

Starting a Local FFA Alumni Affiliate Handbook

National FFA Alumni Association



*“Children are likely to live up to
what we believe of them.”
- Claudia Alta Johnson*

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National FFA Alumni Association

Email: alumni@ffa.org, **Phone:** 317/802-4332, **Fax:** 317/802-5332

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268

Physical/Shipping Address: 6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46278



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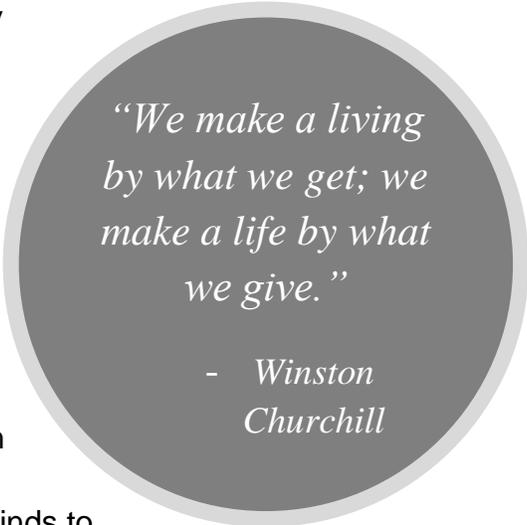
Reasons to have a local FFA Alumni affiliate

National FFA Alumni Affiliates work to:

- Support and promote FFA Organization, FFA activities and agricultural education on local, state and national levels.
- Facilitate involvement and support of former members and others interested in FFA and agricultural education.
- Promote and maintain an appreciation of the American free enterprise system.
- Enhance the personal development aspect of FFA.
- Serve as advocates for FFA and Agricultural education on local, state and national levels.
- Utilize volunteer management tools provided by National FFA Alumni.

Assist

With the increased diversity of agricultural education programs, it is becoming more difficult for advisors/teachers to keep up with all the additional activities. Former FFA members and interested adults are a natural resource of service and support. Focus is on new technology in agriculture and agribusiness, therefore it is important to involve all types of people in your community. With the FFA Advisor coordinating activities, the Alumni can provide hands, hearts and minds to ensuring success.



*“We make a living
by what we get; we
make a life by what
we give.”*

- Winston
Churchill

Advocate

An FFA Alumni affiliate can unify the local community to support agricultural education and FFA activities and provide valuable assistance to agriculture advisors. Advocacy is an on-going, organized system of recruiting, educating, and motivating members to use their influence at the local level. This may include building relationships with legislators, school board members, school administrators, local government leaders, business leaders, and other community leaders. These relationships allow FFA Alumni to inform and communicate the importance of agricultural education.

Provide resources

Schools are facing increasingly tight budgets. As local Alumni we are in a unique position to ensure that the local agricultural education program and FFA chapter have the resources they need. Affiliates across the country have been instrumental in ensuring their chapter/program has the equipment, funds or other resources needed to benefit the students’ learning and growth. Examples range from raising funds to



purchasing materials for a new greenhouse to the extreme situation of paying a portion of a teacher’s salary to keep the program from closing. Each chapter/program has an array of needs and opportunities where the Alumni can assist.

Hosting fundraisers is not the only means of providing additional resources for the chapter/program. If shop or classroom materials are needed, perhaps there is an opportunity for the Alumni to develop a relationship with a local distributor who would donate the items or provide them at a reduced cost. To really ensure the future of the program, work with supporters in your community to consider leaving a gift to the local agricultural education program in their will. These types of investments will have long lasting impact on future generations of students and provides people with an opportunity to share their assets upon their passing. We challenge Alumni affiliates everywhere to creatively consider how they can provide needed resources. By doing so you’ll allow the teacher to focus on teaching!

Mentor

One of the most rewarding benefits of being an FFA Alumni member is the opportunity to mentor the students that come through the agricultural education program. John Crosby once said, “Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.” FFA Alumni can play a unique role in the growth and development of our youth both inside and outside the classroom.





Why FFA Alumni versus boosters?

Many people will wonder why it's important to go through the effort of establishing a local FFA Alumni affiliate and sending state and national dues. Why not keep local money local?

FFA Alumni affiliate is a booster club with a structure

Due to affiliation with the national organization, a local FFA Alumni affiliate is required to operate under a set structure and constitution and bylaws.

State and national backing

A booster club lacks the support structure of the state (where applicable) and national FFA Alumni. This lends validity to the organization and allows people to engage in support of your local program no matter where they reside. Additionally it provides a support system that a booster club lacks. Resources flow from national and state to support the local level.

