

New York State Middle School FFA Opportunities

A guide to the opportunities available to middle school FFA chapters in New York State, including timelines, contacts and general information.

FFA is an intracurricular program that develops premiere leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. The opportunities for FFA membership in New York State begin on a state level in the 6th grade. There are opportunities available exclusively to the middle school members and opportunities that are available to all members where middle schoolers have the chance to participate in a separate division with their peers. Opportunities are available year-round and give students the chance to travel, participate in competitions, build relationships and establish a pattern of taking personal responsibility for their personal success.

FFA Dues –

Membership fees for FFA are due to New York State by February 1st of the school year in which membership is sought. Dues for state membership are \$5 per student. For \$10 a student can become a National FFA member and receive a monthly FFA magazine as well. (National membership must be secured by affiliating with a local high school FFA program – NYS FFA staff will be available to assist with making these connections). Dues are required for students to participate in Career Development Events. Members can be added to your chapter's roster after the February 1st deadline (and before August 1st) by paying a late fee.

Leadership Conferences -

District Leadership Workshops – In the fall, New York FFA offers regional leadership workshops on a district level. There is a minimal cost to the workshop to cover any additional costs (pizza, activities, etc.)

Made For Excellence Conference (MFE) – Targeted toward freshman and sophomores – students just beginning their experiences with FFA – the MFE conference is put on by national trainers and is a good fit for older middle school members. MFE is designed to help students think about their future, understand themselves and consider choices ahead. There is a cost per student to cover the conference, meals and lodging as MFE is a two day activity. New York is looking to host an MFE in January of 2008.

State Convention Workshops – Friday Morning at the State Convention, past state officers and National Officers put on leadership workshops designed to engage and involve FFA members. There is no cost to these workshops separate from the costs of attending the convention. Students do not need to register for these workshops.

Camp Oswegatchie – During the summer, students have the chance to attend a week at the Oswegatchie Education Center in Croghan, NY. Each student takes a leadership class at least one morning a week and spends two mornings building teamwork on the low ropes course. In addition, each student has the opportunity – at no additional cost – to

participate on the high ropes course. Information regarding Oswegatchie can be found at www.oswegatchie.org.

Hands-On Learning

Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) – SAEs are a key component to student success. Students get to apply what they learn in class in a real-world setting. This prepares students for career interests and work-experiences. Each SAE helps to match a student with their interest, instilling in them personal responsibility and allowing them to begin to manage their choices, their time and even their finances. Students can go on to earn local, state and national awards because of their SAEs – adding recognition, prize money and potential travel to the list of benefits the SAE adds to the student’s education.

Discovery degree – Available only to middle schoolers, the Discovery degree is the first in a series of degrees a student can earn in the FFA. It is an easy way to give your students recognition, as well as to provide clear goals for each student to achieve. This degree requires students to be active in their classroom, FFA and have started an agricultural experience – it’s a great tool to use to jump-start your student’s well-rounded FFA experience.

ELP’s – ELP stands for Environmental Science and Leadership Training Programs. The programs take place at Oswegatchie and mix environmental science, historical and cultural lessons with leadership development. The ELP is a 2 day, 2 night program and there are grants available to help subsidize the cost. They require advance registration and fill up quickly... information can be found at oswegatchie.org.

Food Land & People – Food Land and People is a curriculum tool that combines state required standards with agricultural and environmental education that today’s students need. The lesson plans are interactive and matched to learning standards but can be applied to multiple grade levels. These lessons can help target student interests to student talents. More information can be found in the Ag in the Classroom portion of www.nyaged.org.

Career Development Events

Career Development Events, or CDEs, are events in which students have an opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world applications in a competitive setting. Students gain leadership, teamwork and technical skills by participating on local and state levels. CDEs available for middle school members are listed below:

Leadership CDE’s – (Take place regionally throughout the winter and spring and students advance to the state contest where winners are crowned at the state convention in May)
People in Agriculture
Prepared Public Speaking
Extemporaneous Public Speaking

Creed Speaking – (The state winner in creed speaking will go on to represent New York at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN. This will require national membership).

State Fair CDE's – (Take place at the state fair in Syracuse, NY in late August.
*Denotes a CDE that is not traditionally broken into a Middle School/Senior High division).

Agriculture Science Fair
Vegetable Crops ID/Horticulture
Small Gas Engine Troubleshooting*
Diesel Engine Troubleshooting*
Agricultural Electrification*
Agronomy
Dairy Foods
Meats*
Nursery/Landscape
Livestock Judging
Horse Evaluation
Dairy Cattle Evaluation
Dairy Handlers'
Wildlife ID
Tree ID
Environmental & Natural Resources
Poultry

State Convention CDE's – CDE's or contests that occur only at the state convention.
Traditionally these competitions are not divided to include separate middle school teams.

Ag Communications
Food Science
Ag Issues
Ag Mechanics
Marketing Plan
Aquaculture
Parliamentary Procedure
Ag Sales
Discussion Meet
Small Animal Care
Tool ID
Farm Business Management
Floriculture
Jr. Quizbowl – Middle School Only
Jr. Chapter Meeting – Middle School Only

Other state convention awards –

Reporter's award
Scrapbook award

*Questions regarding middle school CDE's can be answered at www.nysffa.org under the CDE link, or by contacting the state office.