

## UPDATE

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U.S. Department of Education

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### DATES TO REMEMBER

#### March

- 1 WLC registration begins
- 10 Application deadline for the National Chapter Award program Superintendent
- 10 Application deadline for the National Chapter Award program Volunteer Superintendent
- 14 Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization Board Meeting – St. Louis, Missouri
- 15 T-shirt Design Contest Entries due – National FFA Center
- 16 National PAS Conference begins – St. Louis, Missouri
- 17 National Conference Staff Training Academy – Indianapolis, Indiana
- 17 National Association of Secondary School Principals Conference begins – Orlando, Florida
- 20 National Agriculture Day

#### April

- 8 National School Boards Association Conference begins – Chicago, Illinois
- 20 National Association of Agricultural Educators Region 1 Conference begins – Boise, Idaho

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### THE LATEST FROM FFA

#### The 79<sup>th</sup> National FFA Convention in Indianapolis

**Convention Planning Guide and Chapter Toolkit:** In mid-April, FFA advisors across the country will receive the *First Edition Advisor's Planning Guide* containing convention housing information. Included in the same mailing will be a welcome packet from the Indianapolis Local Organizing Committee. Be on the lookout for this important mailing.

**Online Convention Registration:** Pre-registration for the annual national FFA convention is always your best bet to ensure your chapter obtains opening session tickets, concert tickets and entertainment options. This year, pre-registering will be easier than ever before, thanks to online convention registration. Advisors nationwide will have the option to register online, seeing real-time availability of tour, National Day of Service, concert and rodeo tickets. You'll be able to print out a confirmation of your registration online, and, best of all, you'll receive FREE shipping and handling on your convention tickets and registration packet. Be on the lookout for important instructions in upcoming editions of *UPDATE* and the *Second Edition Advisor's Planning Guide* due out in August. Of course, you can always still FAX a hard-copy registration form to the National FFA Center, but shipping and handling charges will apply to registrations submitted this way.

**2006 National FFA Convention Registration – Indianapolis Housing Incentive:** The registration fee for the 2006 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., has been set by the National FFA Board of Directors at \$40 per person. As an incentive for using the official Indianapolis housing block, FFA will reduce the registration fee to \$30 per person for chapters registered through the housing block. The standard \$40 registration fee will apply to all participants who do not use the official Indianapolis housing block, including those who drive in locally. This two-tiered fee structure will ensure that the cost of the convention facilities – which include Conesco Fieldhouse, the RCA Dome, the Indianapolis Convention Center and the Indiana State Fairgrounds – is shared equally by all convention participants, regardless of their housing plans.

Just as was done in Louisville, a small portion of the daily room rates charged by the hotels in the official FFA housing block will be used by the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association to pay for the convention facilities. Since those outside the official housing block do not contribute to that portion of the facility payment, the incentive discount does not apply.

**2006 National FFA Convention - State Housing Blocks:** As a friendly reminder, a \$50.00 (non-refundable) deposit per room reserved is due to the National FFA office by June 1, 2006. (Checks should be made payable to the National FFA Organization.) On May 1, you will receive an e-mail verifying your room block (room types and counts). If you have any questions, contact: Ellen Williams, [ewilliams@ffa.org](mailto:ewilliams@ffa.org) or 317-802-4269.

Those states and chapters not participating in the state housing block can still reserve rooms. The forms will be included in the ***First Edition Advisor's Planning Guide***, which will be mailed approximately April 12. **The deadline for housing forms to be received by the National FFA is Sept. 25, 2006.**

**LifeKnowledge Founding Partners:** The Foundation is pleased to announce Cargill and Chevrolet have joined ranks with John Deere, Monsanto and the National Pork Board as Founding Partners for the LifeKnowledge Center for Agricultural Education. The FFA mission is to advance leadership, personal development and career success for students in agricultural education at all levels (middle school, high school and collegiate). We can accomplish this through the development of effective educational and motivational tools for young people. FFA will continue to seek the support of an international and diverse group of Founding Partners to achieve this goal.

**Engaging the Hispanic Community:** The National FFA Center hosted a meeting of 15 agriculture teachers from across the country March 3-4 to discuss engaging the increasing number of Hispanic students and families in traditionally Caucasian, non-Hispanic communities. The issue was identified as an area of critical need. The educators discussed attempted strategies, the needs and opportunities created by shifting demographics and ideas for future programs, services and changes in agricultural education and FFA. The 15 teachers were nominated by state leaders and were selected from applications. Industry experts, university researchers and FFA staff joined the teachers for the discussion. The meeting will produce a collection of best practices, ideas for new tools and services, and research needs for future efforts. It was conducted as part of the USDA Rural Youth Development grant received by National FFA to address tools and strategies to increase recruitment and retention in rural-serving agricultural education programs. For information on the meeting, contact Seth Derner, 317-802-4413, [sderner@ffa.org](mailto:sderner@ffa.org).

