

UPDATE

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U.S. Department of Education
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DATES TO REMEMBER

January

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| 5-21 | International Leadership Seminar for State Officers |
| 31 | Risk Management Essay submissions due, FFA Center |

February

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| 5-8 | National Agriculture Education Inservice, Indianapolis |
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March

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| 15 | T-shirt design submissions due, FFA Center |
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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FFA

SPAM Alert

It has recently come to our attention that the FFA "allstaff" e-mail address has been harvested and used to send SPAM (unsolicited commercial e-mail) to members of that group distribution list—particularly those of you who participate in the various ListSrvs. In the current age of electronic identity theft, we want to assure you that the staff of the National FFA Organization will *never* send you e-mails requesting credit card information or your password for any FFA or non-FFA (i.e., PayPal) computer systems or websites.

If you receive any e-mail message requesting your password or credit card information, even if it appears to originate from FFA, be assured it is SPAM and was not sent by the National FFA Organization. For your protection, you should also delete the message without opening any of its attachments, and empty your e-mail program's trash can of deleted files frequently. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to contact webmaster@ffa.org. Thank you.

Enhancements Help You Make the Most of ffa.org: If you've visited ffa.org lately, you might have noticed that the menus and search engine on the home page look different and give you more options. You can click down eight levels on the dynamic menu as well as choose different options for your search. In addition, the site index has been recently revised and updated, and is now a handy place to search alphabetically for all FFA programs, activities and information.

The new menus use a widely available free plug-in called "Flash" (click here to install the FlashPlayer plug-in) that allows them to load quickly and store lots of information without taking up much file space. If you don't have Flash installed on your browser, you might see a blank blue box on the left side of the ffa.org homepage. If, for any reason, you are unable to install FlashPlayer, you can still access all the upper-level pages, the site index and the contact FFA page, which still allows you to access all the site's content.

You can access the search engine in the upper left corner of the homepage, just under the ffa.org logo. The new menus load directly under the search box. To get to the site index, click on the "Site Index" text link in the upper right corner of the homepage. Text links to the teacher, student, chapter and Team Ag Ed pages are across the bottom of the homepage. And, the

"Contact FFA" page is available in one click from the homepage; the link is right next to the site index, so all your program and contact information is just one click away.

In addition to the homepage, we encourage you to bookmark an additional "starting point" on ffa.org. We've attempted to create pages making the most useful information available to our different user groups. If you're a state staff member, consider using the [FFA State Staff Connection](http://www.ffa.org/statestaff/index.html) <<http://www.ffa.org/statestaff/index.html>> page as your jumping-off point. Here, you'll find one-click access to the current listing of state staff contacts as well as links to the most frequently requested state staff information. If you're an agriculture teacher/advisor, try the [Teacher Workroom](http://www.ffa.org/html/teacherindex.html) <<http://www.ffa.org/html/teacherindex.html>> page; it has one-click links to all the information our teachers consistently request. Bookmark one of these pages as a favorite in your browser, and you'll have a starting point that should get you to your most valuable information quickly and easily.

As always, if there's information you consistently need that you feel should be added to one of our pages, please let us know by contacting webmaster@ffa.org. With the volume of information available on our site, we're always working to make it easier for you to find what you need quickly and painlessly.

2004 NLCSO Dates and Locations announced: Dates and locations for the 2004 round of National Leadership Conferences for State Officers are complete. The following are the confirmed dates and locations for this coming summer: Wyoming - June 20-23, 2004; Louisiana - June 20-24, 2004; Nebraska - June 22-25, 2004; Kentucky - June 28-July 1, 2004; New York - June 27-July 1, 2004; Washington - June 28-30, 2004; Arizona - July 4-9, 2004; North Carolina - July 6-9, 2004; Virginia - Aug. 2-6, 2004.

More information on NLCSO will be available in coming months. For questions regarding location details please contact the state staff in the respective states listed above. For questions specific to program content, national FFA officers, or NLCSO contact Doug Kueker, dkueker@ffa.org <<mailto:dkueker@ffa.org>>. National Leadership Conference for State Officers is sponsored by Ariat International, International Truck and Engine, Intervet, Wayne Farms LLC, Wrangler and KRAFT Inc. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Enter the 2004 Risk Management Writing Contest! FFA members can win an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., when they enter the 2004 Risk Management Writing Contest. Encourage your members to write a personal essay of no less than 1000 words on the topic of risk management strategies used in a Supervised Agricultural Experience Program (SAE) and send it to the National FFA Center. Students should analyze the risks involved in their SAE, describe their risk management strategies and indicate which "tools" were used to minimize risk and how they were applied.

All entries must be postmarked by Jan. 31, 2004. Ten lucky winners and their advisors will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they will meet with top U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and tour our nation's capital. A resource guide and contest rules will be mailed to all chapters in December; contest information and last year's winning essays are posted at ffa.org.

