame) of crops, livestock, processed agricultural commodities, horticulture (including quarry rock for decorative or landscape purposes), floriculture, or forestry items at either the retail or wholesale level. *Note: SAEs that include the production or processing of the previous items does not belong in this award area.*

**Agricultural Sales – (PL):** Student works for an agriculture related business that is not covered in a more appropriate proficiency award category. This could include sales of feed, seed, fertilizer or agricultural chemicals. Students could also work for businesses that involve the sales of agricultural equipment, machinery or structures. Activities could include the merchandising (buying an item with the sole purpose to resell it in a short time frame) of crops, livestock, processed agricultural commodities, horticulture (including quarry rock for decorative or landscape purposes), floriculture, floriculture and/or forestry items at either the retail or wholesale level. *Note: SAEs that include the production or processing of the previous items, it does not belong in this award area.*

**Agricultural Services – (EN/PL):** Student owns enterprises or works in an agricultural business that is not covered in any of the existing award categories. This includes enterprises such as custom equipment operation and maintenance, agricultural management and financial services, animal breeding services, custom baling, crop scouting, implementing integrated pest management programs, horseshoeing, taxidermy services, auction services (working at or owning the auction house), commercial agricultural well drilling, residential tree removal service, custom and contract feeding services or other appropriate services offered through agricultural enterprises. Students applying for placement in agricultural services must work for a company or individual whose primary activity to provide agricultural services. *Note: Activities related to lawn care, landscaping, mowing or other landscape and care activities are not included in this area. Students with these types of enterprises or activities need to apply in other, more appropriate areas related to turf care, horticulture or nursery landscape.*

*The Agriscience Research Proficiency is designed for those students actively engaged in agriscience research and experimentation. This includes students who are actively engaged in doing their own research individually, as well as those students who may be cooperating on research projects with others including but not limited to teams in school, experiment stations or colleges/universities. The student must be actively involved in the*

*development of the experimental design, formulation of the hypothesis, collection of data, interpretation of the data and publicizing the results to be considered for an Agriscience research proficiency*

**Agriscience Research - Animal Systems:** Research in the life processes, health, nutrition, genetics, management and processing of animal systems related to small animals, aquaculture, livestock, dairy, horses and/or poultry.

**Agriscience Research Plant Systems:** Research in the life cycles, classifications, functions, practices of plant systems related to crops, turf grass, trees and shrubs and/or ornamental plants.

**Agriscience Research Integrated Systems:** Must fit one of the following descriptions:

- **Diversified Research** – Research in two or more of the agriscience research areas.
- **Environmental Service Systems/Natural Resource Systems Research** - Research in the systems, instruments and technology used in waste management and their influence on the environment.
- **Food Products and Processing Systems Research** - Research in the product development, quality assurance, food safety, production, sales and service, regulation and compliance, and food service practices within the food industry.
- **Power, Structural and Technical Systems Research** - Research in the agricultural equipment, power systems, alternative fuel sources and precision technology, as well as woodworking, metalworking, welding and project planning for agricultural structures.
- **Social Sciences Research** - Research of leadership, personal growth and career success skills necessary for a chosen profession that effectively contributes to society.

**Beef Production – (EN):** Student owns the enterprise or business that uses the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market beef. This award area is for any beef animals, including miniature Herefords, Zebu, etc.

**Beef Production – (PL):** Student works for a livestock producer applying the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market beef. This award area is for any beef animals, including miniature Herefords, Zebu, etc.

**Dairy Production – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise or business and applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market dairy cattle and dairy cattle products. This award area also includes enterprises in which a student who leases cattle for a dairy production business.

**Dairy Production – (PL):** Student works in the dairy cattle industry applying the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market dairy cattle and dairy cattle products.

**Diversified Agricultural Production – (EN/PL):** Involves the use of the best management practices available to produce and market a combination of livestock and crops in **two or more** proficiency areas. These areas include at least one species included in Diversified Livestock and at least one species included in Diversified Crop proficiency area.

**Diversified Crop Production – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise or business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops from **two or more** of the crop related proficiencies areas. These areas include grain production, fiber/oil production, forage production, specialty crop production (excluding floriculture production) vegetable production or fruit production.

