

**CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS  
OF  
NEW JERSEY FFA ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**Constitution**

**Article I. Name**

The name of this organization shall be the "New Jersey FFA Association, Inc." Members of local chapters are, hereafter, referred to as "FFA." The letters "FFA" may be officially used to designate the organization, its units or members, thereof.

**Article II. Purposes and Activities of the Organization**

The objectives and purposes of the organization shall be as follows:

1. To make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education (The FFA mission statement).
2. To create, foster, advise, and assist subsidiary chapters composed of students of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education.
3. To develop character, train for useful citizenship, and foster patriotism, and thereby develop competent, progressive, and aggressive leadership for agriculture.
4. To create and nurture a community pride by encouraging members to improve the home and its surroundings, to develop organized recreational activities, and to create more interest in the intelligent choice of an agriculture occupation.
5. To encourage the practice of thrift.
6. To strengthen the confidence of students of agriculture in themselves and their work.
7. To encourage such members in the development of individual supervised agricultural experience programs and to become permanently established in an agriculture occupation.
8. To cooperate with others, including the State and Local Boards of Education in accomplishing the above purposes; and to engage in such other activities, consistent with the foregoing purposes, determined by the representative governing body to be in the best interest of the organization.

**Article III Organization**

**Section A.**

The New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. is a chartered association of affiliated local chapters in public schools having organized instruction in Food, Agriculture & Natural Resources Education under provisions of the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A: 19-2 which supports education and training as described in the New Jersey State Plan for Career and Technical Education.

**Section B.**

Local FFA chapters shall be established only in public schools where systematic instruction in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education is given under the provisions of the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A: 19-2.

**Article IV. Membership**

**Section A.**

To hold membership during high school, the member must be enrolled in at least one Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education course during the school year and/or follow a planned program of study for an agriculture occupation which includes a Supervised Agricultural Experience Program, the objective of which is establishment of an agriculture occupation.

Membership shall not be unlawfully denied to any student of a Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Education program based on that person's race, creed, color, religious affiliation, sex, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or socioeconomic status.

Membership may be maintained until November 30, following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school. However, no individual may retain student membership beyond the 23rd birthday.

### **Section B.**

A member who is in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America shall be in good standing during the period of active service without being included in the count of students that determines the fee schedule for Program Affiliation fees or attendance at meetings.

Time spent in the armed forces 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 making use of this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining student membership for application for advanced degrees, must resume active student participation within six months after honorable discharge from service, indicating such a desire by being included in the count of students that determines the fee schedule for Program Affiliation fees and attendance of meetings required. Members participating in a six-month's Armed Forces Program should be eligible for one full year of extended membership.

### **Section C.**

"Student Membership" – All students enrolled in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education at or above the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level are members of their school's chartered FFA chapter through Program Affiliation. Those students, who are enrolled in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education on a semester basis including block schedules, may be a member if the school where the local chapter is established has an approved program of instruction.

A member shall be considered a student member when:

1. The member is included in the count of students that determines the fee schedule for Program Affiliation fees and behaves in a manner prescribed by the organization and:
2. The member attends local chapter meetings while, enrolled in a Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education course of the school where the local chapter is established and:
3. The member shows an interest in, and takes part in, the affairs of the local chapter.

### **Section D.**

Post-Secondary Membership - Post-Secondary membership in the New Jersey FFA Association may include adult students enrolled in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education programs at New Jersey schools having FFA chapter in good standing. These members may participate in those activities designated for Post-Secondary Membership or Adult Students. Adult students will be ranked separately and independently from secondary membership. This level of membership is recognized within the NJ FFA Association only. Post-secondary members may not hold state FFA offices or be eligible to participate in Career Development Events above the state level.

## **Article V. Emblem**

### **Section A.**

The emblem of the FFA shall be made up of five symbols, namely (1) the plow representing labor and tillage of the soil; (2) the owl, representing wisdom; (3) the rising sun, representing progress; (4) a cross section of an ear of corn, representing common agriculture interest, since corn is native to America and is grown in every State and trust territories; and (5) the American eagle surmounting the cross section of the

ear of corn, representing the national scope of the organization. The emblem shall also carry the three letters "FFA" and the words "Agricultural Education."