### **Volunteer and Employment Opportunities**

***Click on attached nca\_VOLUNTEER SUPERINTENDENT POSITION***

***Click on attached nca\_superintendentposition***

### **State Staff News**

The National FFA Organization is seeking a state association to host the entire national FFA officer team in early January, 2007, for the annual National FFA Officer Training Experience Week. This is a terrific opportunity to have all six officers in your state for seven days to interact with FFA members, advisors and supporters. Interested states can request an application by contacting Mark Wilburn, [mwilburn@ffa.org](mailto:mwilburn@ffa.org), 317-802-4252. Completed applications are due to Mark Wilburn at the National FFA Center by Sept. 1.

**2006 State Leadership Resource Guide - Now Available!** The proceedings from the **2006 National Ag Ed Inservice** are now available at <http://www.ffa.org/statestaff/inservice/index.htm>. This year, we are happy to provide this information online (only), so you will have access to it anytime, anywhere. Please enjoy this great resource!

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** "Due to the large size of some documents, it is advised that you right-click on the desired document link and select 'Save Target As'. Then, save the file to your computer **BEFORE** you attempt to open it."

### **CDE Information**

**CDE Web Updates:** Look for new and improved CDE forms and electronic files on the State Guide [www.ffa.org/statestaff/html/stateguide.html](http://www.ffa.org/statestaff/html/stateguide.html). For questions, contact: Jessica Scholer, CDE Certification Coordinator, [jscholer@ffa.org](mailto:jscholer@ffa.org), 317-802-4288.

**State CDE Plaques Available:** Please remember to order plaques for your state's CDEs. Orders must be submitted at least 30 days prior to your presentation using the state plaque order form found on the 2006 State Guide page (<http://www.ffa.org/statestaff/html/stateguide.html>). For questions, contact: Jessica Scholer, [jscholer@ffa.org](mailto:jscholer@ffa.org), 317-802-4288.

**2006 CDE Deadlines Announced:** Deadlines have been set for the 2006 National FFA CDEs. They are as follows:

June 1	Team Declaration Forms due
July 7	Team Certification Forms due
	CDE Special Needs Request due
	State Assistant Forms due
	State Speaking Judges Forms due
August 15	Prepared Public Speaking Manuscripts due
September 15	Agricultural Communications Portfolios due
	Agricultural Issues Portfolios due
	Job Interview Portfolios due
	Marketing Plan Portfolios due
October 11	Add/Delete Forms due

### **CDE Policy Change**

**Click on attached CDE Policy Change** for important changes affecting CDEs this year.

### **Merchandising**

**ffaunlimited.org—New and Improved!** Check out our new website with all the latest FFA merchandise. Sign up for FFA Unlimited e-mails so that we can send you info on great deals and important FFA updates. Check out [www.ffaunlimited.org](http://www.ffaunlimited.org).

### **Official Jacket: Now \$42.00!**

The price of a new standard size official jacket is now \$42! If you're counting, that's a decrease from last year's \$45 price and down from \$47 four years ago. Don't miss the opportunity to buy a new FFA jacket at the lowest price we've offered in more than ten years! Please note, tailored jackets are an additional \$20, and large size jackets are an additional \$3.50 on top of the new \$42 standard jacket price.

**Official Jacket Sample Sets: Now Available for Try-on!** Not sure what size jackets you need? Ease your mind for only \$20 (the outbound shipping cost) and order a full sample set of jackets for your students to try on and find the perfect fit. It's simple! Go to [www.ffaunlimited.org](http://www.ffaunlimited.org) and order the SAM-SET for \$250 plus shipping. Keep the jackets for two weeks, then pack them up with the provided ARS shipping labels and call UPS for pick-up. Upon return, your account will be credited the initial \$250 leaving only the \$20 shipping cost to be paid by you.

**DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MARCH 31! The Fifth Annual T-shirt Design Contest:** Encourage your local FFA chapters to get creative and submit a design for the Fifth Annual FFA T-shirt Design Contest. Entries are due Mar. 31, 2006.

Winning designs will be featured on t-shirts and sold in the 2006-2007 National FFA Blue Catalog and on [ffaunlimited.com](http://ffaunlimited.com). The winning chapters will earn 50 percent of the gross profits on the shirt's catalog sales for one year.

As of the end of January, the six winning chapters from the '05-'06 contest had earned a total of \$10,000. The #1 selling t-shirt, "05-DYNAMITE," has already earned \$5,486! See the 2005-2006 winners in this year's National FFA Blue catalog. (p. 16-17). For questions, contact: Dawn Sharp, 317-802-4271 or [dsharp@ffa.org](mailto:dsharp@ffa.org).

