



[NEW JERSEY FFA
DEGREE AND AWARD PROGRAMS

Degrees & Awards

2024-2025

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Preface

The New Jersey FFA Degree & Awards Program provides members with the opportunity to earn degrees and awards based on their SAE programs, involvement, and contributions within the FFA at the chapter, state, and national levels.

Purpose

The purposes of this publication are to (1) explain the FFA degree program, (2) provide detailed information regarding the types of degrees and various awards available to members, (3) provide information regarding state degree check, and (4) provide important information regarding the completion of degree and award applications.

Background

New Jersey FFA will utilize AET for the State and American FFA Degrees, Proficiency Awards, and all Star Awards. Students can access applications by logging into www.theaet.com and using the Degree/Application Manager in the “Reports” tab. First-time users will need to create an account with the help of their chapter FFA advisor.

The Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET)

All FFA members have free access to AET. Members should ask their FFA Advisors for access to their account. Chapter and State level applications are locked to AET records. This means students will need to make sure records are accurately and completely filled out in the AET record keeping system. There are numerous teacher and student help resources available on www.theaet.com and a variety of professional development workshops held throughout the year to assist with AET.

Applications

Students are to complete the following applications through www.theaet.com. Applications with an asterisk (*) are locked to AET records and do not allow for manual entry of information, unless specified. Only online versions of these applications will be accepted. All other applications are obsolete and will not be accepted.

- American Degree
- Garden State FFA Degree*
- Star Applications
 - Greenhand*
 - Chapter*
 - State*
 - American
- Proficiency Application
- Research Proficiency Application

FFA DEGREES

FFA Degree Program

The FFA Degree program represents a member's progress through the phases of their leadership, academic, and career skill development. For members to earn and be awarded at each degree advancement, they must achieve the specific constitutional requirements as outlined in the New Jersey FFA and National FFA constitution. The five different degree levels for members include: Discovery, Greenhand, Chapter FFA, Garden State FFA, and American FFA.

Information for each degree can be found in their entirety in Article II of the New Jersey FFA By-Laws: https://nj.gov/agriculture/ag_ed/ffa/activity/1.002.pdf.



Discovery FFA Degree

The Discovery FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level to students in grades 7 - 8 who are enrolled in agricultural science courses. To receive a Discovery Degree, members must meet the requirements as outlined in the New Jersey FFA By-Laws. Receipt of the Discovery FFA Degree is not necessary to obtain the Greenhand FFA Degree or subsequent degrees.



Greenhand FFA Degree

The Greenhand FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level. To receive the Greenhand FFA Degree members must be enrolled in an Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource course while meeting the requirements listed in the New Jersey FFA By-Laws. In addition to the Greenhand FFA Degree, members may receive a bronze FFA pin from their local chapter.

(Other requirements may be established by the chapter.)



Chapter FFA Degree

The Chapter FFA Degree is awarded at the chapter level. To receive a Chapter FFA Degree, members must meet the requirements listed in the New Jersey FFA By-Laws. Members must hold the Greenhand Degree to receive the Chapter Degree. In addition to the Chapter FFA Degree, members may receive a silver FFA pin from their local chapter.

(Other requirements may be established by the chapter.)



Garden State FFA Degree

The Garden State FFA Degree is the highest degree the state association can bestow upon a member. The Garden State FFA Degree is designed to recognize students who have developed an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program throughout their FFA career. The Garden State FFA Degree should be the ultimate goal of all FFA members. In order to receive the Garden State FFA Degree, members must meet the minimum requirements as outlined in the New Jersey FFA By-Laws which includes holding the Greenhand and Chapter FFA Degrees. **A maximum of 45 hours from a foundational SAE will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements for advanced FFA degrees above the Chapter Degree.** In addition to receiving the Garden State FFA Degree certificate, members receive a gold FFA charm from the state FFA association.



American FFA Degree

The American FFA Degree is awarded to members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to FFA and made significant accomplishments in their supervised agricultural experience. The American FFA Degree is awarded at the National FFA Convention and Expo each year. The coveted American FFA Degree is awarded to less than 1% of FFA members making it the most prestigious degree and one of the organization's highest honors. In addition to the degree, each recipient receives a gold American FFA Degree key from the National FFA Organization.

Pages 5-7 include a chart that compares the requirements for each degree.

Degree Selection Process

Discovery, Greenhand and Chapter degrees are selected at the chapter level. Each chapter must determine their process for selecting and recognizing members for attainment of these degrees.

Garden State degrees are selected at the state level. Applications received by March 15 are reviewed by the State FFA Advisor and/or State FFA Specialist and a special review committee. If an applicant fails to meet the expectations for the degree, feedback is provided and a short opportunity for resubmission is granted. Applicants are notified via AET regarding the status of their application. State FFA Degree Candidates will receive a certificate and degree charm at the State FFA Convention in May. **Please see pages 12-13 of this handbook for an overview of the application submission process.**

American degrees are reviewed and recommended by the National FFA Board of Directors, and final approval is given by the delegates present at the national FFA convention. However, applications of the candidates are reviewed by the State FFA Advisor and/or State FFA Specialist and a special review committee before being certified for consideration. Applications must be received by March 15. If an applicant fails to meet the state-level expectations for the degree, feedback is provided and a short opportunity for resubmission is granted. It is NOT guaranteed that additional time will be granted for revisions once the applications are certified with the National FFA Organization. Applicants are notified via AET regarding the status of their application. American FFA Degree candidates are recognized at the State FFA Convention in May and if approved, will receive a certificate and degree key at the National FFA Convention in October/November. **Please see pages 12-13 of this handbook for an overview of the application submission process.**