**Section B.**

Emblems shall be uniform in chapters and in recognized units thereof. All student, adult and honorary members shall be entitled to wear the emblem. Advisors are entitled to wear an owl pin of special design.

**Article VI. Officers**

**Section A.**

The elected offices of the New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel, and Parliamentarian.

**Section B.**

The State Executive Board shall be composed of the State FFA Officers, the State Executive Committee, and one FFA chapter advisor selected by the New Jersey Association of Agricultural Educators. The State FFA Advisor and State FFA Specialist will serve as non-voting members.

**Section C.**

The State Executive Board has the authority to make decisions for the State Association, except when in conflict with or would alter the State FFA Constitution and By-Laws.

**Section D.**

The governing body of the State Association shall be the State Executive Board. The House of Delegates and the State Executive Board will be the voting body at the Annual State Convention.

**Article VII. Meetings**

**Section A.**

A State Convention shall be held annually and should be held at least 45 days prior to the National Convention. It should be held at the time and place determined by the executive committee.

**Section B.**

The New Jersey State FFA Association, Inc. meetings should be held once per month at a time and place designated by the State Officers. Chapters will be notified of date and location of all meetings. Meetings may be attended by any FFA member, advisor or guests who have a common interest in agriculture. Minutes of meetings will be available to all members and chapters.

**Section C.**

In the case of an extreme emergency, the State Executive Board may act on behalf of the House of Delegates to transact business typically handled at the annual State Convention including, but not limited to, constitutional amendments and election of officers.

**Article VIII. Program Affiliation**

Annual membership fees for the coming year in the New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. shall be defined by the Program Affiliation fee structure. The fee structure for each plan shall be fixed by a majority vote of the delegates present at the State Convention of the New Jersey FFA Association. Program Affiliation fees will cover state and National dues, New Horizons Subscriptions, as well as certain event fees and resources as determined by the plan.

**Article IX. Amendments**

**Section A.**

Amendments to the State Constitution shall be submitted in writing by any chapter or by the governing body to the State Advisor at least sixty days prior to the annual State convention of the FFA. These proposed amendments will be submitted at the next monthly meeting to the State Officers and the State Executive Board, who shall in turn, submit them to the delegates 45 days prior to the next State Convention with their recommendation. Amendments may be adopted or rejected by a two-thirds roll call vote, recorded by the

Secretary, of the House of Delegates present at the annual State Convention. Amendments that pass will take effect immediately after the elections of the State Officers for the coming year.

**Section B.**

In order to secure flexibility, bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the State Association, provided they are not in conflict with the National Constitution, or the statutes, rules and regulations of the State of New Jersey, Department of Education.

**Article X. Parliamentary Procedure**

All meetings and procedures of the organization shall follow parliamentary procedure as presented in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

**Article XI. Finances**

**Section A.**

The FFA Treasury shall be audited annually by a New Jersey licensed certified public accountant.

**Section B.**

An annual budget shall be prepared and submitted to the State FFA Executive Board for approval. All expenditures shall be authorized by budget items.

**BY-LAWS OF  
NEW JERSEY FFA ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**Article I. Organization of Local Chapters**

**Section A.**

Members of local chapters shall meet, organize, and adopt a constitution of their own. It shall be designed not to conflict with State or National FFA constitutions. Only after the chapter application has been approved by the State Association and State FFA Advisor, shall the members be known as FFA members.

**Section B.**

The New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. may issue a charter to a local chapter when:

1. An application has been filed in the Office of the State Association and approved by the State FFA Specialist/State Advisor and:
2. When a list of names of officers has been filed in the office of the State Association and:
3. A copy of the proposed local chapter constitution and bylaws has been filed in the office of the State FFA Association and:
4. A Program Affiliation contract has been received with payment and a roster has been submitted and:
5. A program of activities has been written and sent to the State FFA office.

