



West Virginia FFA Association

State Constitution



Updated - November, 2015



Article I – Name

Section A - The name of this organization shall be "The West Virginia FFA Association." Members hereinafter referred to as "Future Farmers of America." The letters "FFA" may be officially used to designate the organization, its units or member thereof.

Article II – Objectives of the Organization

The objectives of the organization shall be consistent with Section A of the organization's Federal Charter – Public Law 81-740. The organization shall cooperate with national and state governing agencies and officials for vocational education in accomplishing the following objectives:

1. To be an integral part of the organized instructional programs in agricultural education which prepares students for a wide range of careers in agriculture, agribusiness and other agricultural related occupations.
2. To strengthen the confidence of students in themselves and in their work by developing desirable work habits and the effective usage of their time: by learning to assume responsibility and by developing competencies in communications, human relations and other social abilities leading to intelligent choices of careers and successful employment entrepreneurship in agricultural industry.

3. To provide agriculture related programs and activities which will develop pride, responsibility, leadership, character, scholarship, citizenship, patriotism, thrift and which will improve the economic, recreational, environmental and human resources of the community.
4. To encourage and recognize achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs, scholarship, leadership and other individual and group activities, by providing awards to deserving members and chapters.

Article III – Organization

- Section A - The West Virginia FFA Association is a state organization of (1) chartered local chapters in schools having organized instruction in agricultural education under provisions of the national vocational education acts; (2) a collegiate chapter. The State Association is affiliated with the National FFA Organization.
- Section B - Chapters of the National FFA Organization shall be chartered only in such schools where recognized systematic instruction in agricultural education is offered under the provisions of federal vocational education legislation. Such chapters shall operate as an integral part of the instructional program of agricultural education.
- Section C - Collegiate chapters may be chartered by the state association in two or four year postsecondary institutions where agricultural courses are taught.

Each chartered collegiate chapter may adopt a constitution which shall not conflict with that of the national organization or the respective state association, elect officers and establish a Program of Activities.

Collegiate chapter members shall pay State and National FFA Organization dues.

Section D - To establish a local chapter, prospective members shall meet, organize, adopt a constitution not in conflict with the state and national constitutions, elect officers, set up a program of activities and budget, after which they shall apply to the state executive committee for a charter and membership in the State Association. Upon receipt of a charter from the State Association, a chapter and the members thereof will be recognized as FFA members.

Section E - Local chapters of the state shall be grouped into regions corresponding to the regions into which the state is divided by the agricultural education supervisory staff for administrative and supervisory purposes.

Article IV – Procedure for Determining Standing of Chapters

Section A - A chapter shall be in good standing with the state association when the following conditions are met:

1. All annual state and national dues have been paid by the date determined by the state association.

2. All reports have been submitted as requested by the state association.
3. Provisions of the chapter constitution do not conflict with the State or National FFA Constitutions and chapter activities are in harmony with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

The governing body of the state association shall have the power to suspend the charter of any chapter which violates the State or National FFA Constitution and Bylaws. A report on all suspensions shall be presented to the delegates at the next succeeding state convention. In the event a chapter is not in good standing with the state association at the time of the opening of a state convention, the delegates in session at that state convention shall have the power, upon recommendation of the state association governing body, to withdraw the charter and refuse such a chapter official representation at the state convention. When such action is taken, the chapter in question and members thereof shall be denied the privileges of membership in the state association. Upon meeting the requirement for good standing, a chapter may be reinstated by action of the state association governing body.

In the event a local department of agricultural education is discontinued, its chartered FFA chapter may officially operate for a period not to exceed three years (36 months) from the date of discontinuance, provided proper supervision is given by a person having the approval of the local school administrator and the state FFA advisor. The chapter's charter must be

surrendered to the state advisor at the end of the three year period if a local department of agricultural education is not in operation in the school at that time.

Article V – Membership

Section A - Membership in the National FFA Organization shall be of four kinds: active, alumni, collegiate and honorary.

Section B - Active Membership – To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary agricultural education program. The West Virginia Association considers “secondary agricultural education programs” to be grades 7-12.

To become an active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education 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 organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.

4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

A member may retain active membership until November 30, following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school

A member in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America or into the FFA international program shall be in good standing during the period of active service without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces or FFA international program 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 using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advanced degrees of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service or completing their FFA international program and indicate such a desire by paying dues and attending meetings. Members participating in a six-month armed services program or participating in the FFA international 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.

Section C - Alumni Membership – Membership shall be open to former active members, collegiate and honorary members, present and former

professional agricultural educators, parents of FFA members and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

Section D - Collegiate Membership – Collegiate membership shall be open to students who are enrolled in agricultural courses or who are pursuing career objectives in the industry of agriculture at a two- or four-year postsecondary institution having a collegiate FFA chapter.

