

## A GUIDE TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR STATE FFA OFFICE

**Interviews and state officer examination questions will be taken from this booklet. State officers will need to know this information to serve the New York State FFA Association.**

**(Sources for answers are italicized and put into parentheses)**

### 1. THE ROLE OF FFA IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

A federal Charter was granted to the FFA in 1950, Public Law 740 by the U.S. Congress, which resulted in the organization becoming an integral part of agricultural education. The FFA organization is one of three components of agricultural education. FFA is a “tool to help teachers teach and students learn” agricultural education. It motivates students to excel in the classroom and in their supervised instruction. Thus, the three components of an agricultural education program are classroom instruction/laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience and FFA.

The FFA provides students with dynamic ways to learn about agriculture and leadership, as well as opportunities for self-improvement. Just as the agriculture teacher uses a shop to teach hydroponics or agriculture mechanics, he or she also uses the FFA to teach leadership and motivate students to set high goals and work to achieve those goals. With this come satisfaction and recognition for a “job well done.” The FFA is integral to the instruction having its origin and roots as a definite part of the high school curriculum in agricultural education. An outstanding FFA chapter, under the guidance of an advisor (agriculture instructor) and a challenging program of activities, enriches the instruction of agriculture.

Everyone in the agricultural education/FFA “family” should be constantly aware of our mission statement, what we value and the goals we have set for agricultural education.

**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.*

#### A. Values of the FFA to the Members:

1. FFA creates interest in agriculture.
2. Students learn to be leaders.
3. Members are helped to find themselves and develop confidence.
4. FFA provides group activities in which members develop tolerance, understanding and learn to work together.
5. Members develop initiative and learn to accept responsibility.
6. Students may plan and work on activities they like and that are of value to them in a strong school organization that has high prestige.
7. It provides an opportunity for students to learn to express themselves and take part in public speaking.
8. Members learn to buy and sell cooperatively, finance their activities and practice thrift.

9. FFA planned activities provide for recognition of achievement.
10. The members’ interest in improving their school and community is increased, resulting in pride and better citizenship.

#### B. Values of FFA to the Home

1. It improves the family relationship and understanding.
2. Parents are provided an opportunity to have a part in their children’s work.
3. Interest and improvement of the home surrounding is fostered and developed.
4. It instills desirable work habits – especially working with parents.
5. A progressive attitude is stimulated through challenges offered to the students in his/her work environment.
6. Home provides the setting to satisfy the natural curiosity of youth in working with agriculture through hands on experiences.

#### C. Values of FFA to the School

1. The FFA adds a capable, well known and strong student organization to the school that can be used to develop leadership in other students.
2. It improves the attitude, discipline and scholarship of members.
3. It provides the opportunity for school improvement (landscaping, etc.)
4. Improves the cooperation between school departments, both on the teacher and the student level. (Agriculture Department working with Science and English Departments to accomplish goals).
5. Increase scope of services of school to the community by “bridging the gap” between the school, the parents and the community.
6. The school becomes better known and the FFA becomes the “show-window” of the agricultural education program.

#### D. All FFA activities should be evaluated continuously and when activities are selected, reviewed or revised, they should “measure up” to the following criteria:

1. Does the activity contribute to the objectives of agricultural education?
2. Does the activity motivate youth and create interest in “doing things right”?
3. Does the activity encourage preparation for a career in agriculture?
4. Does the activity provide for group participation for self improvement?
5. Does the activity provide opportunity for service and development of responsibility?
6. Does the activity provide experiences that develop the mission of the FFA?
7. Does the activity provide an opportunity for the FFA to become the “show window” of agricultural education in the community.
8. Can the activity be evaluated?
9. Is the activity a positive experience?