Awards, scholarships, grants

by forming an FFA Alumni affiliate you have the opportunity to receive recognition for your work! As well as offering additional opportunities of scholarships and grants which are only available to students/chapters with a nationally chartered, active National FFA Alumni affiliate.

Member recognition & training

FFA Alumni members have the opportunity to take advantage of member benefits, such as; professional development and training. The national association and many states host events that include opportunities for networking, personal development and skill development. Plus, being a part of the FFA Alumni family allows you to recognize your outstanding volunteers through a variety of national and state recognition programs.

Being a part of the FFA Family

by forming an FFA Alumni you are able to use the FFA Alumni logo; the name "FFA Alumni;" can file for tax exempt status as a subsidiary of the National FFA Organization nonprofit organization. Additionally as an active Alumni member, you are considered eligible for discounts and offers made available to FFA from our various sponsors and work with vendors that have been identified as official FFA fundraiser providers and retail licensees.

Independent entity from school

Booster clubs are governed by the school in which they support, Alumni affiliate have an autonomy that allows them to open their own bank accounts, govern their programs and operations and ensure that the funds generated through their efforts are distributed to the Ag Ed Program/FFA Chapter as determined in their Bylaws.





Chartering/Reactivation qualifications

To charter a **local FFA Alumni affiliate**, meet and maintain these qualifications:

1. Have at least 10 members who have paid National FFA Alumni member dues and State FFA Alumni dues (if applicable).
2. Have constitution/bylaws in harmony with the National FFA Alumni Bylaws.
3. Have a council of elected officers.
4. Complete the Application for Local Charter.
5. Submit the completed **Application for Local Charter**, the **Constitution/Bylaws**, completed **roster**, and national and state **dues** for at least ten members to your State FFA Alumni Association. Your State FFA Alumni Association will forward all forms and documents to the National FFA Alumni Association. Upon receipt of all items, the National FFA Alumni Association will officially charter the new affiliate by issuing an affiliate number, a charter certificate and a scroll.

To **reactivate** an Alumni affiliate:

1. Update your constitution/bylaws (if inactive for over three consecutive years)
2. Elect officers
3. Pay state and national dues
4. Submit a copy of updated constitution/bylaws, listing of elected officers, and state and national dues for at least ten members to your State FFA Alumni Association.

Definitions

Agricultural Education Program: Instruction is delivered through three major components.

- 1) classroom/laboratory instruction (contextual learning)
- 2) supervised agricultural experience programs (work-based learning)
- 3) student leadership organizations - FFA

FFA Chapter: Chapter is the collective term used for students of the local Ag Ed program participating in FFA.

FFA Alumni Affiliate: Affiliate is the collective term used for local FFA Alumni groups.

“As an Ag Teacher I am blessed to have alumni that serve in the traditional roles of fundraising and chaperoning and non-traditional roles sharing expertise in areas I am not as proficient in. As a resource educating students, I am able to use the alumni’s wealth of knowledge to train CDE teams taking the burden off my shoulders and allowing me to concentrate on those areas that I am proficient in. What an asset to our Ag Program.”

- Jodi Geiger, Ag Teacher,
Pine Ridge FFA



National FFA Alumni membership types

Before you can begin focusing on increasing your affiliate’s membership, it is important that you are comfortable with the definitions of the various National FFA Alumni membership categories and the different eligibility requirements. All formal definitions and associated fees can be found online, under “become a member at: www.ffa.org/alumni.

Annual Member

This category of membership is open to anyone who supports agricultural education and FFA. Dues are paid on an annual basis to local, state and national FFA Alumni.

- **Collegiate Annual Member**
collegiate annual membership is offered at a discounted rate to any student who is currently enrolled in a secondary education program and is a collegiate FFA member.

Life Member

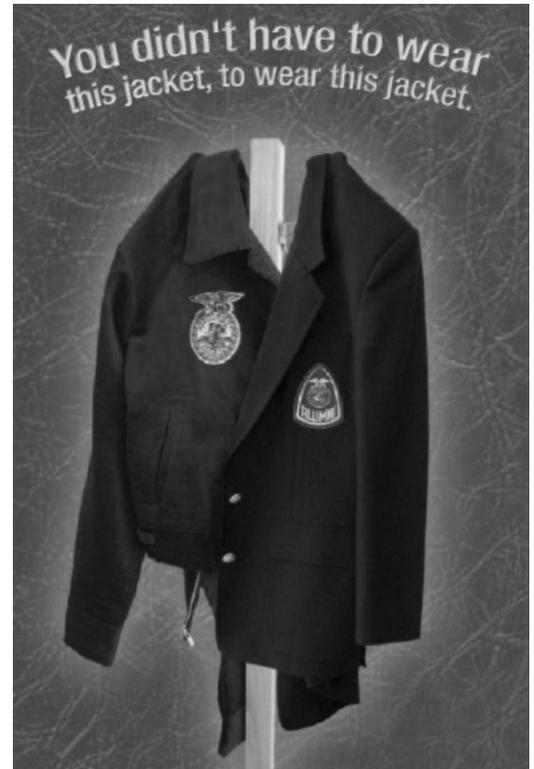
This individually held membership is available to individuals who want to confirm their commitment to uphold the values and traditions of agricultural education and FFA by making a one-time payment of dues.

