



WARRENTON FFA — Members of the Warrenton FFA Chapter sit for a photo during their annual initiation ceremony in October. Submitted photo.

# The declassified FFA Survival Guide

Submitted by the Warrenton FFA Senior Class

Dear Newcomers,  
Welcome to the wonderful world of FFA. Many have passed through, been changed by, and created careers based on this very program you have chosen to be a part of. Here you will make some of the best memories, face the greatest challenges, and develop the best you possible. But don't be intimidated, with the help of your friends, fellow classmates, and this guide, you will have no problem making the most of the four years you will spend in this program. So here is the AG's declassified FFA Survival Guide:

### Always Pack Snacks

Trust us when we say, you will never have too many snacks. Whether you're at Area Leadership Conference, State Convention, or at a competition, you are bound to get a little hungry. Just about every senior has been stuck in a situation where they could not go get something to eat, and all they could think about the whole time is how hungry they were, rather than focusing on what they were there for. This will come in handy especially during contest season.

### Stuff your pockets

Although this one seems rather silly, we promise that when you get to your senior year you will regret throwing away that sheet of paper, or the spoon that you wrote on freshman year at an area event. Anytime you receive something from a local, area, state, or even national event, we suggest you keep it in the pockets of your jacket. You'll want the memory to

look back on, whether that is the next day or four years later in your senior year.

### Ladies, always bring an extra pair of panty-hose

Trust us, the nightmare of embarrassing mishaps with your tights will strike at any moment without mercy. Always keeping an extra pair on your person will save you from many embarrassing moments, especially at the bigger events you will go to.

### Gentlemen: Learn to tie a tie

Boys, let's be honest, it's not very cool to have your mom still be tying your tie into your senior year, so get a head start and learn as soon as possible. Then you can also teach all your friends, and on top of that, you'll eventually need it at some point in your life.

### Experience now, so you don't regret later

You are going to make some of the best memories of your life during your time in FFA, so make the most of it. Take every opportunity that is available to you, even if it means filling out what seems to be the hundredth application that week. Don't hesitate to act as soon as possible. You're going to look back on these days and wish you had one more moment, one more opportunity, and one more day in FFA. So act now, so you won't regret not doing anything later.

We hope that you are able to make the most, and experience all the wonderful things that FFA offers to you. Make the most of it, because four years flies by faster than you think.

# Celebrating who we are in FFA

Submitted by Stephanie Nunez-Cruz,  
Wright City FFA President

Every year in FFA we take a week to demonstrate to our community and district who we are as an organization and what we represent. It is a week in which we represent our organization's roots and celebrate with our fellow FFA members.

Throughout FFA week, we hold fun activities so everyone can participate. Of course, with recent events such as the pandemic we have had to plan out this year's FFA week a bit differently, such as holding Zoom meetings to organize the week's activities with fellow committee members, or by just planning events that allow us to not have as much contact with each other.

Even though we have had to manage with our current circumstances, Wright City FFA still continues on with celebrating FFA week.

This week we have planned events such as movie night, dress up days or cooking up an early breakfast for all members before school. We also plan on holding our annual FFA Week community project by helping our community through our district's pantry program, in which FFA members will donate canned and boxed goods or necessities such as deodorant or shampoo.

We have also planned on including all of the ag students to participate and help us bring our community together because that is what FFA represents. We represent FFA through our motto of "Learning to do, Doing to learn, Earning to live and Living to serve."





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# My favorite FFA memory

Submitted by Claire Erffmeyer, freshman

My favorite memory that I have of FFA is the Area 5 Leadership Conference. This is my favorite memory because it was my first FFA field trip and really gave me a first-hand look at what FFA really was.

As we arrived at the fairgrounds where the conference was being held, I was surrounded by people. Some I recognized and some were new faces. I was excited and yet extremely apprehensive at the same time. There were so many people as we went around to each station.

