

# MONTANA FFA ASSOCIATION

## CONSTITUTION

July 22, 2015

### Article I. Name and Purposes

Section A. The name of this organization shall be the Montana FFA Association. The Association and its recognized units may officially use the letters "FFA" and/or words "Future Farmers of America" to designate the Association, its units and/or members.

Section B. The purposes for which this association is formed are as follows:

1. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.
2. To develop competent, aggressive rural and agricultural leadership.
3. To create and nurture a love of country life.
4. To strengthen the confidence of students of agriculture education in themselves and their work.
5. To create more interest in the intelligent choice of agricultural occupations.
6. To encourage members in the development of individual agricultural experience programs and establishment in agricultural careers.
7. To encourage members to improve the home and its surroundings.
8. To participate in worthy undertakings for the improvement of the industry of agriculture.
9. To develop character, train for useful citizenship, and foster patriotism.
10. To participate in cooperative effort.
11. To encourage and practice thrift.
12. To encourage improvement in scholarship.
13. To provide and encourage the development of organized rural recreational activities.

### Article II. Organization

Section A. The Montana FFA Association is the state organization for Agricultural Education students. It shall consist of chartered local, collegiate and postsecondary chapters.

Section B. Active chapters of the Montana FFA Association shall be chartered only in schools where a minimum of two years systematic instruction in Agricultural Education is offered. Such chapters shall operate as an integral part of the instructional program of agricultural education.

Section C. Upon receipt of a charter from the state association, a chapter and members thereof will be officially recognized by the State FFA Association.

Section D. Collegiate and postsecondary chapters may be established in two or four-year institutions where agriculture courses are taught. Each collegiate or postsecondary chapter shall be chartered by and maintained under the authority of the Montana FFA Association. All activities of these chapters of FFA shall be in harmony with the purposes, principles and ideals of the FFA organization. Activities for FFA collegiate and postsecondary chapter members shall be based upon the needs and interests of its members.

### **Article III. Emblem**

- Section A. The official emblem of the Montana FFA Association shall include five symbols, namely: the plow, representing labor and tillage of the soil; the owl, representing wisdom; the rising sun, representing progress; a cross section of an ear of corn, representing common agricultural interests; and an American Eagle surmounting the cross section of the ear of corn, representing the national scope of organization. The emblem shall also include the letters "FFA" and the words "Agricultural Education."
- Section B. Emblems shall be uniform in all chapters. All Active, Alumni and Honorary members shall be entitled to display the emblem. Collegiate members and advisors may wear an owl pin of official design.
- Section C. Greenhand FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official bronze emblem pin, Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official silver emblem pin, State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm, and American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.
- Section D. Honorary Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear either the official silver or gold emblem pin, Honorary State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm, and Honorary American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.
- Section E. Collegiate FFA chapter members and FFA advisors shall be entitled to wear the official gold owl pin.

### **Article IV. Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership**

- Section A. There shall be five degrees of Active membership based on individual achievement. These are the Discovery FFA Degree, Greenhand FFA Degree, the Chapter FFA Degree, and State FFA Degree, and the American FFA Degree. The National Organization shall set the minimum qualifications for each degree.
- Section B. Greenhand FFA Degree - To be eligible to receive the Greenhand FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications.
1. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
  2. Learn and explain the FFA Creed, Motto and Salute.
  3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
  4. Demonstrate a knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
  5. Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws, and the Chapter Program of Activities.
  6. Personally own or have access to the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.
  7. Submit a written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.
- Section C. Chapter FFA Degree - To be eligible to receive the Chapter FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum 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 course.
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 by the member's own efforts or worked at least 45 hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
  5. Have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
  6. Have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
  7. Show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA awards programs.
  8. Have a satisfactory scholastic record.
  9. Submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.
  10. Candidate must meet other requirements as established by the chapter.
  11. Candidate must have completed a minimum of 10 hours of community service activities.

Section D. State FFA Degree - To be eligible to receive the State FFA Degree from the State Association, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree.
2. Have been an active FFA member for at least two years (24 months) at the time of receiving the State FFA Degree.
3. 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.
4. Have earned and productively invested at least \$1,500 or worked at least 450 hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Demonstrate leadership ability by:
  - a. Performing ten procedures of parliamentary law.
  - b. Giving a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or the FFA.
  - c. Serving as an officer, committee chairperson, or participating member of a chapter committee.
6. Have a satisfactory scholastic record as certified by the local agricultural education instructor and the principal or superintendent. A copy of the transcript must accompany the application. A student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be 2.0 or greater to make application for the State FFA Degree.
7. Have participated in the planning and completion of the Chapter Program of Activities.
8. Have participated in at least five FFA activities above the chapter level.
9. Have completed a minimum of 25 hours of community service in at least two different activities.