**New State Convention Merchandise Sales Program.** For complete details and this year's changes, please read the attached document carefully. The program is no longer a consignment program, but has changed to a regular sales order with a 25 percent discount with free shipping as long as no merchandise is returned. For question, contact: Dawn Sharp, 317-802-4271, [dsharp@ffa.org](mailto:dsharp@ffa.org).

**Click on attached StateSalesManual 2006**

**Click on attached 2006 Convention Assortment**

**Special State Association Plaque and Trophy Forms:** Time to start planning for your state conventions! Attached is the 2005-2006 Special State Association Plaque and Trophy form. If you are interested in adding something new, we now offer customized, solid walnut plaques in the shape of your state! Please see the attached PDF for details. For questions, contact: Heather Rutherford, 317-802-4283, [hrutherford@ffa.org](mailto:hrutherford@ffa.org).

***Click on attached 2006 Trophy Flyer***

**Shipping Capped for State Association Orders:** For orders exceeding \$1,500, state association orders for convention plaques, awards, medals and trophies will have freight charges "capped" at \$100 this year. To qualify, all award orders must be shipped to the same address within three months prior to the state convention date. The only items eligible to qualify for this special offer are plaques, awards, medals and trophies.

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

This freight cap provides a means for states to submit portions of a total convention order as needs are determined, as winners are selected, as recipients are identified or as state chapter awards are decided; as opposed to holding all awards for a large, single order closer to the convention date. By placing partial orders earlier, this allows for more engraving and production time, award proofreading, and validation of ordered item receipt. Contact: Sheridan Gilchrist, 317-802-4270, [sgilchrist@ffa.org](mailto:sgilchrist@ffa.org).

## ***Membership***

***Membership Totals for 2005-2006:*** *The Membership Team would like to thank those states that have already started sending 2005-2006 memberships. Through Feb. 22, 2006, we have received 331,975 members. The following states have reached over 90 percent of last year's membership total – Arizona, Missouri, New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, South Dakota, and Wyoming.*

## **FFA New Horizons Magazine Address Update – Subscription Deadline Dates:**

Members received by these dates will be included in the New Horizons magazine run for the next bi-monthly issue.

MAY/JUNE	APRIL 14, 2006
JULY/AUG	JUNE 14, 2006
SEPT/OCT	AUGUST 16, 2006
NOV/DEC	OCTOBER 13, 2006
JAN/FEB 2007	DECEMBER 9, 2006

## **Return of Membership TelSpan Training:**

Online Membership Issues

New issues to address – MAC users using Safari, Expiring/Deleting Members, Spring Supplemental, Etc.

MARCH 7 – 10:00 AM EST

Online Reporting – Pivot tables, Delegate Reports, Membership Accounting, etc

MARCH 8 – 10:00 AM

MARCH 15 – 2:30 PM

If you have any suggestions for training needs, contact Clay Worley, [cworley@ffa.org](mailto:cworley@ffa.org).

## **Educator News**

The National FFA Organization is excited to announce the 1 Million Hour Challenge — a special challenge issued to chapters across the country in an effort to unite youth with their communities. Knowing that service learning projects and

community development projects can take place throughout the year, FFA chapters will be challenged to document the number of service hours they take part in from Nov. 1, 2005 to Oct. 1, 2006. The 1 Million Hour Challenge is really very simple, but it can make a great impact. Visit [ffa.org](http://ffa.org) and click on the 1 Million Hour Challenge logo for more information on how to log hours for your chapter.

**Sponsor Labels:** Due to a formatting problem, we have not been able to supply chapters with the Proficiency application 2006 sponsor labels. Due to this problem, the sponsor labels will be supplied to the state with their convention state check order. Please do not penalize any application due to this sponsor label problem. We are working on formatting the labels into an Avery 5162 label that we will be able to place on the FFA website. Contact: Rosalie Hunsinger, 317-802-4255 or [rhunsinger@ffa.org](mailto:rhunsinger@ffa.org).

**Applications (Proficiency and American Degree):** We have received numerous phone calls regarding the Proficiency and American Degree applications not showing a zero in the cells that hold numbers. Due to the new calculation that only allows "Whole Numbers" to be entered, the zeros do not show up in the number cells. This is across the board and all applications will appear the same. Contact: Rosalie Hunsinger, 317-802-4255 or [rhunsinger@ffa.org](mailto:rhunsinger@ffa.org).