Section E - Honorary Membership – Farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisor, teachers, staff members in agricultural education, 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. Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree in the local chapter, and Honorary State FFA Degree in the state association.

Article VI – Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership

Section A - There shall be five degrees of active membership based upon individual achievement. These are: Discovery FFA Degree, Greenhand FFA Degree, Chapter FFA Degree, State FFA Degree and American FFA Degree. The national organization shall set the minimum qualifications for each degree. The Discovery FFA Degree is intended for use in state associations and local chapters where middle school membership is offered. Receipt of this degree is not necessary in order to obtain the Greenhand FFA Degree or subsequent degrees.

Section B Discovery FFA Degree – To be eligible to receive the Discovery FFA Degree from a chapter, the member must meet the following requirements:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education class for at least a portion of the school year while in grades 7-8.
2. Have become a dues paying member of the local, state and national levels.
3. Participate in at least one local FFA chapter activity outside of scheduled class time.
4. Have knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Be familiar with the local FFA chapter program of activities.
6. Submit written applications for the degree.

Section C - Greenhand FFA Degree – To be eligible to receive the Greenhand FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the FFA Creed, Motto, Salute and the mission statement.

3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws, and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Personally own or have access to the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.
7. Submit written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

Section D - Chapter FFA Degree – To be eligible to receive the Chapter FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 180 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program and be enrolled in an agricultural education course.
3. Have participated in the planning and conducting of at least three official functions in the chapter Program of Activities.

4. Have earned and productively invested at least \$150 by the member's own efforts or worked at least fifty hours in excess of scheduled class time, or combination thereof, and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
6. Have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA award programs.
8. Have a satisfactory scholastic record.
9. Submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.
10. Meet other requirements as established by the local chapter.

Section E - State FFA Degree – To be eligible to receive the State FFA Degree from the state association, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree.
2. Have been an active FFA member for at least two years (24 months) at the time of receiving the State FFA Degree.
3. While in school, have completed the equivalent of at least two years (360 hours) of systematic school instruction in agricultural

education at or above the ninth grade level, which includes a supervised agricultural experienced program.

4. A student after entering agricultural education must have:
 - a. Earned and productively invested at least \$1,000; or
 - b. Worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time;
or
 - c. A combination thereof, in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Demonstrate leadership ability by:
 - a. Performing ten procedures of parliamentary law.
 - b. Giving a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or the FFA.
 - c. Serving as an officer, committee chairperson or a participating member of a chapter committee.
6. Have a satisfactory scholastic record as certified by the local agricultural education instructor and the principal or superintendent.
7. Have participated in the planning and completion of the chapter Program of Activities.
8. Have participated in at least five different FFA activities above the chapter level.

9. Have participated in at least 25 hours of community service, within at least 2 different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.
10. Meet other requirements as established by the state association.

Written records of achievement of all requirements, verified by the chapter FFA advisor shall be submitted to the state association at least one month prior to the state FFA convention at which the State FFA Degree is to be received. The state advisor shall provide for review of the records and submit a recommendation to the state association governing body, which shall nominate at the state FFA convention the candidates who have been found worthy to receive the honor. The State FFA Degree will be conferred upon the candidates, subject to approval by the delegates at the state convention.

Section F - American FFA Degree – To be eligible to receive the American FFA Degree from the National FFA Organization, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the State FFA Degree, have been an active member for the past three years (36 months) and have a record of satisfactory participation in the activities on the chapter and state levels.
2. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least three years (540 hours) of systematic secondary school instruction in an agricultural education program or have completed the

program of agricultural education offered in the school last attended.

3. Have graduated from high school at least 12 months prior to the national convention at which the degree is to be granted.
4. Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program through which a member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise.
5. A student after entering agricultural education must have:
 - a. Earn at least \$10,000 and productively invested \$7,500 or
 - b. Earned and productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours, times a factor of 3.56, plus actual dollars earned and productively invested must be equal to or greater than the number 10,000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet the minimum requirements for the degree.
6. 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 the principal or superintendent.

7. Have participated in at least 50 hours of community service within at least three different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.
8. Applicants must submit an application electronically through ffa.org. Applicants must submit the signature page with the signatures of the chapter president, chapter advisor, superintendent or principal, and state advisor or state executive secretary, certifying accuracy of statements in the application and that the applicant conducted him/herself in a manner to be a credit to the organization, chapter and community.