**Diversified Crop Production – (PL):** Student works for a crop producer that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops from **two or more** of the crop related proficiencies.

These areas include grain production, fiber/oil production, forage production, specialty crop production, vegetable production or fruit production.

**Diversified Horticulture – (EN/PL):** Student works for someone who or owns the enterprise or business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently manage an SAE program that includes **two or more** of the following proficiency areas: landscape management, nursery operations, turf grass management, or the specific floricultural production or floral design and floral sales activities accepted in specialty crop production.

**Diversified Livestock Production – (EN/PL):** Involves the use of the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market a combination of **two or more** livestock related proficiency award areas. These areas include beef, dairy, sheep, swine, equine, goat, specialty animal, small animal production and care or poultry.

**Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management – (EN/PL):** Students receive practical experience concerned with the principles and practices of managing and/or improving the environment and natural resources. Activities may include the areas of management of agriculture waste (excluding common compliance with EPA regulations) recycling of agriculture products, environmental cleanup, serving in the conservation corps; managing agricultural energy usage (not for building or maintaining), multiple uses of resources, land use regulations pertaining to soil, water and air quality, preservation of wetlands, shorelines, and grasslands, erosion prevention practices; public relations and education concerning pollution; installing subsurface drainage, public relations and education concerning pollution.

**Equine Science – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise or business that provides experiences in horse production, breeding, marketing, showing and other aspects of the equine industry. Programs may also include calf roping, barrel racing, rodeo, racing, training, riding lessons and therapeutic horseback riding if horses are owned and/or managed by the member. This also includes miniature horses (prior to 2012, formerly in specialty animal production).

**Equine Science – (PL):** Student works for an employer providing experience in horse production, breeding, marketing, showing and other aspects of the equine industry. Programs may also include calf roping, barrel racing, rodeo, racing, training, riding lessons and therapeutic horseback riding if horses are not owned and/or managed by the member. This also includes miniature horses (prior to 2012, formerly in specialty animal production).

**Fiber and Oil Crop Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops for fiber and/or oil such as cotton, sisal, hemp, soybeans, sesame seed, flax, mustard, canola, castor beans, sunflower, peanuts, dill, spearmint and safflower.

**Food Science and Technology – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that applies microbiology and biochemistry or food product development to improve taste, nutrition, quality and/or value of food. Programs could include the development of new products, food testing, grading and inspecting. **Note: Food science is not processing of food products, marketing or sales of food products, or food preparation and/or service.**

**Forage Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops for forage such as sorghum not used for grain, alfalfa, clover, brome grass, orchard grass, grain forages, corn and grass silages and all pastures.

**Forest Management and Products – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to conserve or increase the economic value of a forest and/or forest products through such practices as thinning, pruning, weeding, stand improvement, reforestation, insect

and disease control, planting, harvesting, Christmas tree farming, making and selling cedar shakes and firewood and wood chips/mulch, or working for the Forest Service. Does not include any food items harvested from the forest or residential tree removal services.

**Fruit Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops for fruits such as stone fruits, pome fruits, citrus fruits, pineapples, coconuts, berries, cranberries, melons, grapes, olives, nuts and all common fruits. (Pome fruits include apples, mayhaws, and pears. Stone fruits include peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots and cherries).

**Goat Production – (EN/PL)** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that involves the use of the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market goats and all goat products.

**Grain Production – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise or business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops for grain production such as corn, barley (including the malting types), millet, buckwheat, oats, grain sorghum, milo, wheat, rice and rye. Grain Production **does not** include any of the aforementioned crops with an intended use for forage.

**Grain Production – (PL):** Student works for a crop producer or grain production related business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops for grain production such as corn, barley (including the malting types), millet, buckwheat, oats, grain sorghum, milo, wheat, rice and rye. Grain Production **does not** include any of the aforementioned crops with an intended use for forage.