I remember that the officers at each station made everyone feel very comfortable. When we competed against another group from a different town, there was a sense of familiarity in the air. I knew that FFA was a place I wanted to be and I wanted to surround myself with these people.

FFA is an organization that teaches

you things that you couldn't learn anywhere else. It really helps build character, makes your work ethic stronger, and opens you to amazing opportunities that you wouldn't be able to pursue anywhere else.

While at the conference, I remember thinking how I didn't want to go back to school because that would mean that it would be over. Everything that I learned at that leadership conference has stuck with me in the short months that I have been in FFA. I have made friendships that have bettered me as a person. FFA has allowed me to see how agriculture is a huge part of our everyday life, and that without it we wouldn't have a lot of things we have today. I have been able to experience things I never would have thought possible if I hadn't joined FFA.

I never thought that I would have joined FFA, but I am so glad I did. The leadership conference is really what showed me what FFA was. That's why it's my favorite memory.



Thomas Miederhoff rakes hay for a local farmer as part of his placement supervised agriculture experience (SAE). Submitted photo.

# Excitement in FFA

Submitted by Corbin Schone, sophomore

I have enjoyed being in FFA for two years now, and it was one of the best decisions I have ever made. In FFA we do a variety of exciting things: fish fries, blood drives, fruit sales, meat sales, and attending a national convention every year.

One of my favorite activities is going to the national convention. It is an amazing experience, and we learn a great deal of information about farming. We learn about the new tractors that are available and how to use them in a variety of applications. We also learn about various farming techniques for growing different crops. We learn about livestock as well, and the various ways to raise them.

There are also opportunities to visit with college representatives and discover the opportunities each college has in the way of agriculture.

# The benefits of the SAE

Submitted by Thomas Miederhoff, freshman

As a freshman FFA member, I was given the task to develop an SAE – supervised agricultural experience. The purpose of an SAE is to allow students to explore the diversity of the agricultural field by either owning, working, or researching an agricultural topic. The goal of an SAE is to allow students to apply what they learn in the agriculture classroom and hopefully be able to manage those projects so they can earn a profit.

I decided to have a diversified SAE, since I am interested in a variety of agriculture topics. My SAE includes the following: swine production, wildlife management, and placement work experience for local farmers. Since I

have a passion for showing swine at the county fair, I knew I wanted to continue to raise and show market hogs for the county and state fair.

I also have always loved spending time outside hunting and fishing from a very young age. I chose to center my wildlife management SAE around scouting and trapping predator wildlife to reduce the negative impact they can have on the turkey population.

In order to be able to pay for the expenses that come from feeding animals and trapping wildlife, I work for local farmers. Working for these farmers has taught me that it is important to be dependable and to have good work ethic. I hope to continue to learn how to improve and expand my supervised agriculture experience throughout my high school career.

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The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, was founded by a group of young farmers in 1928. Their mission was (and still is) to teach and prepare the youth who will feed our future. Currently, there are more than 760,000 student members nationally.

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# What I’ve learned through SAE

## Becoming involved



Tanner Hargis gets targets ready for shooters at a local gun club. Submitted photo.

Submitted by Tanner Hargis, senior

If you’ve been around FFA members you may have heard the acronym SAE floating around. A supervised agricultural experience, or SAE for short, is an opportunity for an FFA member to learn important leadership, personal growth, and career success skills. However, an FFA member’s SAE does not have to relate to

their future career intentions. An SAE can come in all capacities on a large or small scale, and be complex or simple. For example, one’s SAE can be employment at a job, where the member earns pay and works for placement hours. In contrast, an SAE can be unpaid placement, where the member volunteers in the community. Additionally, an FFA member’s SAE can be a business the member started, making their