Degree	DISCOVERY	GREENHAND	CHAPTER	GARDEN STATE	AMERICAN
<p>For all degree levels, students must appear on the chapter roster at the local, state and national level and must submit degree specific application. State and American Degree application records end on December 31 of the year prior to applying.</p> <p><i>A maximum of 45 hours from a foundational SAE will be counted toward degrees above the chapter degree.</i></p>					
AFNR Semesters/Membership	Enrolled in AFNR courses for a portion of the year while in 7-8 grade	<p>Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 90 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the 9th grade level.</p> <p>Enrolled in agricultural education</p>	<p>Completed the equivalent of at least 180 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the 9th grade level</p> <p>Enrolled in an agricultural education program</p>	<p>Completed the equivalent of at least two years (360 hours) of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the 9th grade level</p> <p>Have been a member for at least two years at time of receiving degree</p>	<p>Have been a student member for the past 3 years (36 months)</p> <p>Have completed the equivalent of at least 3 years (540 hours) of AFNR instruction, OR have completed the equivalent of 360 hours of AFNR instruction and one full year of enrollment in postsecondary agricultural program, OR have completed the program of agricultural education offered in the secondary school last attended</p>
Supervised Agricultural Experience		Have satisfactory plans for an SAE program	<p>Have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program</p> <p>Have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program</p>	Have an approved SAE	<p>Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding SAE, through which the member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial & financial expertise</p>

Community Service (CANNOT be duplicated as paid or unpaid labor/hours through a service based SAE)			Participated in at least 10 hours of community service activities	Participated in at least 25 hours of community service within at least 2 different community service activities	Participated in at least 50 hours of community service within at least 3 different community service activities
Chapter Program of Activities	Be familiar with local chapter POA	Demonstrated knowledge of the chapter POA	Participated in the planning and conducting of at least 3 official functions of the chapter POA	Participated in the planning and completion of the chapter POA	
Speech/Group Discussion			Effectively led group discussion for 15 minutes	Gave a 6-minute presentation on an agriculture topic	
Parliamentary Law Procedures			Demonstrated 5 procedures of parliamentary law	Performed 10 parliamentary procedure activities	
\$ earned/hours worked combination			Earned & productively invested at least \$150 by the member's own efforts or have worked at least 45 hours in excess of scheduled class time	Earned & productively invested at least \$1,000 net income by the member's own efforts from their SAE or worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time or a combination thereof	After entering agricultural education must have earned at least \$10,000 and productively invested \$7,500, OR Earned & productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours, times a factor of 3.56, plus actual dollars earned and productively invested must be equal to or greater than the number 10,000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively

					invested income shall not be duplicated as hours or credit to meet the minimum requirements for the degree.
Additional Requirements	<p>Participate in one local FFA chapter activity outside scheduled class time</p> <p>Knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership & entrepreneurial opportunities</p>	<p>Learned & explained the FFA Creed, Motto, Salute and FFA mission statement</p> <p>Described & explained the meaning of the FFA emblem & colors</p> <p>Demonstrated knowledge of FFA Code of Ethics & proper use of the FFA jacket</p> <p>Demonstrated knowledge of history of the organization & the chapter constitution & bylaws</p> <p>Personally own or have access to the Official FFA Manual and FFA Student Handbook</p>	<p>Must have Received the Greenhand FFA Degree</p> <p>Shown progress toward individual achievement in the FFA Award program</p> <p>Have a satisfactory scholastic record</p> <p>Other requirements may be established by the chapter.</p>	<p>Must have received the Chapter FFA Degree</p> <p>Be familiar with the provisions of the constitution of the State Association and National Organization</p> <p>Served as an officer and/or committee chairperson, or participating member of a major committee</p> <p>Participated in student, chapter, school, or community activities</p> <p>Have a satisfactory scholastic record certified by AFNR instructor and principal/superintendent</p> <p>Have participated in at least five different FFA activities above the chapter level</p>	<p>Must have received the State FFA Degree</p> <p>Have a record of satisfactory participation in activities at chapter and state levels</p> <p>Graduated high school at least 12 months prior to the national convention at which degree is to be granted</p> <p>Have a record of outstanding leadership abilities and community involvement and have achieved a high school scholastic record of "C" or better as certified by principal or superintendent</p>

STAR AWARDS PROGRAM

Star Awards

The New Jersey FFA Star Award program is designed to recognize the most outstanding production, agribusiness, placement, and agriscience based Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs at the local and state levels. The New Jersey FFA Association recognizes star winners at the greenhand, chapter, and state degree level. American Star Awards are also available, but not awarded on the state level. American Star candidates are selected by a state review committee, and applications are forwarded to the National FFA Organization for consideration.

Star applicants must demonstrate fulfillment of the minimum requirements of the degree level corresponding to their award and meet the criteria of the division in which they are applying. In addition to the levels, each star applicant will apply within a specific division that fits their SAE. Members may apply for recognition in only one division per year. **Please see pages 12-13 of this handbook for an overview of the application submission process.**

Star Award Selection Process

Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Awards are based on application only. After being selected at the local level, members may apply to compete at the state level by submitting an application. Applications are due November 1. Applicants **MUST** have been selected by their respective chapter for local level recognition in the school year prior to applying. Only one application per level and category per chapter are permissible. A special committee will review applications and select award winners. Applicants are notified via email regarding the status of their application.

Star State Awards are based on an application and an interview. Applications are due March 15 with the Garden State FFA Degree applications. There is no limit to how many applications a chapter can submit. A special committee will select up to four finalists in each category. Finalists will interview with a panel of judges at the State FFA Convention in May. This panel of judges will select the award winners. Schedules for interview times will be communicated via email.

All Star Award winners will be recognized on stage during the New Jersey FFA Convention and will receive a Star Award winner certificate, pin and monetary award.

- **Star Greenhand:** \$50
- **Star Chapter** (*up to four awards – farmer, agribusiness, agricultural placement, agriscience*): \$100 each
- **Star State** (*up to four awards – farmer, agribusiness, agricultural placement, agriscience*): \$300 each

Star Degree Levels

- **Star Greenhand Degree** candidates must have been recognized by their chapter as a Star Greenhand in their first year of membership at or above the 9th grade level and apply in the November following. One overall award will be presented.
- **Star Chapter Degree** candidates must have been recognized by their chapter as a Star Chapter Award winner in the year following the first year of membership above the 9th grade level and apply in the November following. Up to four awards will be presented – one for each category.
- **Star Garden State Degree** candidates must apply during the same membership year that their respective degree application is submitted for consideration. Finalists will be contacted for scheduling interviews. Up to four awards will be presented – one for each category.