**Home and/or Community Development – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that involves improving and protecting the beauty of an area by using natural vegetation or commercial ornamental plants and/or modernizing the home for better health and comfort through installation or improvement of water and sanitary facilities, heating and air conditioning or labor-saving devices. Also includes community development activities such as volunteerism, community development and community betterment activities. *Note: Students working strictly with the installation or improvement of water and sanitary facilities, heating and air conditioning or labor-saving devices should apply in the Agricultural Mechanics Design & Fabrication area. Students whose activities are limited to using natural vegetation or commercial ornamental plants should apply in the Landscape Management area.*

**Landscape Management – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes experiences of planting and maintaining plants and shrubs, landscaping and outdoor beautification, grounds keeping, sprinkler installations and improvement of recreational areas.

**Nursery Operations – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that provides students with job-entry experience in areas such as turf, ornamental plants, vegetable starter plants, shrubs and/or tree production for the purpose of transplanting or propagation. This could include water garden plants if produced for sale.

**Outdoor Recreation – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that develops outdoor recreational activities for public or family use as experiential or income-producing enterprises. These enterprises could include vacation cabins and cottages, camping and/or picnic areas, recreational fishing, and/or hunting areas, water sports (not including indoor lifeguard activities), winter sports, shooting preserves, guide services, riding stables, trail rides, vacation farms and guest ranches, natural scenic or historic areas, and running petting zoos and rodeo events where the member does not own or manage animals.

**Poultry Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market chickens, turkeys, domestic fowl such as ducks, geese and guinea, and their products.

**Sheep Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market sheep, sheep products and wool.

**Small Animal Production and Care – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market small animals such as all rabbits, cats, dogs, mice, hedgehogs, guinea pigs, lizards, small birds (such as canaries, cockatiels, cockatoos, parakeets, parrots, etc.) and programs that typically provide a service in caring for the well-being of pets. Programs could include working at a pet shop, as a groomer, as a dog trainer, providing pet sitting services, working at a kennel, or preparing guide and assistance animals.

**Specialty Animal Production – (EN/PL):** Applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market specialty animals within the Agriculture industry. Students in the specialty animal production proficiency area must demonstrate that they are producing and marketing specialty animals not covered in any of the existing award categories. Specialty animals can include the following: aquaculture, bees, mules, donkeys, bison, oxen, mink, worms, ostriches, pigeons, emus, alpacas or llamas. Placement experiences could include roles as a zoo worker or placement at any specialty animal facility. In their supervised work experience, students must participate in hands-on activities including feeding, inoculating, performing basic animal care, weighing, measuring, showing and possibly marketing animals in an entrepreneurial or work placement environment. *Note: Goats are now in the goat production award area, and miniature horses have been reclassified and moved to equine science. All rabbits should be entered in small animal production.*

**Specialty Crop Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops not covered in any of the existing award categories such as: native prairie plants, sugar beets, dry edible beans, green peanuts, gourds, tobacco, specialty corns (popcorn, white corn, Indian corn), all grass seed production, herbs and spices, mushrooms, sugar cane, hops, sorghum cane, confectionary sunflowers, production of crop seed or specific floriculture production. (Such as chrysanthemums, daylilies, etc.)

**Swine Production – (EN):** Student owns an enterprise that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market swine.

**Swine Production – (PL):** Student works for an employer that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market swine.

**Turf Grass Management – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that involves the planting and maintaining of turf for outdoor beautification, providing a lawn mowing service; improving recreational areas, sod produced for sale, and sport field or golf course management.

**Vegetable Production – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that applies the best management practices available to efficiently produce and market crops such as asparagus, beans, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, pumpkins, sweet corn, tomatoes, onions, zucchini, hot peppers, all canning vegetables and all common garden vegetables.

**Veterinary Science – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes working with veterinarians in clinical practice, research facilities, colleges of veterinary medicine, animal health industry, or any other environment in which they assist veterinarians in performing duties related to the health of people and/or the health and welfare of large and small animals. This experience should be under the supervision of a veterinarian and may include wage earning, entrepreneurial or exploratory activities not limited to hands-on care of animals, management of business aspects of a veterinary practice, or working on legislation or regulations relating to animals.

**Wildlife Production and Management – (EN/PL):** Student owns the enterprise, or works for a business that includes the improvement and the availability of fish and wildlife through practices such as land and water

habitat improvement, wildlife surveys, development of new land and water habitat, trapping, or the stocking of fish and wild game. This proficiency includes activities conducted with the Fish & Wildlife departments, or Department of Natural Resources. The production of wild species for the stocking of ducks, geese, quail and pheasants are eligible if used as an income enterprise.