Corporate Member

This category of membership is available to any business or corporation that supports agricultural education and FFA. The corporation, not the individual, holds this membership.

Associate Member

This category of membership is a no-cost, 5 year membership to recently graduated FFA members.



State Membership Types and Dues Structure

Each State FFA Alumni Association is able to set state FFA Alumni membership types and associated dues amounts. Please see your state FFA Alumni leadership for this information or contact the national officer for assistance.



National FFA Alumni member benefits

It is important to familiarize yourself with the many benefits that National FFA Alumni offers its members. Your own personal reasons and benefits you receive from being an FFA Alumni member are just as relevant as anything on the list below. Membership in the National FFA Alumni Association can make a difference. Consider the many benefits of membership. To learn more visit www.ffa.org/alumni.

Supporting FFA – Develop a deeper understanding of FFA all while connecting with FFA members and aiding the FFA advisor.

Networking – Meet other individuals and businesses that support agriculture, agricultural education and FFA.

Local/State Affiliates – Attend affiliate meetings to enhance your education, get involved on committees and get the most out of your membership.

Enhance your Education – National FFA Alumni offers you opportunities to enhance your skills and knowledge through conference workshops, the volunteer management online resources, planning and executing affiliate meetings and events, and opportunities to mentor and train students.

Advocating – Membership offers you unity with a group that shares your passions and opportunities to engage in sharing the message of agricultural education and FFA with your communities, school boards and administrators.

FFA Alumni Development Conference - Attend and experience the excitement of being with people who are just as passionate as you are about FFA and agricultural



education! This four-day conference, held each July in a different region of the country, is your opportunity to gather with local and state FFA Alumni leaders from across the country. It's the perfect opportunity to network, make lasting friendships, share ideas and have fun! The conference is structured with half day workshops on a variety of topics related to member and affiliate growth and development.

The second half of the day takes the group on educational or sightseeing tours of the host city/region and opportunities to interact with participants to exchange ideas and solutions.



National FFA Alumni Convention – Held annually in conjunction with the national FFA convention. Attend and experience firsthand the largest student youth gathering in America, dedicated to the development of our student leaders. As part of the overall convention, FFA Alumni hosts: awards and business sessions, interactive learning in the Alumni Nation, benefit auctions to raise funds for student scholarships, and even provides entertainment to attendees by sponsoring hypnotist shows as a fundraiser for the association.

New Visions Newsletter – *New Visions* is our newsletter to all FFA Alumni who wish to receive it (one per household). It provides information on FFA Alumni activities, local, state and national Alumni events, advocacy needs, success stories and opportunities.

New Horizon Magazine – The official member publication for the National FFA Organization, *FFA New Horizons* highlights FFA member achievements, promotes careers in agriculture, prepares students for college, offers life lessons and more. This publication is available to annual FFA Alumni members at a reduced fee. Life and corporate members are able to receive this as an e-publication if desired as part of their life membership benefits.

Volunteering – Not only will you have the opportunity to become involved with local and/or state FFA Alumni activities, you may choose to serve on committees or in officer positions to be involved in the setting of local and/or state FFA Alumni goals and objectives. From these opportunities you'll also gain benefits that will help you grow personally and professionally, leadership experience, satisfaction through helping others, and networking. Get involved! This is your association.

Recognition – Take pride in belonging to the premier association for supporters of agricultural education and FFA! Apply for state and national awards and recognition opportunities.





How to organize a local FFA Alumni affiliate

The estimated times below are approximate and show that it doesn't take a lot of time to start an alumni affiliate. Follow these guidelines to establish an alumni affiliate to support your efforts and ensure your program's survival.

Estimated Time Task

5 minutes

A. Identify potential members. A strong, well-organized, local organization begins with a strong nucleus. Three to five interested individuals can be the foundation to starting off on sound footing. Utilize the leadership FFA Organization has already developed in your area.