**Section C.**

A chapter to remain chartered with the State Association must submit evidence each year by May 1st that it has met the following minimum qualifications:

1. Submit a Program Affiliation contract by September 30 and its payment by January 31.
2. Complete chapter roster on the official FFA Roster program by November 1.
3. Elect officers and send a list of their names and addresses to the State FFA Association Office by October 1.
4. Submit an updated program of activities to the State FFA Association Office by December 1 through the Agriculture Experience Tracker.

5. Have sent two delegates to the previous State convention.
6. Participate in at least five State/National events:
  - (a) Career Development Events
  - (b) Leadership Training Seminars
  - (c) State and National Chapter Awards
7. Submit an updated local FFA chapter constitution to the State FFA Office by December 1.

If the above standards are not met by May 1, the State Executive Board may make recommendations to the delegate body at the state convention to remove the chapter's charter or vote to grant probation for the chapter to fulfill the requirements. A chapter placed on probation will not be able to participate in State/National events until the standards necessary for the chapter to remain chartered with the NJ State FFA Association are met. The chapter will be informed that the State Executive Board will be voting on the recommendations concerning the chapter's charter.

To be reinstated, a chapter must meet the requirements of Article I, Section B, for new chapters.

#### **Section D.**

In the event that a local department of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education in which a chartered chapter of FFA is located is discontinued, the chapter so involved may be permitted to operate officially for a period not to exceed 36 months from the date of discontinuance of the department. A person having the approval of the local school administration and the State Advisor, shall act as local advisor. The local chapter charter shall be surrendered to the State Advisor at the end of the 36-month period if a local department of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources is not re-established in the school at that time.

### **Article II. Degrees for Student Members**

#### **Section A.**

There shall be five degrees of student membership based upon achievement. They are as follows:

- (1) Discovery FFA Degree
- (2) Greenhand FFA Degree,
- (3) Chapter FFA Degree,
- (4) Garden State FFA Degree, and
- (5) American FFA Degree.

#### **Section B.**

"Discovery FFA Degree" - To be eligible to receive the Discovery Degree from a chapter, the member must meet minimum 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 FFA at 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. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 90 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level.
2. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
3. Learn and explain the creed, motto, salute, and the FFA mission statement.
4. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
6. Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws, and the chapter program of activities.
7. Personally, own or have access to the official FFA manual and the FFA Student Handbook.
8. Submit a written application for the Greenhand Degree.

**Section D.**

"Chapter FFA Degree" - To be eligible to receive the Chapter FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following qualifications.

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. 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 program.
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 \$150.00 by the member's own efforts or worked at least forty-five hours in excess of scheduled class time and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in an supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Have effectively led a group discussion for fifteen minutes.
6. Have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Show progress towards individual achievement in the FFA awards programs.
8. Have a satisfactory scholastic record.
9. Submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.
10. Have participated in at least 10 additional unduplicated hours of community service activities.

Other requirements may be established by the chapter.

**Section E.**

"Garden State FFA Degree" - on meeting the following minimum qualifications, the degree may be conferred by the State Association:

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree and have been a student member for two years.
2. 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 experience program.
3. Have earned and productively invested at least \$1,000.00 net income by the member's own efforts from their supervised agricultural experience program or worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time in a supervised agricultural experience or a combination thereof.
4. Be familiar with the provisions of the constitution of the State Association and National Organization.
5. Demonstrate leadership ability by:
  - (a) Performing 10 parliamentary procedure activities or earning 80% or better on the Parliamentary Law Test in AET.
  - (b) Giving a six - minute presentation on an agriculture topic.
  - (c) Serving as an officer and/or committee chair, or participating member of a major committee.
  - (d) Participating in student, chapter, school, or community activities.
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 additional, unduplicated hours of community service activities within at least two different community service activities.

The New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. shall be entitled to elect all those who meet minimum qualifications. Written records of achievement verified by the local advisor shall be submitted to the State FFA Advisor by March 15 of the current year to permit adequate evaluation.

**Section F.**

"American FFA Degree" - Members should consult our National Constitution.