SAE an example of entrepreneurship. My supervised agricultural experience is employment at Benchrest Rifle Club of Saint Louis, where I work for paid placement hours. At Benchrest, I am a target crew employee. With that position comes many responsibilities. It is my duty to conduct competitive shooting matches. When a round during a competitive match is complete, it is my job to

go downrange and reset all targets in order to begin the next round. Consequently, it is also my responsibility to ensure that every participant in the match is following proper firearms safety practices. These safety measures include wearing proper shooting eye protection and hearing protection. Additionally, when a round has concluded and it is time for me to proceed downrange, I must confirm that all firearms are unloaded and placed in the provided gun rack. Once all firearms are placed in the rack with their muzzle pointed up, and their actions open, I can flip the switch turning on the flashing red lights indicating that the range is cold and it is safe to proceed downrange. My time working at Benchrest Rifle Club has taught me the importance of leadership in a workplace environment. It is crucial that I lead with responsibility to avoid mishaps at the range. Furthermore, my SAE has provided me with personal growth from the time I began employment. It has taught me career success skills that I intend to use throughout my future education, and future careers. My time spent at Benchrest Rifle Club is irreplaceable and an example of the irrefutable benefits the SAE program has on FFA and agriculture students.

Submitted by Alex Jaspering, junior

As a first year member of FFA, I don’t have a load of experiences with the group to share, but I can tell you why I wanted to be a part of the organization. I joined FFA in my junior year because I wanted to be more involved with my school as well as the community around me. I spent the first two years of my high school career avoiding any extra responsibilities outside of my education, but receiving the opportunity to see my direct impact on the people in my community has been incredibly fulfilling. I knew FFA was the organization for me because I saw how involved my sister was during her three years and it would give me an opportunity to explore my academic interests in agriculture. The group has been working away from the “only for farmers” ideas and incorporating more agricultural science and business.



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There’s more to FFA

Not just horse’n around

Submitted by Doralynn Lee, freshman

I joined FFA because it runs in my blood. Since my grandpa, my family has been in FFA – Grandpa, my aunt, my cousins, my mom, my brother, and now me. Watching my older brother thrive in FFA and knowing how much he loved it, I wanted in on the fun.

But FFA is more than just fun! I can see why my family loved it so much. They lived and breathed FFA because of how amazing it is. FFA isn’t just about agriculture. Though that is a big part, FFA is about leadership, community service, public speaking, and so much more.

I will admit, I was hesitant about joining FFA. I grew up on a farm watching the combines harvest in the fall, and the workers in the greenhouse were really interesting. Production agriculture wasn’t something that sparked excitement in me when I was younger. Now that I know that agriculture is so much more than raising crops, I can see why my family loved it so much. Yes, agriculture has crop production, but there’s also animal science, plant science, soil science, food science, livestock judging, ag mechanics, and so much more!

I encourage anyone that is even mildly interested in FFA to join!



Doralynn Lee raises and exhibits various poultry animals at the county fair.

Submitted photo.

There is more than you think to agriculture and FFA. Why are you still thinking about it! Get up and join FFA!

Submitted by Gabriella Scruggs, senior

I moved to Warrenton when I was 10 years old and about to go into fifth grade. My whole life prior to moving to Warrenton, the suburbs and city life were all I had ever known.

I have always loved horses since a young age, and was able to start taking riding lessons at the age of 5. By the age of 7, I was working with my mom on the weekends at a stable and had my first horse. When my family moved to Warrenton, I finally had my dream of having my horses in my backyard come true. I spent the next four years riding and showing my horses, and when I got to high school I joined the Warrenton FFA.

Through the FFA, I have had the opportunity to start my own business where I get to teach riding lessons and train horses.

Over the last four years as an FFA member, my business has grown tremendously. I teach approximately 12 students horseback riding lessons year-round, which is more than the four students I had when I started my business. I currently teach about six to eight lessons a week. In my first year I taught 48 hours of lessons, and at the end of my third year I had increased to teaching 88 hours worth of lessons.

Beside my lesson program, I have also bought and trained horses. I purchased, trained and sold two yearlings I raised since they were five days old. In addition, I also sold a 3-year-old mare who



Gabriella Scruggs, right, helps one of her students prepare for a local horse show competition. Submitted photo.