Section E. American FFA Degree -To be eligible to receive the American FFA Degree from the National FFA Organization, the member must meet the following qualifications:

1. Have received the State FFA Degree, have been an active member for the past three years (36 months), and have a record of satisfactory participation in the activities on the chapter and state levels.
2. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least three years (540 hours) of systematic secondary school instruction in an agricultural education program or have completed the program of agricultural education offered at the school last attended.
3. Have graduated from high school at least 12 months prior to the national convention at which the degree is to be granted.
4. Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program through which a member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise.

5. Have earned and productively invested at least \$7,500 or have earned and productively invested at least \$1,500 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours x \$3.56 plus dollars must be equal to or greater than the number 9,000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet the minimum requirements for the degree.
6. Have completed a minimum of 50 hours of community service in at least three different activities.

## **Article V. Membership**

Section A. Membership in the FFA organization shall be of four kinds: Active, Alumni, Collegiate, and Honorary.

Section B. Active Membership - To be eligible for Active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary agricultural education program. "Secondary agricultural education programs" includes grades 7-12.

To become an Active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the Organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current State and National dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

A member may retain Active membership until November 30, following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school.

A member 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 further payment of dues 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 using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining Active membership for application for advanced degree of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service and indicate such a desire by paying dues and attending meetings. Members participating in a six-month armed services program shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual may retain Active membership beyond his or her 23rd birthday.

Section C. Alumni Membership - Membership shall be open to former Active members, Collegiate and Honorary members, present and former professional agricultural educators, parents of FFA members, and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

Section D. Collegiate Membership - Collegiate membership shall be open to students who are enrolled in agricultural courses or who are pursuing career objectives in the industry of agriculture at a two- or four-year postsecondary institution having an FFA chapter. Collegiate and postsecondary members shall pay State and National dues.

Section E. 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 membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention.

Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree in the chapter, Honorary State FFA Degree in the State Association, and the Honorary American FFA Degree in the National Organization.

## **Article VI. Officers**

Section A. All officers of the Montana FFA Association must hold the State FFA Degree.

Section B. The officers of the Montana FFA Association shall consist of the president, two vice presidents, secretary, treasurer, reporter, sentinel, and parliamentarian. The Specialist of Agricultural Education shall assume the responsibility of state advisor.

Section C. All state officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the delegates present at the annual convention. Members are only allowed to run for a state office until their first convention following graduation from high school. The state officers shall be nominated by a special assigned nominating committee set up in the following manner:

1. Members of the nominating committee be assigned by the current state FFA officers.
2. Nominating committee to consist of:
  - a. Three past state officers.
  - b. Three current members (in different districts) from chapters that do not have candidates.
  - c. Three business and industry representatives.
  - d. Two chapter advisors, with one selected annually to serve a two-year term as consultants (non-voting members). They will be elected by the Montana agricultural education teachers.
  - e. Current FFA members shall be chosen from applications submitted to the state advisor by March 15. The application must include the chapter advisor's recommendation.
  - f. A chapter with a state officer candidate is not eligible to submit an application.

Eligible candidates who have been interviewed by the nominating committee, other than those offered by the nominating committee, may be nominated from the floor of the convention. If such nominations occur, the vote will start at president and continue in descending order. If the floor nominee is elected, the candidate nominated by the nominating committee for his/her respective office will automatically be nominated for the next office. This process will continue until all offices are filled.

Each state officer shall be elected for a period of one year or until the next state conference after his/her election. Past and present officers shall not be re-elected to a state office.

## **Article VII. Meetings and Conventions**

Section A. State meetings are to be arranged by the State Executive Committee. The time

and meeting place of the meetings and the state convention will be chosen by the State Executive Committee. The state convention will be held annually at least 45 days prior to the national convention.

Section B. Each local chapter shall be entitled to send two official delegates and one alternate to the state convention if the chapter is in good standing as defined by Article X in the Montana FFA Association immediately prior to the State FFA Convention for the school year. Only two voting delegates from each chapter shall be allowed to sit in the delegate section at any time.

*Section C.* Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall be the Parliamentary Law used by the Montana FFA Association. The Montana FFA Association Constitution and Bylaws shall be the first order of law followed, then Robert's Rules of Order second. Any questions or concerns not directly addressed in the Constitution and Bylaws, shall be enforced by Robert's Rules of Order.

#### **Article VIII. Dues**

Section A. As long as Montana is affiliated, no dues will exist for the members unless requested by the state association and approved by the FFA Board of Directors.

Section B. If current yearly dues are assessed, then any individual member must pay dues prior to that member's participation in a district, state, regional or national activity or competitive event.

#### **Article IX. FFA Districts**

Section A. The state may be divided into districts established by the State FFA Association. All districts must have a minimum of six chapters. All district activities must conform with policies of the Montana FFA Association.