The State FFA Advisor and/or State FFA Specialist will then review records, prepare briefs, and submit recommendations to a special committee appointed by the State FFA President. This committee will elect Garden State FFA Degree Candidates, American FFA Degree Candidates, Proficiency winners, State Star Farmer Candidates, State Star Placement Candidates, State Star Agriscience Candidates, and State Star in Agribusiness Candidates for New Jersey.

**Section G.**

"Honorary Membership" - Farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, 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 State membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention.

### **Article III. State Officers**

#### **Section A.**

All State Officer Candidates will be reviewed, evaluated and recommended for state office by a designated nominating committee, which shall consist of 6 delegates, two delegates from each FFA Region in New Jersey as stated in Article VII, Section A. The nominating committee process shall be coordinated and advised by a state executive committee member, an adult officer, the State Advisor, or a past state officer with student membership.

1. The State Officers shall be elected annually from members holding the Garden State FFA Degree.
2. A member may be an officer not more than two times. Once a member is elected president, he/she may not hold state office again, but may become chairperson of the executive committee.
3. The executive committee shall consist of immediate past state officers who are elected annually at the State FFA Convention. State Officers who wish to serve on the executive committee shall submit a written request to the nominating committee.
4. No elected State Officer, enrolled as a student in high school Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education courses, shall participate as a contestant in the 6-8 Minute Public Speaking LDE, Extemporaneous Public Speaking LDE, Employment Skills LDE, Official Ceremonies Event, Parliamentary Procedure LDE, Agricultural Issues Forum LDE, Agricultural Sales CDE, or the Teach Agriculture Event.

#### **Section B.**

The State FFA Advisor shall be a qualified person employed by the State Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the State Department of Education.

#### **Section C.**

All state officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the house of delegates at the annual convention. In the case of an officer vacancy, the state executive board may reorganize its officer structure from existing officers. The state executive board may also fill any vacated position by opening an application process to all members who meet the minimum qualifications to hold a state office. Applications would then be reviewed by the board and positions would be filled by a majority vote.

#### **Section D.**

The duties of all New Jersey FFA Association, Inc. Officers are as follows:

1. Their primary duty shall be to promote and encourage participation by members and chapters in FFA activities.
2. Each State officer must be able to budget and devote time requested for carrying out the duties and responsibilities. Any State Officer who does not carry out their assigned duties and responsibilities can be requested to resign by the governing body.
3. Any state officer missing more than two FFA activities and/or executive committee member missing more than four FFA activities (activities consist of: meetings, state officers' workshops, and assignments for their entire year of office) without an excused absence will be requested to resign. Excuses will be made directly to the State President or State FFA Advisor. They will be approved or rejected by the governing body at the meeting not attended.
4. Any officer(s) who has not fulfilled their duties and obligations or has violated the statutes within the state and national FFA constitutions and by-laws, and policies, or has violated any local, state, or national public law, will be subject to removal from office by the state executive board. When a violation occurs at an official FFA function, the State Advisor or a



supervisory representative of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture may request an officer's resignation.

**Section E. The Duties of the State FFA President**

1. The president will preside over the state FFA convention and monthly state association meetings.
2. The president shall appoint all committees and may serve as an ex-official member of these committees.
3. The president shall submit a written annual report to the House of Delegates at the State FFA convention.
4. The President shall complete the agenda for all state meetings by the 14th of every month and submit to the State FFA Office.

**Section F. The Duties of the FFA Vice-President**

1. The state vice-president shall assume the duties of the president if he/she is absent at a meeting.
2. The state vice-president shall be responsible for the operation of all committees.

**Section G. The Duties of the State FFA Secretary**

1. Keep an accurate record of all meetings.
2. Compile state convention proceedings and submit by September 1.
3. Keep listings of all committees and assignments.
4. Keep attendance at all meetings.
5. The State Secretary shall complete the state minutes by the 14<sup>th</sup> of each month and submit to the State FFA Office

**Section H. The Duties of the FFA Treasurer**

1. Make report of the financial situation at all state meetings.
2. Serve as a liaison between State FFA Staff and the State FFA Executive Board concerning the state FFA budgets.
3. Help prepare the audit of all financial materials and records.