10-15 minutes

B. Develop tentative bylaws prior to the meeting. (Suggested bylaws available at www.ffa.org/alumni, under Start an Affiliate)

28-29 minutes

C. Call a nucleus meeting to:

5 minutes

1. Review the purpose and benefits of a local affiliate and how it will help local FFA members and the program.

3 minutes

2. Define membership eligibility.

3 minutes

3. Discuss the procedure for chartering a local affiliate.

5 minutes

4. Review the suggested FFA Alumni bylaws, constitution and application for local charter.

2-3 minutes

5. Appoint a chairperson to assign duties.

10 minutes

6. Make a list of potential members and divide the responsibility of contacting each prospect between nucleus committee.

20 minutes

D. Publicize an organizational meeting that is open to the public, the Alumni affiliate and community members:

10 minutes

1. Write and deliver a news release to the local media and announce meeting date, location and purpose.

5 minutes

2. Have FFA members send handwritten invitations to parents, administrators and community leaders.

5 minutes

3. Nucleus members contact potential members in person or by telephone. Ask people to spread the word to at least five other individuals.

60 minutes

E. Conduct the organizational meeting:

5 minutes

1. The temporary chairperson and committee should present the purpose of the meeting, explain purposes and objectives of a



- 5 minutes
 - 10 minutes
 - 30 minutes
 - 10 minutes
2. Review Alumni promotional materials.
 3. Invite an FFA alumni state or national council member to assist in presenting the purpose and objectives of the Alumni association.
 4. Temporary chairperson asks for motion to form affiliate. The local chapter advisor or FFA president then takes over the meeting for the election of president. Make sure the president is respected and willing to put forth the time and energy necessary to start an affiliate. The president then takes over the meeting to conduct the election of the vice president, secretary and treasurer. A local constitution and bylaws should be handed out and each item discussed. From this, draw up the permanent constitution and bylaws. A motion to accept the constitution and bylaws is then in order.
 5. Establish local dues and set date for next meeting. National and State membership dues amounts should be mentioned. The length of time from this first organizational meeting in which a potential member can be considered a charter member should be set. Most groups allow one month, the shorter the time, the better. Make plans to conduct the member initiation ceremony at the next meeting or at a special event.

10 minutes

F. Publicize the results. Publicity of the meeting should go to all media sources. Successful activities of a local FFA Alumni Affiliate will make a successful organization.



SPECIAL NOTES:

1. *Have all members pay dues immediately following the meeting. This will insure they will be charter members.*
2. *Complete a roster with each member's information.*
3. *If the member is currently a member of another affiliate and would like to transfer to the new affiliate, please include all information plus current affiliate number and member number if known.*



Starting the process of organizing

Meet with the Agricultural Educator(s) at your local program

You're likely reading this because you've either been approached by the teacher(s) at your local program about helping start a local affiliate or you're interested in approaching the teacher(s) about starting an affiliate. In either case, the first step is having a discussion with the teacher(s) about how a local FFA Alumni affiliate can benefit them, the program and FFA chapter. Remember the FFA Alumni exists to ASSIST the teacher - not dictate their work, take over running the program, direct curriculum, etc. Each program should have an Advisory Committee that is responsible for ensuring the curriculum taught is meeting the needs of the community and industry. The role of Alumni is to assist in whatever capacity the teacher(s) request.

In your discussions with the teacher(s), make a list of the specific areas in which he/she sees the Alumni assisting. Examples include: arranging field trip locations & logistics; raising funds for students to attend events or providing scholarships; coaching specific Career Development Event teams; identifying classroom guest speakers, hosting parent orientation night for parents of students just entering the program; finding chaperones to accompany the chapter to district/state/national events; help facilitate a community service activity, etc. Be specific about the areas the Alumni will offer assistance.

Talk to other teachers and Alumni within your state or region to learn about ways in which they assist their local program, chapter and teacher(s)!

Recruit members to form the nucleus or organizing committee

Once you've identified what the purpose and role of your local FFA Alumni will be it's time to start pulling together a nucleus group to do the leg work in establishing the affiliate. Identify a small group of people to serve on this organizing committee. There is not a set number of people to involve on this committee, just consider the purpose is for a small body to come together to do the organizing, therefore in general you want about 4-8 individuals committing their time and energies to establishing the local affiliate.

This committee then becomes responsible for the following:

- **Do your homework**

What has already been done in your community in terms of a volunteer group to assist the Ag Ed program? Has your local FFA Chapter/Ag Ed Program had a local FFA Alumni that died out? Do you have a booster club that's looking to be reenergized or to join with the state and national structure for greater benefits? Why was it done? Was it successful? Who was involved and can we reengage



them now? What needs to be done? Doing your homework is an essential part of the process. As a committee, develop lists of questions like those above and answer them to help you determine the best ways to structure and implement the new FFA Alumni.