Star Category Criteria

- **Star Farmer** recognizes students with SAEs that involve ownership/entrepreneurship in production agriculture. This includes the production of animals, grain crops, tree production, etc.
- **Star in Agribusiness** recognizes students with SAEs that involve ownership/entrepreneurship in non-production agriculture. Examples include but are not limited to, lawn care services, crop consulting services, and equipment repair services.
- **Star in Agricultural Placement** recognizes students with SAEs that involve working for an agricultural producer or agribusiness. The placement does not have to be a paid position, although the applicant must have enough hours, earnings, and investment to qualify for the degree.
- **Star in Agriscience** recognizes students with SAEs that involve planning and conducting a scientific experiment based on a hypothesis and the use of the scientific method of investigation on the hypothesis. This may include qualitative research, quantitative research, experimental research, descriptive research, or quasi experimental research. Members who work for agricultural laboratories but are not performing their own research should apply in the agricultural placement category.

*Candidates who have SAE projects of multiple types must decide which their strongest type is and complete the Star application with ONLY that information. However, information from all SAE types may be included in the Garden State FFA Degree application.

PROFICIENCY AWARD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

What are they?

- Agricultural Proficiency Awards are based entirely on a member's Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). These awards recognize individual's skills and career-based competencies developed through multiple years of participation in Immersion type SAE projects.
- Agricultural Proficiency Awards are divided into "areas" where members exploring or becoming established in specific agricultural career pathways can receive recognition. Each area has a specific description that the SAE project must fit to apply in that area.
- Proficiency award areas do not and are not meant to define SAEs. Not all SAE projects will have a proficiency award area to be recognized in, though areas are added and updated each year, attempting to include as many SAE projects as possible.

Award Application Types

Once the correct SAE type is determined, the next step is to select the correct Agricultural Proficiency Award application type. There are four application types:

- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP** – The application type is for Ownership/Entrepreneurship SAE projects, School-based Enterprise SAE projects, and some Service-Learning SAE projects.
- **PLACEMENT** – This application type is for all Placement/Internship SAE projects and some Service-Learning SAE projects.
- **COMBINED** – This application type is for applicants who have multiple SAE projects, some of which fit into the Entrepreneurship application type and some of which fit into the Placement application type. This application allows both SAE types to be included.
- **AGRISCIENCE RESEARCH** – This application type is for Research SAE projects. If you determine you have an Agricultural Research SAE, go to the National FFA Agriscience Research Proficiency Awards Handbook for information specific to this agricultural proficiency award type.

Award Areas

The list of available Agricultural Proficiency Award areas is updated yearly and released each fall. The current list is available on the Agricultural Proficiency Awards webpage of FFA.org.

Carefully review the current year's award area list to find an award area description that matches the SAE project(s). Read all possible award areas to be certain. Some types of agriculture are specifically specified in certain areas. If the wrong award area is selected, the application will perform poorly in the judging process.

With constant changes in agriculture and the creativity of students, parents and advisors, it is possible to have an SAE project that will not fit into any Agricultural Proficiency Award area. Updates are made each year, attempting to include all types of SAE projects.

Competition and Recognition Levels

Agricultural Proficiency Awards start competing at the chapter level and are narrowed down through multiple levels of competition until a single national winner in each award area is named at the National FFA Convention & Expo. Opportunities for awards and recognition are provided at each level.

- **CHAPTER** – Agricultural Proficiency Award applications start the competition process at the local chapter level. Check local chapter rules to ensure eligibility, meet local deadlines, and use the correct application forms and procedures. Chapters have many options to provide recognition to local winners. Certificates, pins, plaques and even cash awards may be offered.
- **STATE** – New Jersey FFA Agricultural Proficiency Award applications are due March 15. Only one application per area per chapter is permissible each year. A special committee will review applications and one winner in each award area is selected. Applicants are notified via email regarding the status of their application. All Proficiency Award winners will be recognized on stage during the New Jersey FFA Convention and will receive a certificate and \$250. Award winners will have time to update their application before it is submitted for National consideration. **Please see pages 12-13 of this handbook for an overview of the application submission process.**
- **NATIONAL** – The National FFA Organization allows each state association to submit one national competitor in each current year's Agricultural Proficiency Award area for competition at the national level. Each state association may submit only FFA members from their association. National-level competitors receive a rating of Participant, Bronze, Silver, Gold, National Finalist, or National Winner from the national judges.
 - **Participant Rating** – Applications rated Participant are not recognized on the national website or provided an award pin. These applications generally have major errors such as being submitted on the wrong application type, being non-agricultural or being submitted in the wrong proficiency award area.
 - **Gold, Silver, Bronze** – Applicants are listed on the National FFA Organization website and receive a bronze, silver, or gold medallion to wear on their FFA jacket. Gold-rated applications received high scores from judges. Silver-rated applications received middle scores, and bronze-rated applications received low scores from the judges.
 - **National Finalist** – Four competitors in each award area are rated National Finalist. These applicants move on to the finals round of judging and are expected to attend the National FFA Convention & Expo to be recognized in person. These applications are recognized on the National FFA Organization website and may receive certificates, medals, plaques, or cash awards.
 - **National Winner** – One applicant from the four National Finalists is selected in the finals round of judging as the National Winner. This achievement is announced live during the National FFA Convention & Expo. The national winner is recognized on the National FFA Organization website and may receive additional certificates, medals, plaques, or cash awards.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS

Guidelines for Submitting Degree & Award Applications

All Degree & Award Applications will be approved by chapter FFA advisors in AET using the “Submission Lists & Feedback” portal in the Reports tab. This replaces the Degree & Proficiency Application Submission Summary form previously used. All applications must be added to the submission list by 11:59 PM on March 15.