I had raised, trained, and broke myself. Over the past two years I have spent over 600 hours training and working with my horses. I take great pride in my business and hope to take my love of horses into the future with me.

I plan to go to the University of Missouri Columbia and major in animal science in the hopes of one day specializing in Equine Veterinary Care.

Why I joined FFA

Submitted by Cameron Faerber, sophomore

I was in seventh grade, and it was that time of the year for us to choose our classes for the eighth grade year. One of the options was Exploring Ag. Without hesitation, I chose that class.

I had always been interested in agriculture, but never had a good opportunity to get involved. That class led me into the FFA chapter at the high

school my freshmen year. I am in my second year here at the high school, and by far my favorite class has to be agriculture.

There are many reasons why one should join FFA: scholarships, contest teams, the memories, being part of a group, trap shooting – the list goes on. But whether you live in a neighborhood or live out of city limits, FFA has options for everyone. These are why I joined FFA at my high school.

Passion for plants and animals

Submitted by Lily Dalton

This is my first year of FFA. I joined FFA because I’ve always had a passion for plants and animals, and I wanted to find a way to put that passion toward helping the commu-

nity. I have always had a number of animals growing up, ranging from your typical house pets to the exotics. It is always a joy to mature and thrive alongside them. My goal is to offer the same privilege to the people around me.





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# Programs change, but FFA core stays the same

Submitted by Amy Kesler,  
Wright City FFA Advisor

As I sit at my desk preparing for another upcoming celebratory week in the FFA organization, I ponder my existence in the FFA since 1981. I was a sophomore in high school in a small town in Mexico, New York. I was one of three female students in the program.

I gravitated to this place in the building because it was way different than the traditional sit and listen classes. We got to go outside and plant trees. Go to the land lab and drive tractors plowing and planting fields. We made a makeshift greenhouse and started plants.

Then my junior year we were able to use an old barn and acquired animals. We had a gelding horse, dairy heifers, turkeys and beef steers. Nothing was better than going to the barn instead of sitting in a boring class.

The organization also showed me more than hands-on, get dirty lessons. It gave me an opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and present speeches. I was also able to go to summer camp and travel to the state fair and put on demonstrations for the public. I was able to travel to Kansas City, Mo., by charter bus to the National FFA Convention and to Washington, D.C., for the Washington Conference Program. I also served as a state officer representing District 7 as president.

These experiences shaped my decision to pursue an education in animal science and later obtain my degree in agricultural education from the University of Georgia. While in college I continued to pursue more opportunities in the collegiate FFA program. After finishing my degree I participated in a work experience abroad program in Australia for seven months. While in the country, I experienced working on a 38,000 acre sheep/beef ranch and also worked on a dairy farm that also raised swine. These experiences allowed me to put my book education to work in hands-on activities.

After returning to the United States I stayed in Georgia teaching for six years before moving to Missouri. I have been here for 24 years. While a teacher, I have seen many things in the FFA organization change. From an official name change to moving the National Convention from Kansas City, to Louisville, to Indianapolis. From changing and upgrading the emblem wording and the wording of the FFA Creed. From moving the National FFA Headquarters.

I have seen some contests go away and new ones added. Some contests add more components to them

to make them more challenging for the competitor. I have also seen the demographics of the organization change. More and more females are involved and more minorities are also involved. I have seen the first female, the first African American and the first English as a second language National President preside over the organization.

Let's not forget the world of virtual learning and learning more and more by computers. This year and the last half of the previous school year threw a huge curve ball at all students. However, for the ag program and the FFA, we had canceled contests, conventions, seminars, conferences and meetings. Learning how to navigate Zoom and rely on limited technology knowledge has been a challenge to most everyone including the teachers.

With these challenges came a whole new way of learning and learning to work together in virtual settings. Attending conferences in a Zoom meeting or attending National Convention via a website connection. Instead of taking a few students to Indianapolis, we took the whole class. Opening up new door ways for students to experience what the few in the past were lucky enough to attend. Allowing those students to explore careers and take advantage of industry people's knowledge, talking in group chats and live sessions.

