

# Frequently Asked Questions

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**Membership Rosters** – We'll start with the bad news. In spite of their efforts, National FFA will not be able to launch the Ag Career Network (ACN) as planned. There have been numerous stumbling blocks, the main being employment changes with the company who is developing the platform for the Ag Career Network, which caused a huge setback. Rather than releasing a subpar product, FFA had decided to pilot test all aspects of the ACN before opening it up to all states. We support this decision...launching a program that is not fully functional would be very frustrating.

So, for this first semester, we ask that you move forward with submitting your membership rosters online through PeopleSoft once more. The attached document titled "Step By Step Guide To FFA Membership" will assist those of you not familiar with entering your membership into the PeopleSoft program.

Of course, you will need your Chapter Number and your password for the program. For those who do not have their Chapter Number and password, please contact Mary Mitchell @ [mary.mitchell@tn.gov](mailto:mary.mitchell@tn.gov) for this information. Many new teachers may experience difficulty with the online registration...it can be a bit of a pain.

To all teachers, I recommend having each FFA member complete the attached FFA Member Information Sheet. This sheet will allow you to get answers from all of your FFA members that will be needed when you begin entering information on PeopleSoft.

A Few Tips:

1. Remember that members renewing their membership are entered differently than new members. If you register a renewing member as a new member, you will create a headache down the road when membership is verified b/c that student will have multiple membership numbers. So, when applying for state degrees, American degrees, proficiency awards, etc it will be difficult to get all of the years membership.
2. Because entering this information can be time consuming, if you have a student who possibly works in your classroom during a period a day or a student whose SAE is in agricultural education, let them help! Give them all of the information sheets, show them how to enter members, and let them have at it. This will take a little bit of training from

you, but it will save you a lot of time in the end. Remember to separation new members from renewing members.

3. December 1 is the deadline for first semester dues. A few have already sent their dues in and completed membership online – thank you. We need to collect these dues to continue the operations of our state FFA association. Thank you for being patient while we waited for the new membership system to open...because it will not be ready, it will be important that we get dues submitted quickly. Hopefully, we have already collected dues from our FFA members and can simply request a check to be sent in.
4. If you are an affiliating FFA chapter, you will need to contact Mary Mitchell @ [mary.mitchell@tn.gov](mailto:mary.mitchell@tn.gov) to find out how much you need to pay.

**Program of Activities** – According to the State FFA calendar, chapters should have their POAs submitted by December 1.

**Harvest For America** – The National FFA has lost some sponsorship for Harvest For America this year. I know that a few programs have already been collecting food for this program, which is fantastic. FFA will still be offering awards, but they will not be as large as they were last year due to the loss of sponsorship. Along with the loss of sponsorship comes the loss of monitoring. As you know, FFA monitored the pounds that were donated last year. In order for Tennessee to participate in the national program, someone will need to step up as the coordinator for our State Harvest For America program to keep a record of lbs. dropped off by each chapter and serve as the liaison between Tennessee FFA and National FFA. If you are willing to fill this role, please respond to the message. Ideally, multiple teachers will want to jump on this...however, I fear that may not be the case. Please, prove me wrong. Your job would be to send out correspondence (through me, across the listserv) about the program, have teachers report their amounts to you, keep a spreadsheet, update participants regularly, and submit final numbers to the National FFA. I'm excited to see who will want to volunteer. If no one volunteers, we may not have the program in Tennessee FFA this year.

**SAE Grants for Students** – November 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for SAE Grant Applications. Receiving an SAE Grant is an excellent way to support a proficiency award, STAR award, state or American FFA degree application. The application is VERY short. All information about SAE grants can be found at:

<https://www.ffa.org/programs/grantsandscholarships/SAEGrants/Pages/default.aspx#>

If nothing else, please provide this information to your students. There are some really hard go getters in Tennessee FFA...I'm certain our students will qualify as viable candidates for SAE grants.

**State Agriscience Fair** – The Tennessee FFA Agriscience Fair (held at state convention) will follow the rules/guidelines of the National FFA Agriscience Fair. The categories for this year are different than in previous years. Information about the Agriscience fair can be found at: <https://www.ffa.org/programs/awards/agrisciencefair/Pages/default.aspx#> - as a heads up, there are Six categories/systems for the Agriscience Fair this year:

- Animal Systems

- Environmental Services/Natural Resource Systems
- Food Products and Processing Systems
- Plant Systems
- Power, Structural and Technical Systems
- Social Systems

Notice that the names are different as are the descriptions. Visit the webpage to learn more...the Social Systems is significantly different than the other categories, so be sure and look it over. I have a hunch that many students will enjoy this category. The four divisions are still the same:

- Division I - Individuals in grades 7, 8 and 9
- Division II - Individuals in grades 10, 11 and 12
- Division III - Teams in grades 7, 8 and 9
- Division IV - Teams in grades 10, 11 and 12

**Proficiency Applications** – As previously indicated, there have been some changes to the proficiency awards program. A complete list of proficiency awards that will be available in 2012 is found at: [https://www.ffa.org/documents/prof\\_awardareas.pdf](https://www.ffa.org/documents/prof_awardareas.pdf). Also, descriptions of each award area are found at: [https://www.ffa.org/documents/prof\\_descriptions.pdf](https://www.ffa.org/documents/prof_descriptions.pdf).

Please note that the Agriscience Research Proficiency Awards (there are three of them and they are all new) require a different application. When completing these applications, pay attention to the Agriscience Research Proficiency Awards Handbook. All handbooks and applications are found at: <https://www.ffa.org/programs/awards/proficiency/Pages/default.aspx#>.

It's never too late to get started on proficiency applications! Tennessee had 10 national finalists...I bet we could increase this number to 15 or even more!

**State FFA Degree Applications** – We will use the same State FFA Degree application as last year; however, I am in the process of getting the date changed to 2012. The American Degree applications will not change next year, as of now. Of course, I may come back late and say that they are changing...but for now, they are not.

When completing state FFA Degree applications, remember that all students in their junior year or senior year must have participated in 5 different activities above the chapter level for the state FFA degree. This means that attending state convention three times will only count as one activity above the chapter level will only count once. Also, to be eligible, students must be in at least the third year of FFA membership...this information is found in the FFA manual – reference that if there are questions about eligibility. When you are printing FFA membership verification, you will need to make sure that the dues for these students have been paid for the last three years. Let's avoid the havoc of doing this last minute as some experienced last year...if we meet the December 1 deadline, there shouldn't be many issues.

**Ag Communications Rotational Theme** – According to the National FFA website in regard to CDEs; “Each November following the national FFA convention, the agricultural communications CDE committee will release event specifications for the next year. The

specifications will outline the scenario to be used for the media plan and presentation as well as the specific practicum activities and software.” For those interested in the 2012 Ag Communications Theme, check the National FFA website beginning in November.

**Student Nominating Committee** – There have been some questions about who can apply to the on the State Officer student nominating committee. This application is found on the State FFA website, but the qualifications are as follows:

1. Must be in the third or fourth year of active membership and currently a junior or senior in high school.
2. Must have earned the Chapter FFA Degree.
3. Limited to one application per chapter.
4. Chapters with a state officer candidate are ineligible.
5. Application must be complete and submitted by February 15.