Proficiency Award Application Submission Guidelines

- Complete the National FFA Proficiency Award Application in the Degree/Application Manager in AET. Be sure to review the Handbook for full guidance.
- Ensure all items in the Checklist are MET.
- Save your application to generate a version #.
- Advisors must add the application to the Submission List in AET by 11:59 PM on March 15.
- Be sure the most recent version of the application is added!
- DO NOT email or send physical copies of the application to the Office of FANRE. Only applications listed in the AET Submission List will be reviewed.

American FFA Degree & American Star Application Submission Guidelines

- Complete the National FFA American FFA Degree Application in the Degree/Application Manager in AET. Be sure to review the Handbook for full guidance.
- Ensure all items in the Checklist are MET.
- Save your application to generate a version #.
- Advisors must add application to the Submission List in AET by 11:59 PM on March 15.
- Be sure the most recent version of the application is added!
- DO NOT email or send physical copies of the application to the Office of FANRE. Only applications listed in the AET Submission List will be reviewed.
- SPECIAL NOTE: To be considered as an American Star Candidate, you must click “yes” on the Cover Page to the prompt, “I would like to complete additional pages in this application to be considered for an American Star.” Clicking “yes” will automatically populate the American Star application sections that are to be completed at the same time as the American Degree application.

Garden State FFA Degree Application Submission Guidelines

- Complete the AET State Degree Application in the Degree/Application Manager in AET. ALL other State Degree applications are obsolete!
- Ensure all items in the Checklist are MET.
- Save your application to generate a version #.
- Advisors must add application to the Submission List in AET by 11:59 PM on March 15.
- Be sure the most recent version of the application is added!
- DO NOT email or send physical copies of the application to the Office of FANRE. Only applications listed in the AET Submission List will be reviewed.

Star Award Submission Guidelines

- Complete the AET Degree application that corresponds to the level star award for which you are applying – Greenhand, Chapter, State. All items must be MET before you can proceed to the Star Award application. **SPECIAL NOTE:** The American Star application has a different process which is outlined above in the American FFA Degree & American Star Application Submission Guidelines section.
- Complete the AET Star Award in the Degree/Application Manager in AET. ALL other Star Award applications are obsolete!
- Connect the AET Star Award Application to the respective Degree Application.
- Ensure all items in the Checklist are MET.
SPECIAL NOTE: A Letter of Recommendation is NOT required; however, the applicant must upload a blank document to override the system and allow the value to be MET.
- Save your application to generate a version #.
- Advisors must add application to the Submission List in AET by the following deadlines:
 1. 11:59 PM on November 1 for Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Awards
 2. 11:59 PM on March 15 for Star State Awards
- Be sure the most recent version of the application is added!
- DO NOT email or send physical copies of the application to the Office of FANRE. Only applications listed in the AET Submission List will be reviewed.

GENERAL TIPS FOR COMPLETING AET DEGREE APPLICATIONS

- All Degrees are linked to AET record books (EXCEPT the American Degree). Students must have complete AET records in order for applications to populate.
- On the Profile Tab
 - Complete personal profile
 - Ensure Ag Classes for each year of FFA membership is listed
 - Complete resume
- On the Journal tab
 - Ensure Experience Manager (SAE) is updated
 - Ensure each listed SAE has a Plan entered (pencil icon – All tabs: Description, Time Invested/Financial Investment, Learning Objectives)
 - Include an annual review (clipboard icon) for each SAE
 - Complete Journal Entries for (where applicable) – activities must have occurred by December 31 of the year prior to submitting the application.
 - Community Service
 - Other Activities (parli pro, speeches, etc.)
 - Leadership Roles
 - Committees
 - Competitive Activities
 - Other FFA Activities

- On the Financial Tab
 - Complete Entries for (where applicable)
 - New Cash Entries
 - New Non-cash Entries
 - Paychecks
 - Non-Current Items
 - Loans
 - Non-SAE entries (personal & education income/expenses)

AET Resources

- AET Video Library: <http://library.theaet.com/>
 - Videos for Students Using AET
 - Videos for Teachers
 - FFA Award Application Videos & Submission List Tools
 - Explore SAE
 - AET Online Workshops
- Student Help: <https://www.theaet.com/studenthelp>
 - Getting Started: <https://www.theaet.com/page.aspx?ID=254>
 - Awards: <https://www.theaet.com/Awards>
 - AET Resume: <https://www.theaet.com/page.aspx?ID=256>
 - AET Journal: https://www.theaet.com/AET_Journal
 - SAE and Other Finances: <https://www.theaet.com/page.aspx?ID=255>
 - SAE Best Practices: <https://www.theaet.com/BMP>
- Teacher Help: <https://www.theaet.com/teacherhelp>
 - Getting Started: <https://www.theaet.com/GettingStarted>
 - FFA.org and AET Connections: <https://www.theaet.com/RosterHelp>
 - Recorded Trainings: <https://www.theaet.com/Workshops>

COMMON ISSUES WITH STATE DEGREE APPLICATIONS

Overview

Each year, minor but requirement specific issues cause us to return applications for resubmission. Some of these mistakes are made year after year, even with an explanation. Please pay close attention to the items listed below BEFORE submitting applications. **If an application is submitted with one or more of the following issues, it will NOT be allowed to be resubmitted for reconsideration.**