If you have questions, or would like a copy of the Risk Management Essay Contest materials sent to FFA advisors, contact the Risk Management Writing Contest Program Coordinator by e-mailing riskmanagement@ffa.org. This contest is offered by the National FFA Organization in cooperation with the National Council for Agricultural Education and with funding from the Risk Management Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

National FFA Collegiate Scholarship Program: Members are living the FFA tradition through their academic involvement, community service, leadership development, SAE and FFA activities. Encourage them to be a part of another rich legacy-the National FFA Collegiate Scholarship Program.

More than \$2 million in scholarships is available for 2004, and FFA has awarded nearly \$20 million during the past 20 years. Scholarship books have been mailed to all chapters. If an advisor has not received one, please have them contact the scholarship office at scholarships@ffa.org. Applications must be postmarked by Feb. 15, 2004. Also, advisors can visit <http://www.ffa.org/programs/scholarships/index.html> to download an application.

Call for Nominations for National FFA Delegate Coordinator: There are three delegate coordinator positions available for the National FFA Organization beginning in 2004. Delegate coordinators must be agricultural education teachers, state leaders, or teacher educators. The term is for three years and has two major responsibilities.

The first responsibility is attendance at the State Presidents' Conference (SPC) in Washington, D.C., typically held the third or fourth week of July. All expenses are paid for this trip by the national organization. The coordinator will lead or co-lead one of the delegate issue committees for national convention. Following SPC, the coordinator must send a letter to the entire committee welcoming the students to the convention and committee work and coordinate a plan of action for convention with the delegate committee chair.

Second, the coordinator must attend the national FFA convention and devote all day Tuesday and all morning Wednesday to the delegate process. The national organization provides a \$150 stipend for this trip; coordinators are responsible for travel to convention and lodging at convention. The coordinators responsibilities at the convention include attending chairperson/coordinator meetings and facilitation workshops. The coordinators are asked to have a useful, working knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Delegate work at convention consists of training, testimony hearings, committee deliberations, and general assembly meetings. Coordinators are required to facilitate all of these with the exception of the general assembly hearings. Following the convention, the coordinator sends a thank you letter to each committee member.

The delegate coordinators that will be serving next year are:

Dr. Andrew Baker, Illinois
Ben Scheierman, Alabama
Donelle Johnson, Nebraska (head coordinator for 2004)
Val Aarsvold, Minnesota
Jim Scott, South Carolina
Michael Brammer, Pennsylvania
James Craft, Illinois

Currently, the western and eastern regions have the fewest coordinators, so emphasis will be placed on selections from those regions. All who are interested, however, should apply. Those interested in serving may nominate themselves, and other state leaders can nominate individuals they believe would be well suited for service to the organization in this capacity. Please send nominations in an e-mail to sderner@ffa.org no later than Dec. 10, 2003.

Baxter Black's Ag Man comic book available for classroom use: Based on the premise that 21st Century agricultural education is more than "just feeding your pig," Ag Man comics utilize Baxter's unique sense of humor to introduce controversial and sensitive topics that impact the

agriculture industry. They present stimulating topics in a digestible format for classroom study and discussion that covers the broad spectrum of agriculture's impact and challenges in a world of famine, politics, technology, increased production and bio-terrorism.

Along with the comic book there is a Teacher's Guide highlighting the key components of these issues. Ag Man is arming students with the facts, so that they will be able to respond intelligently and reasonably to biased accusations when they hear the misinformed use modern agriculture as a scapegoat.

You can download a sample Ag Man issue and teacher's guide on ffa.org at <http://www.ffa.org/html/teacherindex.html>. To order the comic books, visit www.baxterblack.com.

National Officer Training Experience State Named: The Georgia FFA Association has been selected to host the 2003-04 through 2005-06 National FFA Officer teams for the annual National Officer Training Experience. This year's event is scheduled for Jan. 5-9, 2004. The Georgia FFA Association has arranged for chapter visits, school assemblies, meetings with government officials and media interviews as an introduction for the officers to their year of service. Contact Tiffany Sanderson, tsanderson@ffa.org.

CONVENTION NEWS

2003 National FFA Convention song: The 2003 National FFA Convention theme song is now available on the website. Visit <http://www.ffa.org>, and scroll down to "2003 National FFA Convention Theme Song." Right click, then choose "save target as." This will allow you to save the song to your computer as an mp3 file.

2003 National FFA Convention Photography: Congratulations to each American FFA Degree recipient who walked across the stage during convention. Chappell Studios was hired to take photos of each individual who did so-one backstage and one onstage. Proofs were mailed directly to each recipient and included information on how to access, review and purchase the photos online via www.chappell.com. There is no obligation to purchase photos. If American FFA Degree recipients have not yet received their proofs, they can contact Chappell directly at 1-800-424-3686 for more information.