Section B. All competitive events held in these districts shall be under the jurisdiction of the district officers and advisor of the chapter hosting the district convention.

#### **Article X. Chapters in Good Standing**

Section A. A chapter to be in good standing in the Montana FFA Association must pay dues for all Active members and submit a Program of Activities (It is strongly recommended that the format follow the form on the Local Program Resource Guide CD) to the state association by November 1 and Form #2, Final Report on Students Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs by February 10.

Section B. A chapter which is not in good standing is ineligible to participate in contests or activities above the chapter level.

#### **Article XI. Amending the Constitution**

Section A. Any proposed amendment to the state constitution must be prepared in writing and submitted to the Executive Committee and the state advisor 60 days before the annual state convention.

Section B. Any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be compiled by the Executive Committee and the state advisor and referred to local chapters for their

consideration and review at least 30 days prior to the annual state convention.

Section C. Amendments may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegates assembled at the state convention.

## MONTANA FFA ASSOCIATION BYLAWS

### **Article I. Duties of State Officers**

**Section A. President.** It shall be the duty of the president of the Montana FFA Association to preside over all meetings of the state association and preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee. It shall be the president's duty to call a meeting of the Montana FFA Association at least once a year. The president shall call special meetings of the Executive Committee. The president shall appoint all committees and serve as an ex officio member of these committees.

**Section B. First Vice President.** The first vice president shall assume all duties of the president in the event that the office of the president becomes vacant. The first vice president shall preside over meetings in the absence of the president as are assigned by the Executive Committee. The first vice president shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section C. Second Vice President.** It shall be the duty of the second vice president, acting under the direction of the president and the first vice president, to care for the welfare of the FFA organization in their assigned area.

In case the office of the first vice president becomes vacant by resignation or otherwise, the second vice president shall assume the duties of the first vice president.

The second vice president is a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section D. Secretary.** The secretary shall keep an accurate record of all annual meetings, meetings of the Executive Committee and meetings of special committees. The secretary is a member of the Executive Committee. The secretary shall be responsible for providing to the state advisor the report of each year's conference proceedings for distribution to local chapters.

**Section E. Reporter.** The reporter shall make a complete report of all items of interest concerning the activities of the Montana FFA and with assistance of the state advisor shall see that such reports are sent to the various newspapers. The reporter will collect material and maintain the official Montana FFA Association scrapbook. The reporter is a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section F. Treasurer.** The treasurer must make a financial report at each meeting. The treasurer is a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section G. Parliamentarian.** It shall be the duty of the parliamentarian to assist the president and the delegates in the orderly conduct of business in the most efficient manner by the correct use of parliamentary procedure. The parliamentarian is a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section H. Sentinel.** The sentinel shall assist the president in maintaining order. The sentinel should also have charge of the meeting room and welcome visitors and guests. The sentinel is a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section I. Advisor.** "The advisor is a member of the Executive Committee and an ex officio member of all committees. It is the duty of the advisor to advise the Executive Committee on matters of policy and to assist state and local officers in conducting meetings and programs. Also, the advisor is responsible to update the



constitution once it is ratified, so that it can be sent out to the chapters. The advisor will coordinate all statewide FFA activities and state officer responsibilities as well as maintain all association financial records and provide appropriate reports of such records.”

Section J. Immediate Past Officer. The immediate past officer is to be an ex officio member of the first major association meeting, District Leadership School meeting, and the first State FFA Convention planning meeting. His/her duties shall be in an advisory capacity only and will have no power in the voting process.

## **Article II. The Executive Committee**

Section A. The Executive Committee shall be made up of all state officers. The president shall preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee. The secretary shall keep records of all business transacted by this committee. The advisor, executive secretary and immediate past officer shall be members of this committee, *Foundation Development Officer, the State Ag-Ed Specialist, and the Division Head of Agriculture Education at Montana State University-Bozeman* in an advisory capacity only. The advisor and executive secretary shall attend all meetings of this committee. The immediate past officer shall attend meetings designated in Article I, Section K.

## **Article III. Methods of Issuing Local Charters**

Section A. Secretaries of local chapters must submit with an application for a charter the following information:

1. Proof through minutes of a meeting that the local chapter has adopted the state constitution.
2. A list of elected officers.
3. A Program of Activities for the year.
4. A copy of the constitution and bylaws of the local chapter.
5. A list of the charter members with dues for each member.

## **Article IV. Dues and Use of Dues**

Section A. As long as Montana is affiliated, no dues will exist for the members unless requested by the state association and approved by the FFA Board of Directors.

Section B. Funds collected from the payment of dues are used for purposes such as:

1. National dues.
2. State dues.
3. The Montana FFA newspaper.
4. The National FFA magazine.
5. State FFA Degree keys.
6. Chapter charters.
7. Certificates and framing thereof for state awards.
8. Appreciation plaques.
9. State FFA Degree certificates.
10. Travel of state officers.
1. Assistance to national delegates.