## **Section 7: Chapter Recognition, Advisor and Non-Teacher Awards**

### **National Chapter Award**

The National Chapter Award Program is designed to recognize FFA chapters that actively implement the mission and strategies of the organization. These chapters improve chapter operations using the National Quality FFA Chapter Standards (NQCS) and a Program of Activities (POA) that emphasizes growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture. Chapters are rewarded for providing educational experiences for the entire membership.

National award and recognition programs should reflect instruction that currently takes place in the entire agricultural education program, including classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, individualized instruction in leadership and the supervised agricultural experience. Also, it is appropriate for the national organization to develop events and awards that stimulate instruction in emerging areas that reflect both current and future community, national and global workforce needs. Those events should be developed with significant input from FFA members, teachers, partners, respective industry sponsors and others involved in agricultural education. The National FFA Organization continues to encourage accessibility and provide opportunities for achievement and recognition for students with diverse backgrounds.

The National Quality FFA Chapter Standards serve as a foundation for consistent delivery of quality FFA chapters across the nation focused on growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture. These standards are designed to be used by local advisors, administration, community partners and/or stakeholders, FFA Alumni and/or an assessment team to conduct an evaluation of the local FFA chapter and develop clear goals and objectives for chapter improvement. The first step to success in the National FFA Chapter Award Program is to develop and maintain a quality FFA chapter based on these standards.

The National Quality FFA Chapter Standards include the following 13 indicators:

1. All students enrolled in the agricultural education program have the opportunity to be a member of FFA.
2. Students build a progressive leadership and personal development plan.
3. All students participate in meaningful leadership and personal development activities in each component of the agricultural education program:
  - Classroom and laboratory instruction
  - Experiential, project, and work-based learning through SAE
  - Leadership and personal development through FFA
4. The FFA chapter constitution and bylaws are up-to-date and approved by chapter members.
5. FFA members are involved in the planning and implementation of a Program of Activities (POA).
6. The FFA chapter conducts regularly scheduled chapter meetings.
7. An awards recognition program planned and conducted by FFA members is in place.
8. The FFA chapter has a current budget, which provides the financial resources to support the POA.
9. Capable and trained officers lead the FFA chapter.
10. The FFA chapter has an active, dedicated support group (i.e., FFA Alumni, agriculture booster club).
11. Stakeholders are engaged in developing and supporting a quality chapter.
12. SAE is an integral component of the agricultural education program, with all students maintaining an exploratory SAE and career plan of study.
13. A recruitment and retention plan which yields steady or increasing student enrollment.

Chapters in good standing may apply for the National Chapter Award. Those chapters completing all 13 indicators as outlined in the National Chapter Quality Standards will be recognized as a Superior Chapter provided a completed Form I application is submitted at the district and area degree checks. Applications meeting requirements as outlined in Texas FFA Policy Section 26.2 (c) may be submitted to the State Advance Awards and Degree Check.

For those chapters completing Form II, application will be ranked at the State Advanced Awards and Degree Check as gold, silver, or bronze by a committee using a rubric developed by National FFA. There will not be a minimum number of applicants in any classification, but pursuant to National FFA rules, no more than ten percent of the state's chapters may be rated as gold. Only gold ranking applications shall be certified and submitted for national judging.

National Chapter applications are available in the Application Center of the Advisor's National FFA account. National Chapter Award Handbook can be found here: [www.FFA.org/nationalchapter](http://www.FFA.org/nationalchapter)

### **Golden Horizon Award**

An integral part of the agricultural education instruction is the FFA Golden Horizon Award. A well-rounded local FFA chapter with an inclusive, progressive, aggressive program of activities that promotes participation at all levels is a key element in delivering the leadership component of agricultural education. The Golden Horizon Chapter Recognition program was implemented as a tool for chapter officers and advisors to measure their involvement in the chapters Program of Activities. The Golden Horizon Award application serves as means to provide recognition for those chapters who succeed in involving a large number of members in the diverse array of activities through the FFA. The Golden Horizon Award is divided into two categories; Division I for schools with only one full-time or part-time certified agricultural science teacher/FFA advisor, and Division II for schools with more than one teacher/FFA advisor.