Article VII – Procedure for Selecting American FFA Degree Recipients

- Section A - Applications for the degree must be approved by the state advisor or representatives(s) thereof and be received by the national organization not later than midnight of June 30, or show by postmark or other reliable evidence, to have been mailed to the national organization on or before June 15, prior to the national convention at which the degree is to be received.
- Section B - Applications must be submitted on the official form provided by the National FFA Organization.
- Section C - The National FFA Board of Directors shall review the American FFA Degree applications and recommend those candidates meeting the minimum qualifications. Final approval of the candidates shall be given by the delegates present at the national FFA convention.

Article VIII – Emblem

- Section A - The official emblem of the National FFA Organization shall include five symbols, namely; the plow, representing labor and tillage of the soil; the owl, representing wisdom; the rising sun, representing progress; a cross-section of an ear of corn, representing common agricultural interests; and an American eagle surmounting the cross-section of the ear corn, representing the national scope of the organization. The emblem shall also include the letters "FFA," and the words "Agricultural Education."
- Section B - All members shall be entitled to display the emblem.
- Section C - Greenhand FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official bronze emblem pin; Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official silver emblem pin; State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm; and American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.
- Section D - Honorary Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear either the official silver or gold emblem pin; Honorary State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm; Honorary American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.
- Section E - Collegiate FFA chapter members and FFA advisors shall be entitled to wear the official gold owl pin.

Article IX – Officers

- Section A - The officers of the State Association shall be a president, a secretary, and one vice president from each region. The state supervisor of agricultural education shall be state advisor. An executive secretary and/or treasurer from the state professional staff shall be named by the state advisor. The officers shall perform the usual duties of their respective offices. Vice Presidents shall be selected by the State executive committee to serve as vice president, reporter, treasurer and sentinel at meetings and conventions. The elected officers, the state advisor, the executive secretary and/or treasurer and the outgoing state president shall constitute the executive committee of the state association. The executive shall have authority and control over the association subject only to such regulations and bylaws as may be adopted by the state association at any annual convention. The officers of the association shall be active members elected annually by a majority vote of the delegates assembled in annual convention.
- Section B - Chapter officers shall consist of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter and sentinel. Additional officers may be designated if desirable. The local teacher of agricultural education shall assume the responsibilities of local chapter advisor. Where two or more teachers are employed in one school, one shall be designated as the chapter advisor. Officers of the local chapter shall be active members elected annually or semiannually at a regular meeting of the local chapter. The chapter executive committee shall be composed of the chapter officers.

- Section C - Only active members who have been elected to the State FFA Degree are eligible to hold state office. Officers in the local chapter must at least hold the Chapter FFA Degree after the chapter has been established in any given school for one year or longer.

Article X – Meetings

- Section A - A state convention shall be held annually and shall be at least 45 days prior to the national convention at a time and place to be determined upon by the state executive committee.
- Section B - The State Association will send delegates to the national convention designating a chair and vice chair, plus additional delegates based on the association's percentage of national membership.
- Section C - Local chapters shall hold their meetings monthly or more often throughout the calendar year and at such time and place as may be decided upon by the executive committee of the local chapter.
- Section D - Each local chapter shall be entitled to one delegate for the first twenty-five members or any fraction thereof and one additional delegate for each additional twenty-five members or major fraction thereof at the state convention.

Article XI – State Advisory Committee

- Section A - There shall be a State FFA Advisory Committee composed of the state supervisor of agricultural education; program specialists of agricultural education; one teacher-educator of agricultural

education; and one chapter advisor from each region elected alternately by the members of the West Virginia Agriculture Teachers' Association to serve a three-year term. The state advisor shall act as chairman.

Section B - The State FFA Advisory Committee shall cooperate with and serve in an advisory capacity to the state advisor of the FFA, assist with the administrative direction of the organization, and interpret the state constitution of the FFA.

Section C - The State FFA Advisory Committee shall have the power to approve or disapprove actions of the state executive committee and the delegates to the state convention.

Article XII - Dues

Section A - Annual membership dues in the state organization shall be fixed by the state executive committee on the basis of a budget submitted by the committee and approved by a majority vote of the delegates present at the State FFA Convention. The FFA year for payment of state and national dues shall be September 1 to August 31.

Section B - The dues of any chapter shall be fixed by the Chapter Executive Committee subject to a majority vote of the membership of that chapter.

Article XIII – Amendments

Section A - Proposed amendments to this state constitution may be submitted in writing by: Authorized representative of local chapter, the State FFA Advisory Committee or the State Executive

Committee. Proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Governing Body, and if approved by the Governing Body, submitted to the delegates at the state convention. Amendments may be adopted or revisions made in this state constitution at any State Convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates.

