

April 17, 2020

The last several weeks have been unprecedented. Our hearts go out to you, your families, and anyone who has been directly or indirectly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19). Our heartfelt thanks go to the brave people in our communities who are helping protect each one of us. It is times like these that we cannot underestimate the collective power of working together and supporting each other. To that point, we want to thank all of our teachers for their patience and understanding as agricultural educators around the state tirelessly work to develop ways to engage our students and manage our personal lives during these extraordinary times.

As many of you are already aware, the most recent Executive order issued by Governor Cuomo, extends New York State on Pause through May 15, 2020.

As of 4/17/2020, New York Agricultural Education and FFA have made additional difficult decisions to postpone the date of the CDE/LDE Invitational to August and modify the June NYAAE conference. The NYAAE professional development committee has already met to start creating a virtual event.

We have based these decisions on the following critical factors:

- Our prioritized concern for student and community health and safety;
- The closing of New York's K-12 public schools and Universities through at least May 15 ; and
- Uncertainty as to when school will be back in session.

As the situation changes on an almost daily basis at the moment, we want to ensure our teachers are well-informed as it relates to our FFA and NYAAE programming throughout the next few weeks and months. Please refer to our **COVID-19** page for up-to-date information and the following **FAQ pages and Cancellation Statements** with specific details on upcoming teacher and student conferences, events, trainings and student leadership programming.

Please click on each event below for more information:

- [**April 2-4, State Officer Selection- Virtual Event**](#)
- [**District President Selection – Virtual Event**](#)
- [**May 14-16, NYS FFA Convention/LDE & CDE Invitational-DATE CHANGE**](#)
- [**May 15, Incentive Grant Program at State FFA Convention- Cancelled**](#)
- [**June 22-24, NYAAE Conference- Virtual Event**](#)
- [**2020 FFA Summer Camp Update**](#)

While it is disappointing that we will not be able to celebrate in person some of our students and colleagues achievements at upcoming events, there are still several ways to engage virtually, including participation in the virtual NYS FFA Convention, and virtual NYAAE Conference. We encourage everyone to participate in these live and recorded events so together we can support our students, teachers, and stakeholders.

While we are limiting our in-person activities at this time, be assured we are all still here to assist you. Please do not hesitate to reach out anytime.

At last year's NYAAE conference we talked about resilience, who would ever have imagined it would test each and every one of us during the spring of 2020. Take good care of yourself and cherish your loved ones as we all navigate these uncharted waters.

Shari Lighthall, Director, NYS Agricultural Education Outreach

Derek Hill, NY FFA Director

Gleason Walley, NYS FFA/NYAAE Governing Board Chair

Paul Perry, State Convention Committee Chair

Karen Labombard, NYS FFA/NYAAE Governing Board President Elect