All chapters in good standing are eligible to apply for the award. Points for the award are accumulated between June 1st of the previous calendar year and May 31st of the current calendar year. All applications must be submitted for review at the district and area degree checks to verify accuracy for participation. Applications submitted to the State Advanced Awards and Degree check will also be verified for accuracy. All applications will be ranked in their respected divisions. The top quarter will be ranked as gold. All gold ranking chapters will be recognized during the Texas FFA Convention. All remaining applications will be ranked as silver or bronze based on the natural point break.

The Golden Horizon application is available through the advisor's Texas FFA Roster Application system.

### **Honorary Awards**

The Texas FFA Constitution provides for the election of those who have rendered meritorious service to agricultural education and the FFA to honorary membership. Those interested in production agriculture or agribusiness, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, business people, and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and the FFA and who have rendered outstanding service, may be elected to honorary membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention. Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree/Chapter Farmer Degree in the chapter, Honorary State FFA Degree/Lone Star Farmer Degree in the state association, and the Honorary American FFA Degree in the National Organization. The number of Honorary Lone Star FFA Degrees awarded is equal to 10% of the previous year's Lone Star Degrees awarded in each area. Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree applications can be found here: <https://www.texasffa.org/honorary-awards>.

Outstanding supporters who have previously received the Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree may receive the Distinguished Service Citation.



## Section 8: Community Service, Service Learning, & Fundraising

### What is the difference between community service and service learning?

The main difference between community service and service learning is the level of commitment and difference of intention. **Community service** projects are usually short, one hour to one day, investments of time to an organization or a cause that will benefit the community.

**Service learning** involves being part of the planning, preparation and implementation that results in benefit to the community. Service learning requires a higher level of commitment and a sustained investment of time. It also starts with an intention of learning and an expectation of reflection and evaluation.

Managing and executing a community service project is service learning, where volunteering the day of the event is community service.

### What is the difference between community service/service learning and fundraising?

Community Service/Service Learning are volunteer opportunities working for others and there is no benefit to FFA chapter or FFA chapters.

- Example 1: Prosper FFA Toy Drive (benefiting Toys for Tots)
- Example 2: Visiting a local nursing home to sing carols and serve Christmas dinner
- Example 3: Adopt-a-Highway

If volunteer opportunity is a **financial benefit for the FFA chapter** in **ANY** way, it is **NOT** community service, it is a **Fundraiser**.

- Example 1: Having a car wash to raise money to buy buckles for the local stock show
- Example 2: Working the concession stand at the chapter stock show. Even if this FFA member doesn't have an animal project – the concession stand money still benefits the chapter and its members

## Section 9: State Advanced Degree and Award Check

The Texas FFA State Advanced Degree and Award Check is held annually in June for the purpose of selecting American FFA Degree Candidates, State Degree candidates, Proficiency Award winners, Star Award winners, Chapter Awards, and various scholarship recipients. Requirements for all degrees, student awards and chapter awards can be found online in Texas FFA Policy Section 26: Selection Procedure for Degree Candidates, Student and Chapter Awards. *Note: Per PH 26.4 (g): A maximum of 45 hours from a Foundational SAE will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements for advanced FFA Degrees above the Chapter Degree.*

Texas FFA Degree Check Requirements				
Requirements	Star Application	Proficiency Application	Lone Star Degree	American Application
Financial Record end date	April 1 of application year	Dec. 31 of year immediately prior to applying	April 1 of application year	Dec. 31 of year immediately prior to applying
Application program	Theaet.com	Theaet.com	Theaet.com	Theaet.com
Does the Record Book need to be Included?	Yes, hard copy must accompany application	Yes, hard copy must accompany application	Yes. The decision for the either the hard copy or electronic format will be announced by April 1 on the Degree Check webpage.	Yes, hard copy must accompany application
Duplicate application needed?	Yes. First application and star application in folder AND two copies of the application and star application	No	No	No
Award Folder Needed?	Yes	No. Please staple application in top left-hand corner	No. Please staple application in top left-hand corner	No. Please staple application in top left-hand corner

\*Rubrics and check sheets for all proficiencies, degrees, and star awards can be found here:  
<https://www.texasffa.org/degree-check>

## Section 10: Finding Success with Awards and Degrees

### Required Hours

- A member must have completed 180 AFNR hours per year for degree applications. For example;

Year(s)	Classroom Hours	Year(s)	Classroom Hours
1	180	3	540
1.5	270	3.5	630
2	360	4	720
2.5	450		

- SAE Placement Hours - \*Caution\* If paid and/or unpaid placement hours significantly exceed 2,080 hours in any single year in which the applicant is a student, an explanation must be provided in the application of how hours were earned while not violating Federal Child Labor laws.
- Community service hours must come from at least **two different** activities.