State Degree Application

- SAE entry has errors
 - Relationship to agriculture is unclear (if the relationship to agriculture is not apparent, please be sure to provide enough detail to make it so). Project must be tied to the National AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards (NOT including the career ready practices or foundation pathway skills).
 - Not enough information is provided on the SAE. Please be sure students are providing a complete description of their SAEs (size, responsibilities, etc.).
 - No growth is shown. In most cases, there should be evidence of growth in the project (growth in skill, in responsibility, in hours/earnings). If no growth, please have the student explain why.
 - Hours worked are not reasonable for a high school student.
 - Gross earnings and hours worked are not relevant or don't meet minimum wage requirements.
- 10 DIFFERENT parliamentary procedure activities outlined in the FFA manual are not listed and/or activities listed do not meet the criteria. Amend and Amend an amendment are the same. Use of the gavel, second, and debate do not count as activities. Please reference the FFA manual for the list of approved motions.
- Each Parliamentary procedure activity must be listed separately and location of where the procedure was demonstrated must be listed.
- Missing the title, year, and/or group and length for SIX-minute speech on an agriculturally related topic. Team speeches are not permissible.
- Fails to list at least one FFA related leadership role and/or fails to provide the start/end year.
- Fails to show the planning and completion of a chapter POA activity or committee involvement.
- Wrong SAE Type Chosen
 - Only 45 hours of Foundational SAE hours can be used to satisfy this degree.
 - Research refers to SCIENTIFIC research where a hypothesis was created, and the scientific method was followed. Students should include the hypothesis in the description.
 - Placement refers to projects, paid or unpaid, where the student works for someone else for wages or the experience. Students cannot earn paid and unpaid hours in the same project.
 - Entrepreneurship refers to all OWNERSHIP type projects. A student does not need a full-fledged business to be considered entrepreneurship. If a student OWNS the animal/plants/etc., the project is to be considered entrepreneurship (even if the parents buy the supplies).
- Entrepreneurship Projects have incomplete records
 - Income & Expense Summary must be fully completed, and inventory pages must be complete (if applicable). Students with entrepreneurship projects cannot avoid these pages.
 - Inventory is NOT a listing of all items used throughout the duration of an SAE project. Inventory is what is on hand as of December 31, 2022.
- Financial Balance Sheet is not balanced.

- Financial records listed in the application should only be reflective of what a student earns in an SAE, the money a student uses to support an SAE (whether it's earned or gifted), and expenses that are paid using money from an SAE.
- Community Service Hours are missing or not acceptable
 - Hours must be from two different activities (doing the same activity two different times does not meet the "two different activities" requirement).
 - Hours cannot be used for SAE hours and for FFA chapter activities. Activities/hours may only be used in one section of an application.
 - Activities can be organized by a group the applicant is a part of, but the activity cannot be for the benefit of the group itself.
 - Please review this document for more details about acceptable and unacceptable community service - <https://ffa.app.box.com/v/Library/file/323326541238>

Important Notes

1. Read all instructions and watch all instruction videos before you begin. AET has numerous resources to assist.
2. Check your application for spelling, grammar, mathematical, or technical errors.
3. For award and degree purposes, all unpaid or directed laboratory/SAE hours must occur outside of the regular scheduled agriculture class, EXCEPT for up to 45 hours of Foundational SAE work.
4. For award and degree purposes, no unpaid or directed lab/SAE hours dedicated to owning and managing an entrepreneurship/ownership type project are eligible for consideration.
5. State and Federal Child Labor Laws should be considered when entering total hours dedicated to an SAE. It is also important to consider the hours a student must dedicate to school, sleep, personal care, etc.
6. The Ending Date is 12/31 of the year prior to submitting your application. For example, applications submitted for consideration in 2025 should have an ending date of 12/31/24.
7. Inventory refers to current and non-current items **on hand that are personally owned by the student as of December 31** of the ending date of the application. Inventory is NOT a list of items utilized throughout the entire time of their SAE.
8. While it is common for SAE programs to include other family members, applications should only include the student's share of inventory, income, net worth, etc.
9. State FFA Degree, American FFA Degree, and Proficiency Award applications are due by 11:59 PM on March 15. This deadline is FIRM! None of the applications require you to send them through the U.S. Postal Service or other delivery carriers.
10. Once in an application, please read ALL INSTRUCTIONS and view ALL instructional videos. Applications submitted with one or more of the issues listed on pages 15-16 of this document will NOT be allowed to be resubmitted for reconsideration.

CHECK LISTS & RUBRICS

Degree Checklists

State Degree Checklist Used by Review Committee: Pages 26-27 of this document

American Degree Checklist Used by Review Committee:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/75vwvmzgxsh4x0a55gy1to8ejw7g2iby/file/902848727671>

Proficiency Awards

Placement Rubric:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/rf6qk3q8t8zwsyeaqibuzt5b46l0q9t0/file/289986715178>

Entrepreneurship Rubric:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/rf6qk3q8t8zwsyeaqibuzt5b46l0q9t0/file/289980859187>

Combined Rubric:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/rf6qk3q8t8zwsyeaqibuzt5b46l0q9t0/file/289990891242>

Agriscience Research Rubric:

<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/rf6qk3q8t8zwsyeaqibuzt5b46l0q9t0/file/777851030102>

Star Award Rubrics

Star Greenhand Application Rubric: Pages 19-20 of this document

Star Chapter Application Rubric: Pages 21-22 of this document

Star State Application Rubric: Pages 23-24 of this document

Star State Interview Rubric: Pages 25-26 of this document

**PLEASE UTILIZE THE DEGREE CHECKLISTS and RUBRICS
PROVIDED BEFORE SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS!!!**

<p>Student Name:</p> <p>Chapter:</p>
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AET STAR GREENHAND APPLICATION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS	MID POINTS	LOW POINTS	SCORE
<p>Performance Review A-1 The student explained how their SAE(s) relates to this award area.</p>	4	3-2	1-0	
	Illustrates a clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	Illustrates a somewhat clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area but lacks clarity.	A poor or unclear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	
<p>Performance Review A-2 The student explained their SAE(s) roles, responsibilities and management decisions and how they have changed.</p>	4	3-2	1-0	
	Illustrates a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made.	A somewhat clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made, but lacks clarity.	A poor understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made.	
<p>SAE Skills and Planned Activities Award App Summary & Section F. SAE Plan Skills, Planned Activities and outcomes</p>	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates an appropriate and clear list of skills, planned activities and outcomes that clearly related to the project area.	Somewhat appropriate and somewhat clear list of skills, planned activities and outcomes and clearly relate to the SAEs listed in this application, but lacking some details.	A poor or missing list of Skills, planned activities and outcomes for the SAEs listed in this application.	
<p>SAE Annual Summary SAE Summary (Yearly) for each SAE listed - See Section F. Scope / Annual Summary for each SAE listed</p>	10-7	6-4	3-0	
	Illustrates a clear summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	A somewhat clear summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	A poor summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	
<p>SAE Plans Student SAE(s) plans for each SAE - See Section F. SAE Plan for each SAE listed</p>	15-11	10-5	4-0	
	Illustrates a clear SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and clear learning objectives that relate to the SAE.	A somewhat clear SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and a somewhat clear learning objectives that relate to the SAE.	A poor SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and a poor listing of learning objectives that relate to the SAE, or missing information.	