**Section I. The Duties of the FFA Reporter**

1. Prepare news releases for state FFA events.
2. Prepare newsletters and other forms of communication to chapters, officers, and advisors.
3. Encourage chapters to have an active public relations program.
4. Serve as photographer and recorder for state FFA activities.

**Section J. The Duties of the FFA Sentinel**

1. Have official paraphernalia present and properly positioned at all meetings.
2. Arrange all meeting rooms for the best comfort and efficiency of the meeting.

**Section K. The Duties of the FFA Parliamentarian**

1. Provide parliamentary advice at all meetings, conferences, and the State FFA Convention.
2. Give parliamentary procedure demonstrations at Leadership Training Conferences and state meetings.
3. Assist Secretary and Reporter in correspondence and communications.

**Section L. The Duties of the Executive Committee Chair**

1. Implement and execute the Nominating Committee process of the State Officers during the state FFA convention
2. Choose members of the Nominating Committee process for the State Officer Selection Process
3. Handle the evaluation of the Member of the Month Applications and present the applicants at each monthly State Executive Board meeting
4. Oversees the Executive Committee report at each monthly State Executive Board meeting.

**Section M. The Duties of the Executive Committee**

1. Attend all meetings, conferences, conventions and career development events.
2. Share wisdom, advice and ideas to the State Officers in a respectful manner.
3. Serve on standing committees to ensure that the purpose will remain authentic.
4. Handle the behind-the-scenes work during conferences.
5. Receive a stipend for mileage used by their personal vehicle for attending state FFA activities.

**Section N. The Duties of All Officers**

All State FFA Officers will abide by the duties, and responsibilities outlined in the 'APPLICATION FOR A STATE OFFICE IN THE NEW JERSEY FFA ASSOCIATION, INC.' form, along with the 'CODE OF ETHICS' prescribed by the National FFA Organization and the State FFA Officer team. All State FFA Officers shall:

1. Encourage and attend regional FFA activities, working closely with the NJAAE representatives
2. Promote communication and cooperative activities between chapters.
3. Provide information concerning state association activities to all chapters.

**Article IV. Meetings****Section A.**

Each local chapter shall be entitled to send two official delegates from the student chapter membership to the State Convention. The Chapter President and Vice-President are recommended.

**Section B.**

The New Jersey State FFA Association, Inc. is entitled to send official delegates from the student membership to the National FFA Convention. The delegate positions shall be picked from the State's leadership delegates (President and Vice President) followed by Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel, Parliamentarian and Executive Committee. If a leadership delegate is not able to attend, alternates from the current state officers will be selected. A past Executive Board member with current student FFA membership may be selected to fill the role of delegate and represent the New Jersey FFA Association with the approval of the majority of the State Executive Board.

**Article V. Program Affiliation Fees**

Any chapter failing to submit the annual Program Affiliation contract and fees shall be deemed ineligible for State and National FFA Activities.

**Article VI. Regions in the New Jersey FFA Association, Inc.****Section A.**

There shall be three FFA regions in the State consisting of the following counties:

**Northern Region:** Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, Warren

**Central Region:** Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth

**Southern Region:** Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, Salem

**Article VII. Bylaws - Amendments****Section A.**

Amendments to the State Bylaws shall be submitted in writing by any chapter or by the governing body to the State FFA Advisor at least sixty days prior to the annual State Convention of the FFA. These proposed amendments will be submitted at the next monthly meeting to the State Officers and the State Executive Board, who shall in turn, submit them to the delegates 45 days prior to the next State Convention with their recommendations. Amendments may be adopted or rejected by a two-thirds roll call vote, recorded by the Secretary, of the House of Delegates present at the annual State convention. Amendments that pass, will take effect immediately after the elections of the State Officers for the coming year.

**Article VIII. Finances****Section A.**

Monthly bank statements shall be reconciled.

**Section B.**

Monthly treasurer's report shall be presented to the executive board. It shall include all income and expenses with reference to the annual budget.

**Section C.**

All reports necessary to maintain nonprofit organization status shall be filed by the organization.

**Section D.**

All deposits shall be noted on the treasurer's report and made in a timely manner.