**New Core Catalog to Hit Mailboxes in March:** Be looking for the latest edition of *The Core*, a catalog packed full of resources and teaching tools for agricultural education classrooms, on your desk in March. You'll find 14 new products, including revised editions of ***The Official FFA Student Handbook*** and ***Official FFA Manual***. New resources you'll have to check out include the **Program of Activities Tool** for planning and managing local POAs and a **Substitute Teacher Guide** jam-packed with activity based lesson plans and ideas for preparing for your next sub.

If you'd like extra copies for your department or for use with pre-service teachers, please e-mail [coreadvice@ffa.org](mailto:coreadvice@ffa.org). When making your request, please let us know how many copies you'd like and they should be sent. *The Core* – Your First Stop for Agricultural Education Resources.

**Student Handbook and Official FFA Manual Get Facelifts:** When the latest edition of *The Core* catalog arrives on your desk in March, you'll notice the Student Handbook and Official FFA Manual both have a new look! In 2005, we traveled to eight states around the country and visited with over 120 FFA members and local teachers asking what information was needed in the Student Handbook and Official FFA Manual. All of the changes you'll see have come from their input and the thoughts of others who have shared with us throughout the last couple of years. In the case of the Official Manual, you'll only see cosmetic changes – all of the vital information you've relied on the Manual to have will still be there, now in a user-friendly, well organized way.

As the **Student Handbook** is on a five-year revision cycle, 2006 is the scheduled year for an updated version to come out. The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the "text" on FFA boasts over 100 pages filled with:

- Over 60 interviews with students, former FFA members and agricultural professionals
- An exciting exploration on what FFA is
- A comprehensive investigation of how FFA got its start
- Fun facts on FFA and its traditions
- A complete look at what FFA has in store for its members, especially at the local level
- Tons of examples of what each of the POA committees may do at the local level
- Pages full of ideas on how to make the most of the FFA experience
- Loads of ideas from national proficiency finalists on SAE programs and proficiency areas
- Prompts to facilitate students answering the question, "Where do I go from here?"

Lesson plans, challenging questions, activities, discussion topics, vocabulary words, video clips and PowerPoints can be found in the completely renovated Advisor's Guide to the FFA Student Handbook. Product development for the Student Handbook was funded by Bayer CropScience as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The **Official FFA Manual** still has the important information about FFA history, traditions, ceremonies, chapter operations, programs, activities, awards and policies that you've always found in the Official FFA Manual. After seeking the recommendations of teachers and students, the new look is "fun" to suit students' feedback and organized in a user-friendly format to meet the requests of teachers.



New features include:

- Tabs in the side margins to help categorize information and make it easy to find,
- Reorganized text to enhance the flow of information
- Relocated Creed and Opening/Closing Ceremonies to the center of the book for quick and easy access.

### Previously

**National Convention Judges:** The National FFA Organization is accepting nominations for judges for the Agricultural Proficiency Awards, Stars, Agriscience Awards, and National Chapter Awards at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana this fall. The Agricultural Proficiency and the Star Awards judging will take place on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2006, and all of the judges will be invited to an awards luncheon on that day. The Agriscience Awards will be judged on Wednesday, Oct. 25 and Thursday, Oct. 26. National Chapter Awards will be judged on Wednesday, Oct. 25. We are not able to cover any expenses for the judges. Nominations can be submitted on the attached form and should be mailed to Rosalie Hunsinger, National FFA Organization. P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, fax 317-802-5255.

**Washington Leadership Conference:** It's time to start planning for the 2006 Washington Leadership Conference. Due to the increasing popularity of WLC, *the 2006 conference will be offered for seven weeks* instead of six! The 2006 conference dates are; June 6-11, June 13-18, June 20-25, June 27-July 2, July 11-16, July 18-23, July 25-30. *Advisors: be sure to read about the new advisor program options and registration.* Visit [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org) for updates. Registration begins March 1, 2006. Contact: Tina Paris, 317-802-4238, [tparis@ffa.org](mailto:tparis@ffa.org) for specific questions.

**Internship Opportunity:** Summer internship opportunity offered at the National FFA Center. The National FFA Organization will be offering an eight-week internship opportunity for an experienced teacher to work with SAE-based awards and activities this summer. Please encourage interested teachers to check the job posting on the website or to review the advertisement in the January and February issues of "Advisors, Making A Difference". Applications for the position are due postmarked by April 1, 2006. Contact: Rosalie Hunsinger, 317-802-4255, [rhunsinger@ffa.org](mailto:rhunsinger@ffa.org).

**UPDATE** is available online each month at [www.ffa.org/media/html/med\\_pub\\_index.htm](http://www.ffa.org/media/html/med_pub_index.htm). Attachments are also available online.

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### The FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth** and **career success** through agricultural education.

### The Agricultural Education Mission

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

The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the National FFA Organization Constitution and Bylaws.

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

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