#### II. FUNDAMENTALS TO KNOW ABOUT AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Your effectiveness as a State Officer will be enhanced by knowing the following: (*The italicized information are references in which the information may be found.*)

1. What are the three major components of agricultural education?  
(*Student Handbook, Official Manual, SAE Handbook*)
  - a. Classroom Instruction
  - b. Supervised Ag Experience
    - i. Entrepreneurship
    - ii. Placement
    - iii. Exploratory
    - iv. Research/experimental & analysis
  - c. FFA Organization
2. How does the three components of agricultural education work together to form a well rounded, strong program?  
(*Student Handbook, Official Manual, SAE Handbook*)
3. How many agricultural education programs are in New York?  
(*New York Ag Ed Program Directory*)

### III. FUNDAMENTALS TO KNOW ABOUT THE FFA

**Your effectiveness as a State Officer will be enhanced by knowing the following:** (*Student Handbook, Official Manual, FFA & 4H Brochure, [www.nysffa.org](http://www.nysffa.org), State Officer Application, [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org) Local Program Resource Guide CD-Rom*)

1. What is the place of FFA in the program of agricultural education?
2. Why was the FFA organized?
3. What are the "building stones" of the FFA? How do they contribute to the development of young people as agriculturalists, good citizens and leaders in their communities?
4. What are some unique features of FFA?
5. What would you say are the main values of the FFA?  

The Community	Internationally
The Home	The Advisor
The School	The Member
Our Nation	To each member
6. AS you look back over your experiences in the FFA, why did you join the organization and how does this reason compare to what it has meant to you?
7. If a supporter of the FFA, who is also a supporter of the 4-H asks you "What is the difference between the FFA and the 4-H?" How would you respond?
8. Relative to the administration of the FFA, know the following:
  - a. What and who is the State Board of Trustees?
  - b. What and who is the State Executive Secretary and Executive Treasurer?
9. What is the relationship of the board of state officers to:
  - a. State staff
  - b. The State Association
  - c. Chapter Officers
  - d. State Officers' Chapters
10. What are the specific (major) duties of a state officer?
11. What are your responsibilities as a state officer?
12. Referring to the Official FFA Manual what are your responsibilities to:

- a. Groups or persons in the state association?
- b. Groups or persons in the local chapter?
13. Is the FFA a government organization?
14. With reference to the major agricultural organizations:
  - a. Be familiar with several organizations such as:
    - i. NY Farm Bureau [www.fb.com/nyfb](http://www.fb.com/nyfb)
    - ii. NY Department of Ag & Markets [www.agmkt.state.ny.us](http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us)
    - iii. NY Grange
    - iv. Know the top leaders of each State's organizations
    - v. Be clear on the work each organization does for youth.
15. In what way will the above information be of value to you and how will you use it? What precautions should be taken relative to the use of this information?
16. It is essential that you have a good understanding of or know the following:
  - a. The history of the FFA.
  - b. The purposes of the FFA.
  - c. How the organization operates.
  - d. A program of activities and how it is developed.
  - e. The essentials of good officer training on the local and state levels.
  - f. Leadership training programs.
  - g. All ceremonies for FFA meetings and degrees.
  - h. The National FFA Center, FFA Supply Services, FFA New Horizons Magazine.
  - i. Parliamentary Procedure.
  - j. National FFA Week and other public relations programs.
  - k. FFA Mission Statement.
  - l. FFA Emblem.
17. What policies govern the use of and authorization for use of the name and emblem of the FFA? (*Chapter Planning & Recognition Handbook*)
18. How is the FFA financed?
  - a. Membership dues
  - b. NY Department of Ag and Markets
  - c. NY Department of Education
  - d. NY FFA Leadership Training Foundation
  - e. NY FFA Alumni Association
19. What are good guidelines for planning and conducting a program of activities? (*Chapter Planning & Recognition Handbook*).
20. What is the cost of FFA dues and what benefits do members get with their dues paid?
21. What international opportunities are available to FFA members?