Looking for a great photo to commemorate national convention? You can still purchase a state group photo. Contact Chappell Studios directly at 1-800-424-3686 for more details or to order a print. Do you want another copy of that CDE team/award, proficiency, national chapter, agriscience or H.O. Sargent print for your chapter scrapbook, as a gift or for a memento? Visit www.orderyourphoto.com to purchase additional photos. You must have a password to view and order pictures. The password is: FFA at 75. Contact Nicole Bishop at nbishop@ffa.org for more information or if you have questions.

Please note: The Monday Morning Monitor gave incorrect photo information in the Nov. 17 issue. The web address for "King Shots" referenced in that publication has no photos from the 2003 FFA convention.

MERCHANDISE

The third annual T-shirt design contest entries are due March 15, 2004: FFA is looking for some creative students to submit their designs. Winning designs will be featured on t-shirts sold in the 2004-2005 National FFA Blue Catalog and online store. Encourage your FFA members to submit all those fabulous designs that have been produced at the local level. If their design is

selected, their chapter will earn 50 percent of the gross profits on the catalog sales for one year. See the 2003-2004 winners in this year's blue catalog. (See p. 16-17) For questions, please contact Dawn Sharp, dsharp@ffa.org.

Give a gift that makes them feel warm and fuzzy this holiday season! From stadium blankets to cuddly teddy bears, FFA has the perfect gift for your friends and loved ones. Shop online today and get FREE shipping on orders of \$100 or more. Offer is good until 12/31/03 and is valid on Blue catalog merchandise and online orders only. Official dress is excluded. Log onto www.ffaunlimited.org <<http://www.ffaunlimited.org>>, and enter coupon code "HOL2003" at checkout.

STATE STAFF NEWS

National Agriculture Education Inservice: We are pleased to announce that the National Agricultural Education Inservice will be held Feb. 5-8, 2004, at the downtown Adams Mark Hotel in Indianapolis. We will follow the same registration format used last year. Please read all the attached information and make plans to attend the upcoming Inservice.

In addition, we will conduct the National New State Staff Inservice (NSSI) on Feb. 4-5, 2004, at the same location. This is a wonderful opportunity for new state staff to learn more about the programs and services provided by the National FFA as well as connect with the individuals who facilitate them. Those who would greatly benefit from the NSSI are new state FFA advisors, executive secretaries, directors, and other new state staff who work closely with the National FFA Organization. NSSI will run from noon on Wednesday, Feb. 4, until noon Thursday, Feb. 5. At the conclusion of NSSI, new state staff will also have the opportunity to attend the National Agricultural Education Inservice. Those who wish to attend NSSI prior to the National Ag Ed Inservice are asked to check the appropriate box on the attached registration form (*AEIS 2004 Registration Form*).

For questions on registration, please contact Michele Gilbert, Local Program Success assistant, National FFA Organization, 317-802-4301, mgilbert@ffa.org.

For questions on the National Ag Ed Inservice or NSSI, please contact Tony Small, Local Program Success manager, National FFA Organization, 317-802-4300, tsmall@ffa.org.

Future National Ag Ed Inservice Dates: February 3-6, 2005; February 2-5, 2006.

Future NSSI Dates: February 2-3, 2005; February 1-2, 2006.

INTERNATIONAL HAPPENINGS

Teacher Resources: The FFA Global website has numerous resources available for teachers to utilize in their classrooms. Choose from a wide range of lesson plans and interactive global projects. Bring global agriculture into your classroom by visiting: www.ffa.org/programs/global/ online resources or call 317-802-4309.

FFA Global Leadership Training available online: FFA Global is looking for agriculture instructors who are interested in exploring agriculture in our exciting online learning program about global agriculture. A "real world" storyline allows students to learn about global agriculture and U.S. policy as they follow the lives of two fictional FFA members as they travel to Moldova, Honduras and Ethiopia. Several chapters are already using the program, and if you are interested in learning more about this project, please contact FFA Global at 317-802-4309 or

at global@ffa.org. Visit the FFA Global Leadership Scenarios site at <http://www.ffa.org/scenarios/> today!

International Teacher Opportunities: Competitive scholarships are available for agriculture teachers to participate in an international experience through EARTHWATCH. The scholarships are available for use in 2004. EARTHWATCH institute promotes sustainable conservation of our natural environments and cultural heritage by creating partnerships among scientists, the general public, educators and businesses. Expeditions take place year round throughout the world. Participants can receive up to \$1500 scholarships to cover a portion of the expedition costs plus membership to EARTHWATCH. To learn more about the expeditions available, visit www.earthwatch.org <<http://www.earthwatch.org>> Scholarship applications are available online at www.ffa.org/programs/global/. Please call 317-802-4309 for more information.

UPDATE is also available at www.ffa.org/news/html/ffapubsindex.html#update each month. Attachments are 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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