Scope & Complexity of Records / Project See Section F. SAE Expenses, Journals or other entries	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates a complex project, a variety of responsibilities and a significant amount of hours and/or earnings.	Illustrates a somewhat complex project, a smaller variety of responsibilities and a somewhat significant amount of hours and/or earnings.	Illustrates a simple project with few responsibilities and a low amount of hours and earnings.	
SAE Journals and or Finances Complete, appropriate and accurate SAE Journals and/or Finances - See Section F. SAE Expenses, Journals or other entries	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates an complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, and appropriate records for the scope of the project.	Illustrates a somewhat complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, but lack some aspects. Also, somewhat illustrates records for the scope of the project, but misses certain aspects.	A poor set of records that do not represent a logical listing of records and timeframe of the project.	
Spelling, Grammar, and Detail Spelling and overall appeal of the application. See all sections.	4	3-2	1-0	
	Very complete and proper use of grammar and details of records.	A somewhat complete use of grammar and details of records.	A poor use of grammar or details.	
Student Resume Development of a career objective and engagement in FFA, SAE and Community Service	3	2-1	0	
	Student resume includes a well-written career objective and high-level of engagement in all areas.	Student resume includes a somewhat well-written career objective and somewhat engaged in all areas.	Student lacks a career objective and limited involvement in resume areas.	
TOTAL SCORE				

Evaluator Signature:

Student Name: Chapter:

AET STAR CHAPTER APPLICATION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS	MID POINTS	LOW POINTS	SCORE
Performance Review A-1 The student explained how their SAE(s) relates to this award area.	4	3-2	1-0	
	Illustrates a clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	Illustrates a somewhat clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area but lacks clarity.	A poor or unclear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	
Performance Review A-2 The student explained their SAE(s) roles, responsibilities and management decisions and how they have changed.	4	3-2	1-0	
	Illustrates a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made.	A somewhat clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made, but lacks clarity.	A poor understanding of their roles, responsibilities and management decisions made.	
SAE Outcome & Efficiency Factors Performance Review Efficiency Factors	5-4	3-2	1-0	
	An appropriate and clear list of efficiencies gained and clearly relate to the SAEs listed in this application.	A somewhat appropriate and somewhat clear list of efficiencies gained and clearly relate to the SAEs listed in this application, but lacking some details.	A poor or missing list of efficiencies gained for the SAEs listed in this application.	
SAE Skills and Planned Activities Award App Summary & Section F. SAE Plan Skills, Planned Activities and outcomes	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates an appropriate and clear list of skills, planned activities and outcomes that clearly related to the project area.	Somewhat appropriate and somewhat clear list of skills, planned activities and outcomes and clearly relate to the SAEs listed in this application, but lacking some details.	A poor or missing list of Skills, planned activities and outcomes for the SAEs listed in this application.	
SAE Annual Summary SAE Summary (Yearly) for each SAE listed - See Section F. Scope / Annual Summary for each SAE listed	10-7	6-4	3-0	
	Illustrates a clear summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	A somewhat clear summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	A poor summary of annual growth from year to year, responsibilities, important outcomes and engagement across all years listed.	

SAE Plans Student SAE(s) plans for each SAE - See Section F. SAE Plan for each SAE listed	10-7	6-4	3-0	
	Illustrates a clear SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and clear learning objectives that relate to the SAE.	A somewhat clear SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and a somewhat clear learning objectives that relate to the SAE.	A poor SAE description, planned us of time/financial investments and a poor listing of learning objectives that relate to the SAE, or missing information.	
Scope & Complexity of Records / Project See Section F. SAE Expenses, Journals or other entries	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates a complex project, a variety of responsibilities and a significant amount of hours and/or earnings.	Illustrates a somewhat complex project, a smaller variety of responsibilities and a somewhat significant amount of hours and/or earnings.	Illustrates a simple project with few responsibilities and a low amount of hours and earnings.	
SAE Journals and or Finances Complete, appropriate and accurate SAE Journals and/or Finances - See Section F. SAE Expenses, Journals or other entries	20-14	13-7	6-0	
	Illustrates an complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, and appropriate records for the scope of the project.	Illustrates a somewhat complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, but lack some aspects. Also, somewhat illustrates records for the scope of the project, but misses certain aspects.	A poor set of records that do not represent a logical listing of records and timeframe of the project.	
Spelling, Grammar, and Detail Spelling and overall appeal of the application. See all sections.	4	3-2	1-0	
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Student Resume Development of a career objective and engagement in FFA, SAE and Community Service	3	2-1	0	
	Student resume includes a well-written career objective and high-level of engagement in all areas.	Student resume includes a somewhat well-written career objective and somewhat engaged in all areas.	Student lacks a career objective and limited involvement in resume areas.	
TOTAL SCORE				

Student Name:
Chapter:

AET STAR STATE APPLICATION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS	MID POINTS	LOW POINTS	SCORE
Performance Review A-1 The student explained how their SAE(s) relates to this award area.	4	3-2	1-0	
	Illustrates a clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	Illustrates a somewhat clear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area but lacks clarity.	A poor or unclear understanding of their SAE program and how it connects to this award application area.	
Performance Review A-2 The student explained their SAE(s) roles, responsibilities and management decisions and how they have changed.	4	3-2	1-0	
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SAE Annual Summary SAE Summary (Yearly) for each SAE listed - See Section F. Scope / Annual Summary for each SAE listed	10-7	6-4	3-0	
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SAE Plans Student SAE(s) plans for each SAE - See Section F. SAE Plan for each SAE listed	10-7	6-4	3-0	
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	Illustrates an complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, and appropriate records for the scope of the project.	Illustrates a somewhat complete, appropriate, and accurate set of records that represent the timeframe of the project, but lack some aspects. Also, somewhat illustrates records for the scope of the project, but misses certain aspects.	A poor set of records that do not represent a logical listing of records and timeframe of the project.	
Spelling, Grammar, and Detail Spelling and overall appeal of the application. See all sections.	4	3-2	1-0	
	Very complete and proper use of grammar and details of records.	A somewhat complete use of grammar and details of records.	A poor use of grammar or details.	
Student Resume Development of a career objective and engagement in FFA, SAE and Community Service	3	2-1	0	
	Student resume includes a well-written career objective and high-level of engagement in all areas.	Student resume includes a somewhat well-written career objective and somewhat engaged in all areas.	Student lacks a career objective and limited involvement in resume areas.	
TOTAL SCORE				

Student Name:
Chapter:

STATE STAR INTERVIEW RUBRIC

Select Star Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/> Agribusiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Placement	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriscience
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CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS 10-7	MID POINTS 6-4	LOW POINTS 3-0	POINTS EARNED
Introduction	<p>Confident and professional, suitable for a formal business setting.</p> <p>Provides a concise, clear and detailed description of their SAE project related to the award area, what they personally did to start the project and project's current status.</p> <p>Answers clearly demonstrate personal ownership/responsibility for project.</p>	<p>Less confident and somewhat casual for a formal business setting.</p> <p>Provides a general view of the SAE project and/or includes information not related to the project, does not present a detailed picture of how they personally started the project and/or is unclear about the project's current status.</p> <p>Answers do not clearly demonstrate personal ownership/responsibility for project.</p>	<p>Nervous or unsuitable for conducting business in a formal setting.</p> <p>Provides a vague or disorganized overview of SAE project and/or includes a information with little to no relevance to described project, what they personally did to start the project and/or provides little or no detail on current project status.</p> <p>Answers leave in doubt the implied level of personal ownership/responsibility for project.</p>	
CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS 20-14	MID POINTS 13-7	LOW POINTS 6-0	POINTS EARNED
Personal Growth & Skill Development	<p>Provides clear and detailed answers about their personal project roles, responsibilities, management decisions and challenges encountered</p> <p>Answers clearly demonstrate major growth in personal responsibility, skills and abilities through project participation</p> <p>Answers clearly demonstrate ability to apply learning and experiences to future career and life opportunities.</p>	<p>Provides somewhat clear answers with little detail to questions about their personal project roles, responsibilities, management decisions and challenges encountered</p> <p>Answers demonstrate minor growth in personal responsibility, skills and abilities through project participation</p> <p>Answers demonstrate some ability to apply learning and experiences to future career and life opportunities.</p>	<p>Provides vague answers with little or no detail to questions about their personal project roles, responsibilities, management decisions and challenges encountered</p> <p>Answers demonstrate very little or no growth in personal responsibility, skills and abilities through project participation</p> <p>Answers demonstrate very little ability to apply learning and experiences to future career and life opportunities.</p>	

CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS 15-11	MID POINTS 10-6	LOW POINTS 5-0	POINTS EARNED
Hours/Financial Records	<p>Answers to questions about the hours and/or financial records included in the application clearly demonstrate a complete understanding of the project finances and personal financial management.</p> <p>Answers about income & expenses are well explained and align with industry standards.</p> <p>Provides clear and detailed answers to questions about year to year changes or, lack there of, in SAE size and scope.</p>	<p>Answers to questions about the hours and/or financial records included in the application demonstrate a partial understanding of the project finances, real world costs and personal financial management.</p> <p>Answers about income & expenses are vaguely explained and/or less realistic based on industry standards.</p> <p>Provides somewhat clear and less detailed answers to questions about year to year changes or, lack there of, in SAE size and scope.</p>	<p>Answers to questions about the hours and/or financial records included in the application demonstrate little understanding of the project finances, real world costs and personal financial management.</p> <p>Answers about income & expenses are poorly explained and/or are unrealistic based on industry standards.</p> <p>Provides vague answers lacking detail to questions about year to year changes or, lack there of, in SAE size and scope.</p>	
CRITERIA	HIGH POINTS 5-4	MID POINTS 3-2	LOW POINTS 1-0	POINTS EARNED
Professionalism	<p>Confident and professional throughout the interview in behavior and dress. Used professional language. Sought to understand questions and was well prepared for Interview.</p>	<p>Exhibited some confidence and professionalism throughout interview in behavior and/or dress. Demonstrated some unprofessional language or behavior. Answers showed a partial grasp of questions asked and/or was not well prepared for Interview.</p>	<p>Exhibited a lack of confidence and professionalism throughout the interview in behavior and dress. Used unprofessional language. Did not understand or seek to understand questions and was unprepared for Interview.</p>	
TOTAL POINTS				

Judge Signature:



2025 Garden State FFA Degree

Checklist of Minimum Qualifications

STUDENT: _____ CHAPTER: _____

The following are review sections related to the Garden State FFA Degree. When evaluating the application, the reviewer should verify information with the candidate's record book.