### IV. FUNDAMENTALS TO KNOW ABOUT THE STATE AND NATIONAL FFA FOUNDATION, INC.

The State/National FFA Foundation greatly benefits FFA members. Your knowledge of the following is essential: (*Student Handbook, Official*

Manual, [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), [www.nyag-ed.org](http://www.nyag-ed.org), Food for America Handbook, CDE Handbook, Local Program Resource Guide CD-Rom)

1. When was the National FFA Foundation, Inc. organized?
2. What are the purposes of the Foundation?
3. How is the State Foundation administered?
4. How is the State Foundation financed?
5. The National FFA Foundation sponsors the publications below. Who do these publications serve?
  - a. FFA Advisors...Making a Difference
  - b. Convention Proceedings
  - c. The FFA New Horizons
  - d. Alumni Newsletter
  - e. Student Handbook
  - f. Advisors' Handbook
  - g. Reporters' Handbook
  - h. Advisors' Public Relations Guide
6. The National FFA Foundation sponsors numerous leadership function. Who is involved in each?
  - a. National Leadership Conference for State Officers
  - b. Washington Leadership Conference
  - c. State Presidents' Conference
  - d. Made for Excellence
  - e. EDGE
  - f. Advance Leadership Development
  - g. State Officer International Program
  - h. International Program
7. The Food for America program is not an award program.
  - a. What is its purpose?
  - b. How can it help in student recruitment?
  - c. How does it relate to Ag in the Classroom?
8. The National FFA Foundation supports numerous public information programs (films, TV, publications). Are you familiar with:
  - a. SAE – More than You Can Imagine?
  - b. Impact Videos?
  - c. National FFA Week materials
9. What are the National FFA Foundation-funded programs that recognize outstanding Agriscience activities for teachers and for students?
  - a. Agriscience Student of the Year
  - b. Agriscience Teacher of the Year
  - c. Agriscience Fair
10. The National FFA Foundation funds the National FFA Career Development Events and awards.
  - a. How do these events relate to local instruction in agriculture?
  - b. How do these events differ from proficiency award programs?
  - c. What do properly operated career development events test?
  - d. What is done to keep these events current with new procedures and standards in the industry?
11. The National Proficiency Awards Program recognizes individuals in most agriculture/agribusiness areas.

- a. What does the student receive at the local, state and national levels?
  - b. How should proficiency awards relate to SAE programs?
  - c. How do proficiency awards differ from Career Development Events in what's measured or tested?
  - d. May a student win more than one proficiency award at the national level?
  - e. How does the proficiency awards program relate to American FFA Degree Program?
  - f. How can this program be used in local recruitment efforts?
12. Answer the following questions on the chapter award program:
    - a. What is the purpose of this award program?
    - b. What types of awards are presented?
    - c. How are the national winners selected for each award?
  13. If you are asked to present Foundation awards at a State Convention, what important points should you emphasize in your remarks?
  14. How would you increase the number of FFA award winners who would take the time to write a thank you letter to sponsors?
  15. If you had three minutes to explain the importance of FFA to a corporate president, what would you say?

#### V. FUNDAMENTALS TO KNOW ABOUT THE FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The FFA Alumni Association is a membership group of former members and others interested in supporting the agricultural education program and the FFA. (*Student Handbook, Official Manual, [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), FFA Alumni Manual*)

1. When was the National FFA Alumni Association chartered? State Alumni?
2. Why was the FFA Alumni organized?
3. How is the Alumni financed?
4. What is a life membership?
5. Where would an FFA member find information on the FFA Alumni?
6. What are some major National FFA Alumni activities?
7. What are possible state and local activities?
8. What are the Alumni events and awards program?
9. How do you organize or charter a local affiliate?
10. Does a member of a local FFA Alumni Affiliate have to be a member of the state and national FFA alumni associations?
11. Who can be an alumni member and what can they do for the FFA?

#### VI. QUESTIONS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER WHILE SERVING AS AN OFFICER

1. How have you benefited from serving the organization as an officer?
2. What is the difference between the FFA and 4-H?
3. A student's parents do not want their son/daughter to enroll in agricultural education. What advise do you give?
4. What should an officer or member do when they see an FFA member smoking in public while wearing the FFA jacket? When the jacket is improperly worn?
5. What are th characteristics of a good officer? A good member?

6. What should you do after receiving a Foundation award?
7. How do chapter members utilize all the opportunities provided by the FFA?
8. What special training did you receive as a chapter officer?
9. How do you prepare your speeches? Where do you get your ideas?
10. What do chapters do that have the most successful chapter banquets?
11. A member has just been defeated in running for chapter office; what advise do you give them?
12. How can chapter officers be "positively encouraged" to learn their parts for FFA ceremonies?
13. In what careers are past state officers involved?