- Section B - Bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the state organization or any unit thereof, provided they are not in conflict with the state or national constitution.

Article XIV – Governing Body

- Section A - The governing body of the State FFA Association shall be composed of (1) the members of the executive committee of the State Association, and (2) the members of the State FFA Advisory Committee.

- Section B - The State Advisor shall serve as chairperson.

BYLAWS

Article I – Duties of the State Officers

- Section A - THE PRESIDENT. It shall be the duty of the president to preside over the State FFA Convention and over all meetings of the state executive committee. The president shall call one state convention each year on such date and at such place as shall be fixed by a majority vote of the state executive committee. The president shall appoint all committees and may serve as an ex-officio member of these committees.
- Section B - THE SECRETARY. The secretary shall perform the duties common to the office, such as keeping an accurate record of business conducted at sessions of the state convention and of meetings of the state executive committee. One copy of this record shall be given to the state advisor for the permanent file. The secretary shall perform other duties as directed by the state executive committee.
- Section C - VICE PRESIDENTS. It shall be the duty of each vice president, acting under the direction of the president, to look after the welfare of the State Association.
- Section D - THE STATE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/TREASURER. The state executive secretary-treasurer shall act as custodian of the funds of the organization; collect national and state dues; keep an accurate record of all receipts, bank deposits and disbursements; make an annual financial report at the state convention and supplementary reports as may be directed by the state executive

committee, including the presentation of annual budget at the state convention. The state executive secretary/treasurer shall pay out of the treasury such funds as are ordered paid by the executive committee on checks countersigned by the advisor, and shall furnish a complete report and financial records to be reviewed by the auditing committee.

- Section F - THE ADVISOR. The advisor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. It is also the advisor's duty to make recommendations to the state executive committee, convention delegates, and the FFA committees concerning matters of policy. The advisor will assist the state officers in conducting meetings and other activities. The advisor shall review all applications for State and American FFA Degrees and prepare a brief of the qualifications of the candidates.

Article II – Committees

- Section A - The president of the State FFA Association shall appoint the following three committees annually: nominating, auditing and program of activities. Other committees may be appointed if necessary.
- Section B - The nominating committee shall consist of an equal number of representatives from each region. The nominating committee shall, after careful consideration of the applicants, place in nomination the candidates for the various state offices.
- Section C - The auditing committee shall audit the books of the treasurer.

Section D - The committee on program of activities shall set up the annual objectives and goals of the State Association.

Article III – Reports to the State Executive Committee

Section A - Each chapter shall submit the following information to the state executive committee through the state advisor:

1. A list of the current chapter officers when required.
2. A copy of the chapter program of activities and budget.
3. A report on any changes in, or amendments to, the chapter constitution and bylaws immediately following such changes or amendments
4. A list of official delegates to the state convention at least ten days prior to the convention.
5. An annual chapter report on forms furnished by the state executive committee, giving such data on status, activities and progress as may be deemed advisable and called for by the state executive committee.

Article IV – Procedure for Electing State Officers

Section A - The nominating committee shall study and review the qualifications of all applicants who are eligible for election to a state office. This committee shall report its nominations during the state convention. Election of officers shall require a majority vote of the delegates.

- Section B - The president, secretary and vice presidents shall be elected from the membership with not more than one vice president from each region. The State Agricultural Education Supervisory Staff will designate the chapters comprising each region. Only the president and secretary may have previously held a state office in the West Virginia FFA Association.
- Section C - State officers shall be elected to serve from one state convention through the succeeding state convention. If a state convention is not held in any given year, the officers already serving shall continue to hold office through the next convention. The state executive committee, with the approval of the state advisory council, shall have the power to appoint officers to fill any offices declared vacant between state conventions.
- Section D - Candidates for state office from any one local chapter shall be limited to one candidate for state president or state secretary and one candidate for state vice president from their own designated region.

Article V – Procedure for Issuing Charters to Chapters

- Section A - Local groups shall apply to the state advisor for affiliation with the FFA organization. Using the form provided, applications shall be completed and submitted to the state advisor. The following materials must accompany the application for a charter:
1. A copy of the chapter constitution and bylaws.
 2. A copy of the chapter program of activities and budget.

3. A list of members who have paid dues.
4. A list of the names and addresses of chapter officers.
5. A remittance of \$1.00 to cover cost of charter and lettering.

Section B - Following completion of requirements outlined in Article V, Section A of these bylaws, a charter shall be granted by the state executive committee, provided the proposed chapter constitution is not in conflict with the state and national FFA constitutions, the charter to be signed by the state president, secretary and advisor.