YES	NO	AREA TO ASSESS	RECORDS VERIFICATION
_____	_____	The candidate has completed two years of systematic instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, including an SAE. Application reflects course the student was enrolled in during this time.	
_____	_____	Student has FFA membership for at least 16 months	FFA Membership (Award App)
_____	_____	Student basic profile is complete (100%)	Cover Page
_____	_____	Student must be a junior, senior, or have graduated to apply for this degree	AET Profile
_____	_____	Student holds the FFA Greenhand Level Degree	A. Student Resume (Profile)
_____	_____	Student holds the FFA Chapter Level Degree	A. Student Resume (Profile)
_____	_____	Candidate has a current membership for the ending date of this application	FFA Membership (Award App)
_____	_____	Candidate has obtained the required electronic signatures and approvals.	Award Application
_____	_____	Candidate has served as an officer, committee chairperson, or participating member of a major committee	C. Officer/ D. Committee (Profile)
_____	_____	Has performed ten parliamentary law procedures OR received an 80% or higher on the Parli Pro Exam. <i>Special note: No duplicate procedures. Amend and Amend an amendment are the same in nature. Use of the gavel, second, and debate are NOT acceptable procedures. Please reference the FFA manual for the list of approved motions that are considered acceptable procedures.</i>	AET Profile
_____	_____	Student has given a six-minute speech relating to agriculture <i>Special note: Cannot be a team speech. Speech MUST relate to agriculture. FFA and leadership related topics are not acceptable unless there is a clear DIRECT connection to agriculture.</i>	E. Other (Journal)
_____	_____	Participated in a minimum of five events above the chapter level <i>Special note: Activities listed must have occurred BEFORE December 31 of the year prior to the application. Activities must be official FFA activities of the New Jersey State FFA Association and/or the National FFA Organization or activities recognized and approved by the New Jersey State FFA Association to fit this requirement (i.e. The Big E, Del Val Leadership Day) A countywide FFA event could be accepted if the State FFA Association is made aware the event prior to the submission of the application and the event is clearly identified in the chapter's POA.</i>	E. FFA Activities (Journal)
_____	_____	Participated in at least 25 hours of Community Service Activities in at least 2 different fully-described activities that DID NOT BENEFIT FFA and NOT DUPLICATED AS AN SAE <i>Special note: Candidates must list "Individual/Group/Organization to whom service was provided" in the first column, not who service was performed with. Entries which list FFA, 4-H, or applicant's own school in the first column are wrong and will be questioned. Entries must provide enough detail so it can be clearly determined whether this service meets the guidelines. Listed activities must meet Community Service Guidelines for FFA Degrees: https://ffa.app.box.com/s/wo71rluv9djbz4ctjxs3nqm1o4dvt6gj</i>	E. Community Service (Journal)

_____	_____	All SAE Plans are complete, which is noted by “green” check mark	F. SAE Plan
_____	_____	Student qualifies for the Degree with earnings, productively invested, and hours.	
		<i>Special note: Candidate must meet one of these three conditions:</i>	“Earned & Prod. Invested” Award application
		1. <i>Candidate has worked 300 hours in excess of class time in an SAE (with the exception of 45 hours that can be from a Foundational SAE)</i>	
		2. <i>Has earned and productively invested \$1,000</i>	
		3. <i>A combination, thereof</i>	
_____	_____	Candidate has valid financial entries and no SAE warnings reported by AET	AET Experience Manager
_____	_____	SAE transactions (income/paychecks, expenses, or journal hours) for each SAE are appropriate and reasonable for the SAE(s) listed. Journal hours are entered weekly or biweekly. Lump sums of hours is not permissible.	F. SAE Details (Records)
		<i>Special note: To verify, reviewers should see (1) journals and (2) cash and non-cash entries</i>	
_____	_____	If market livestock projects, does inventory purchased for resale exist?	
		<i>Special note: To verify, the reviewer should see ‘financial records in cash and non-cash entries.’ If this does not apply to the candidate, they should record n/a on the final review page.</i>	F. SAE Expenses (Finances)
_____	_____	Are SAE market adjustments appropriate and reasonable for the SAE(s)?	
		<i>Special note: To verify, the reviewer should see ‘financial records in cash and non-cash entries.’ If this does not apply to the candidate, they should record n/a on the final review page.</i>	F. SAE Expenses (Finances)
_____	_____	If placement SAEs, are record journals and paychecks appropriate & reasonable (verify wages) and are less than 2,080 hours per year?	
		<i>Special Note: To verify, the reviewer should see ‘journal and financial records.’ If this does not apply to the candidate, they should record n/a on the final review page.</i>	F. SAE Details (P & L Summary)
_____	_____	Are non-current items reasonable and appropriate for their SAE(s) and explained in their SAE plan (agreement)?	
		<i>Special Note: To verify, the reviewer should see ‘non-current and SAE plan.’ If this does not apply to the candidate, they should record n/a on the final review page.</i>	F. SAE Plan/G. Non-Current (Records)
_____	_____	SAEs listed in the application are aligned with AFNR content areas/agricultural career fields and/or state-approved experiences.	F. SAE Details (Records)
_____	_____	Scope/description of SAE (ex. Size of enterprise, type of animal cared for, responsibilities) provides enough detail.	F. SAE (Reflection)
_____	_____	(Placement Only) SAE project descriptions describe only Placement projects. (Example: Project descriptions such as “feed and groom my horse” or “harvested my garden” lead reviewers to believe the project is an owned Entrepreneurship project.)	F. SAE (Reflection)
_____	_____	(Entrepreneurship Only) Income & Expense Summary of SAE Program is reasonable for scope of project and includes an appropriate amount of operating expense for each Entrepreneurship project described for each year and Entrepreneurship project is listed. (Example: An application which includes owned livestock must show expenses to feed and maintain animals.)	
_____	_____	(Entrepreneurship Only) All items included in both current and non-current inventory are directly related to the Entrepreneurship SAE projects included in the application.	
_____	_____	(Research Only) Are only individually titled research projects listed in the SAE – Research section?	
		<i>(i.e. Each project is listed with a descriptive “Research Title” that provides enough description for a reviewer to determine what research was about so agricultural nature can be established. An entry such as, “Research, 20 hrs.” is not acceptable.)</i>	F. SAE Details (Records)
_____	_____	Checklist of Minimum Qualifications are all met	
_____	_____	Application has not been altered.	

EVALUATOR: _____

PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/ CONCERNS ON THE BACK.