That will definitely go down in my mind as a challenge that is met and conquered.

The organization as a whole has not changed from its initial values and standards. It has not changed the FFA Motto: "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live and Living to Serve." Those words which become action in the members' hands will never change. If anything, it will change an FFA member into a productive citizen within their community, their state, our country, and who knows, maybe someone who changes the look of agriculture on a global scale.

My goal as a teacher is to provide students with the agricultural knowledge that will last them a lifetime. Knowing where and how their food is grown. Knowing how so many products come about through the research of agriculture. However, I think more importantly, they leave my classroom with a general love of learning and wanting to pursue further education and obtain jobs that make them productive citizens.

They take those basic skills learned in the classroom and apply them to real world situations. They will know, "Without agriculture, they would be naked and hungry."



Dawn Sherman, second from right, stands for a photo with the other members of the 2020-2021 Area 5 FFA officer team. Sherman is president of the Warrenton chapter and secretary of the Area officers. Submitted photo.

# My Area Officer experience

Submitted by Dawn Sherman,  
senior

This year I have had the privilege to serve as the Area 5 FFA Secretary. As an area officer, I am responsible for serving 19 chapters within the Area 5 Association. As you can imagine, this year has created many hurdles. However, it has only made myself and my fellow officer team stronger.

While planning area events such as the Battle of the Chapters and the Area 5 Leadership Conference, my team and I had to think outside of the box to provide safe leadership experiences for all of the members in the Area 5 Association. In addition to the tradition-

al in-person events, virtual workshops and gatherings have been incorporated to ensure all FFA members are given the opportunity to attend events above the chapter level.

Even at virtual events, I have been able to network with other passionate FFA members and share my FFA story. While this year has been different, it has still been one of the best leadership opportunities I have had since joining the FFA organization. This year I learned to think outside of the box and how to problem solve, but most importantly I have learned to make the best out of every situation! I encourage all FFA members to act now because nothing is better than the present.

# FFA through my eyes

Submitted by Alexandra Chandler,  
freshman

The most recognizable symbol of FFA is our jackets. National Blue and Corn gold are the main colors displayed on our FFA jackets. These two colors are a source of pride and unity for our organization.

National Blue represents the patriotism in FFA. FFA is a national organization that spans from Alaska to the Virgin Islands, and from Maine to Hawaii. FFA members have always stood up for their country. We had hundreds of thousands of members that served during war. We even had one of our national FFA presidents step down from office to serve in the army during World War II.

Corn Gold is equally as important. When you think of gold, you think of value. FFA was built on a certain set of values. Hard-work, leadership, and determination. Farmers are what

built, and continue to support, our country. Their hard-work has continued to feed and support not only our country, but surrounding countries as well.

I have grown up with two of my older brothers in FFA. I have seen firsthand how it has changed them. It has strengthened their character and pushed them to take pride in all they do. I knew that following in their footsteps, and joining such an impactful organization that gives back to the community I have lived in all my life, was something I wanted to do.

From the beginning, FFA has taught me leadership, confidence, and better public speaking skills. The FFA members support you in and outside of FFA meetings. The teachers have been role models for me and shown me what it truly means to be a FFA member. FFA has molded me into the role model I want to be for my nephews and niece so they can see FFA through my eyes.

# Ridder joins Cattlemen's Committee

The Missouri Cattlemen's Association Executive Committee recently welcomed appointee John Ridder of Marthasville, who will serve as an at-large representative upon approval by the Board of Directors.

Ridder and his family operate Falling Timber Farm in Warren County, where they raise registered Angus and Hereford cattle, as well as row crops. In addition to the farm, Ridder works as a sales representative for GENEX and VitaFerm, and is ranked nationally for his successes in the sales world. He was appointed by MCA Pres-

ident Patty Wood to serve a one-year term as at-large representative, which is up for approval by the Board of Directors on April 8, 2021.

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