### Record Books

- Record books may be printed front/back and placed in a braded folder, stapled in top left corner, or in a binder.
- No journaled class hours are required however, the SAE must have at least 1 hour of time/activity toward the SAE.

### SAE

SAE plans should answer the questions similar to the examples provided below. Learning Objectives or SAE Competencies of the Plan should be related to the individual SAE and simple. Pick three to five objectives, not the entire list. **Stars and Proficiencies should be enhanced to meet the application.**

- Example of Learning Objectives / SAE Competencies for Market Swine SAE:
  - AS.02.03 Select animals for specific purposes and maximum performance based on anatomy and physiology.
  - AS.03.01 Prescribe and implement a prevention and treatment program for animal diseases, parasites and other disorders.
  - AS.04 Apply principles of animal nutrition to ensure the proper growth, development, reproduction and economic production of animals.
- Example of Learning Objectives / SAE Competencies enhanced for a **Star or Proficiency** award with a Breeding Beef enterprise:
  - AS.02.03 Select animals for specific purposes and maximum performance based on anatomy and physiology.
    - In addition to desired phenotype cattle selected as replacement females were evaluated based on yearling frame scores and weights. All females selected met a minimum frame score of 5.5 and could not exceed a frame score of 6.0. The parameters for yearling weights ranged from 1000 to 1100 pounds.
  - AS.03.01 Prescribe and implement a prevention and treatment program for animal diseases, parasites and other disorders.
    - As a means of decreasing illness and disease within my cattle herd, I developed a bi-

- annual vaccination program to aide in the prevention of clostridial and Bovine Respiratory diseases in calves, yearlings and mature cattle.
- AS.04 Apply principles of animal nutrition to ensure the proper growth, development, reproduction and economic production of animals.
  - With the assistance of a nutritionists I developed a custom creep ration which was \$120 per ton cheaper than the commercial ration previously used. In addition to the savings, the custom ration increased the average weaning weights of my calves by 11 pounds.

## Applications

All printed application that are turned in for scoring must have matching version numbers. If you revise your initial printed application, reprinting will regenerate a new version number on each page. Mis-matched version numbers may result in disqualification.

### • Star Awards

- All Star applications will be verified for correct categories prior to State Degree Check. This will eliminate students showing up at State Degree Check and finding out their application does not meet the criteria of the category. This verification date will be in late May along with the Star American/Honorary Lone Star Degree check.

### • Lone Star FFA Degree

- Must have 10 participations in at least 3 different activities.
- All Lone Star applications will have an automatic check to verify that the Greenhand and Chapter Degrees were earned.
- Officer positions, chairperson, and/or member of the Chapter's Program of Activities will be an automatic check.
- Years of Agricultural Education courses (four semesters) will be an automatic check.
- Community service will be a manual check for hours in at least two different activities.
- Lone Star Degree applications not meeting course hours or minimum requirements for hours/\$1000 dollars earned or productively invested will print off as "Draft".

### • American FFA Degree

- All American applications will be submitted to the area and state level in paper form.
- Texas FFA will submit all American FFA Degrees advancing to the National FFA electronically.

### • Proficiency Applications

- Proficiency Award applications that are not 100% entrepreneurship or placement must use the combination rubric.
- Combination applications must have percentages indicated.
  - For example, you have a goat production SAE where you produce goats and have generated \$600. You also work for another goat producer and have earned \$400. On your application you would indicate that your SAE is 60% production and 40% placement.
- Proficiency Award applications end on December 31st of the previous year and should not have any dates in the application for the current year. **Example: applications closes December 31, 2017. Therefore, 2018 should not show up in the application or resume.**