12. Assistance to eligible FFA judging teams.
13. State Officer expenses.
14. Part of the travel expense for national band and chorus members.
15. Uniforms for national band and chorus members.

#### **Article V. Committees**

Section A. The president shall appoint all committees to be composed of not less than three members, one acting as chairman. Standing committees shall be:

1. Program of Activities committee. This committee shall prepare a Program of Activities for the year and submit it to the delegates at the regular meeting.
2. Auditing committee. The auditing committee shall examine the books and records of the treasurer and submit a report at the regular annual meeting.

Section B. All committees are appointed for one year.

Section C. The state advisor shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

Section D. Other committees may be appointed as necessary.

#### **Article VI. State FFA Board of Trustees**

Section A. The general purpose of the FFA Board of Trustees is to evaluate all phases of the state district and local programs.

Section B. Membership of the Board of Trustees is made up of five MAAE members. It is recommended that the five members represent different areas in the state.

Advisors are to be elected at the annual meeting of the Montana Association of Agriculture Education (MAAE) at the time of the regular annual meeting of the state association. Advisors serving on the Board of Trustees will serve for two years, with two new members elected each year.

Section C. Specific functions of the FFA Board of Trustees are as follows:

1. Provide any requested assistance to the state advisor in selection of American FFA Degree Applications.
2. Evaluate the overall agricultural competitive events.
3. Consider and evaluate all fairs holding statewide events for FFA.
4. Act as a liaison committee between the MAAE and the Montana FFA Association.
5. Develop policy for the Montana FFA Association.

#### **Article VII. Procedure for Committee Reports**

Section A. All reports and questions which are proposed to the convention may be referred, if felt necessary by the president, to a committee of delegates for study and consideration. After due consideration, this committee will prepare a report to be presented to the delegate assembly for its consideration.

#### **Article VIII. Competitive Events**

Section A. Competitive events held in the name of the Montana FFA Association shall be

under the control of the Executive Committee which will have the power to specify the rules of the events, place where they are to be held, officials, judges, prizes and qualifications of the participants.

Section B. Rules for competitive events are:

1. All participants must be active members in good standing of a local chapter of FFA which must be a chapter in good standing of the Montana FFA Association.
2. Participants must be enrolled in an agricultural education class and have a supervised agricultural experience in an agricultural related business.
3. Participants must be making current passing grades in at least three solid subjects.
4. Team will be disqualified for any infraction such as those noted in the Activities and Awards booklet of the Montana FFA Association.

Section C. A member of a trip winning judging team is eligible for further state competition, but cannot repeat the same trip. In the event one member of a winning team does win a trip for a second time, the remaining three individuals are eligible for the national team. However, if two or more members of a winning state team have competed at national level the national trip will pass to the next eligible team in descending order.

Section D. Chapters are eligible to participate in all national competition areas that they qualify in, providing that no member of the team is also a member of another team.

#### **Article IX. Removal from Office of State Officers**

Section A. Any elected officer who fails in performance of his/her duties may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. Such removal must be approved by the advisor. The officer to be so removed must be notified in writing at least one month (30 days) prior to removal and must have been given notice of unsatisfactory work before notice of removal is issued.

Section C. In the event the president is removed from office, the first vice president shall assume the duties and office of the president. The second vice president shall assume the duties and office of the vice president. All other officers shall remain in their elected office with no additions to the officer team. In the event an officer other than the president or vice president is removed from office, the officers will remain in their elected offices and the duties of the absent officer shall become the responsibility of the president to delegate among the officer team.

Section C. The resignation of a State Officer may only be accepted by Board of Trustees.

#### **Article X. Method of Paying for FFA Association Expenses**

All items of expense in connection with the Montana FFA Association may be paid for by the state advisor. All such disbursements shall be subject to review by the Executive Committee.

#### **Article XI. Selecting Delegates and Paying Their Expenses to the National FFA Convention.**

Section A. Delegates to the National FFA Convention shall consist of the two state officers attending the State Presidents' Conference and three randomly chosen delegates

drawn from the available state officers at their initial training session.

Section B. If any delegates find it impossible to attend, alternate delegates shall go and have their expenses paid. Alternate delegates shall be chosen by random drawing of the available state officers at their initial training session.

Section C. State Officers, other than the delegates, wishing to attend the National Convention shall receive financial support equal to that of a State FFA team member or other FFA member representing the State Association.

**Article XII. Amending the Bylaws**

Section A. The bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the delegates present at a regular meeting of the Montana FFA Association.

Section B. Any item or question not covered by this constitution and bylaws shall be governed by the national FFA constitution as published in the current official manual of the FFA Organization.