## VII. NY STATE FFA OFFICER SELECTION AND ELECTION PROCESS

- A. The process is divided into two parts:
- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| Part I. Written Exam of 50 questions          | 50 pts  |
| Part II. Written Letter                       | 50 pts  |
| Part III. Interviews – two at 200 points each | 400 pts |
- Total Possible = 500 pts
- B. The interview schedule will be mailed to all candidates prior to the State Convention.
- C. Interviews:
- Round 1: Personal FFA & SAE Experiences and Public Speaking  
Round 2: Involvement in and Conducting FFA Activities
- D. Written Exam: Exam material will be taken only from materials in the study guide and any supplemental pages provided by the state staff.
- E. Written Letter: Letters may be a thank you letter, invitation or a letter of information.
- F. State Officer Evaluations will be reviewed for the state officers rerunning for an office.
- G. Election of the new state officers by the NY FFA state convention\ delegates. See NY FFA Constitution and *Guide For Prospective Officers* for further details.

## VIII. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF EACH ROUND OF INTERVIEWS

**Round 1: Personal FFA & SAE Experiences and Public Speaking**  
Committee members will inquire to identify the candidate's FFA and SAE knowledge and experiences. State FFA Officers represent the organization to leaders at all levels. It is important they understand the purpose of career and technical education and that they know the structure of agricultural education at the state and federal levels and that they understand the role of FFA in preparing a student for a career in agriculture. State FFA Officers need to have a sound understanding of what constitutes a quality, successful local agricultural education program using the Local Program Success model. It is important that a state officer can communicate the purpose of supervised agricultural experience programs and stimulates new FFA members to begin laying a foundation for a

meaningful SAE program of their own, which someday gives them a chance for awards, degrees and recognition in FFA and for a satisfying career in the industry after FFA. The committee members will use questions and other methods to measure the candidates understanding of agricultural education programs.

State officers are expected to be able to speak in front of others. A state officer will be asked to give many speeches throughout a year of service. It is important for a state officer to be able to think on their feet to deliver a speech. In this round candidates will be asked to present the speech they submitted with their state officer application. The committee will be looking for organization of thoughts, presentation and overall effect of the speech.

## IX. WRITTEN EXAM AND LETTER WRITING

**Written Exam:** The written exam portion of the state officer selection process is designed to measure the candidate's knowledge of FFA and related topics. The categories that will be presented on the test are:

1. The FFA mission, the Agricultural Education mission, programs, structure and history.
2. FFA Foundation and Alumni.
3. State Officer's role in FFA.
4. Agriculture and education issues.
5. Leadership, personal development and agriculture careers.
6. FFA history, programs and structure.

**Written Letter:** This portion is used to help evaluate the candidate's ability to express their thoughts on paper. The candidates will be asked to write a thank you letter, an invitation or just general informational letter on a specific topic.

## X. SCORING STATE OFFICER CANDIDATES

### Part I. Personal FFA & SAE Experiences and Public Speaking

Interview:	
<b>Ease during interview</b> – attitude, poise, personality, appearance, self-confidence and posture	(20 points)
<b>Candidates FFA &amp; SAE knowledge and experience</b>	(30 points)
<b>Power of Expression</b> – forcefulness, pronunciation, English and grammar usage	(20 points)
<b>Clarity of thinking</b> – fluency, emphasis, conciseness and structure of answer	(20 points)
<b>General effect</b> – extent to which candidate was understandable and convincing	(10 points)
Public Speaking:	
<b>Appropriateness of and the depth of remarks</b>	(35 points)
<b>Creativity and originality of the responses</b>	(25 points)
<b>Verbal ability – vocabulary, grammar, articulation</b>	(20 points)
<b>Mental alertness and poise</b>	(10 points)

**Overall effect** (10 points)

Total possible points 200 points

**Part II. Involvement in and Conducting FFA Activities**

**Appropriateness of individual remarks** (50 points)

**Creativity and originality** (50 points)

**Contribution to group effort** (40 points)

**Courtesy and cooperation** (40 points)

**Overall effect** (20 points)

Total possible points 200 points