- **Look at your current situation**

Know the situation of your community, the school, the agricultural education program, and FFA chapter before you can start recruiting members and promoting the Alumni. Work with the teacher(s) to determine the current support received from school administration, school board, community leaders and businesses, etc. What is the value and quality of the agricultural education program, FFA chapter and the teacher(s) that we can promote and advocate on behalf of? Consider the demographics of your community and the different segments you might recruit to join your local affiliate (parents, former members, school board and administrators, those in the agricultural industry, etc.)

- **Contact your State FFA Alumni Association (if one exists)**

Your state FFA Alumni can be a valuable resource for you. Not only can they help you navigate the paperwork to charter a local affiliate, they have experience on their side and can offer insight and suggestions. Additionally many times, state FFA Alumni officers are willing to travel to organizing meetings to assist with presenting on the benefits of a local FFA Alumni. They can also provide state dues information, any awards and events they offer and contacts within your area that may be able to assist in some way. If you or your teacher(s) are not aware of a state FFA Alumni, contact the national office to determine the appropriate contact.

- **Develop a preliminary mission & purpose of the local FFA Alumni Affiliate**

Based on your discussions with the teacher(s) develop a statement that describes simply what the FFA Alumni will be/do. A brief statement of purpose allows you to communicate effectively to stakeholders and recruit members.

- **Determine your affiliate name**

Based on who the affiliate will be serving, you can select a name for your affiliate. Most select the name of the school that they are serving, however many go by the county/valley/area name based on if they are serving more than one program. Your official name will be (CHOSEN NAME) FFA Alumni. Some affiliates choose to add “and friends, family, supporters, etc.” to their name for general use and to assist in overcoming the confusion sometimes associated with the term “Alumni.” These additions are fine; however it’s important to note that your official name is “FFA Alumni” and needs to be noted as such for items



such as tax exempt status.

- **Develop a preliminary Constitution & Bylaws**

The committee needs to draft up a preliminary constitution and bylaws (these can be combined into one working document) to be presented at the organizing meeting for adoption. Sample Constitution and Bylaws are available online at www.ffa.org/alumni under Start an Affiliate.

- **Develop preliminary officer positions and duties**

As a committee draft up what the leadership positions for your affiliate could be structured. These positions will also be presented at the organizing meeting for approval. We highly recommend writing brief job descriptions for each leadership position. This will ensure that those interested in taking on a leadership role understand their responsibilities and expectations. Contact the national office for sample job descriptions. NOTE: Occasionally people are put off by traditional terms of President and Vice-President. If you feel this is a hindrance to getting people to run for office, consider calling the positions by an alternative name, such as Chair or Vice-Chair.

- **Develop preliminary membership structure**

Once you've reviewed the state and national membership structure and associated dues, you can then determine if you want to charge local dues. Not every state charges state dues, nor does every local affiliate. However, it is a good way to initially generate operating funds to start functioning. Determine the membership types and dues amounts that seem appropriate for your local membership and present those at the organizing meeting for approval. Your state association can assist you with understanding how other affiliates are structuring their membership and dues.

- **Develop preliminary signature programs based on advisor feedback**

Based on your discussions with the teacher(s); brainstorm the 2-3 things the FFA Alumni could take on in the next year. It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you look at all the opportunities to engage members in support of the program. In goal setting, it's important to select just a few that you can reasonably accomplish. Determine with the teacher their priority of needs and have the 2-3 possible signature projects ready to present at the organizing meeting. People tend to get enthused about assisting with programs that have had some forethought and identify how they will make an impact versus just asking for people to come up with activity suggestions on the spot during the meeting. For example, your goals might be as follows:



- 1) Hold a fundraiser by August 31 to be donated to FFA Chapter to assist in defraying the per student cost to attend the National FFA Convention in October.
- 2) Identify coaches to train four Career Development Event teams (list the event areas) to compete at the district competition in November.
- 3) Host a community dinner during FFA week for FFA members, Alumni members, school faculty and the community to join together in celebration, tour the agricultural education facilities and learn more about Ag Ed, FFA and FFA Alumni.

- **Develop a preliminary budget to establish the affiliate**

The best plan and the best intentions will go nowhere without adequate financing. Remember, this is an investment in the affiliate's future. Determine the costs for mailings, public notices in the paper, open houses, etc. Identify a way to cover these initial costs until the affiliate gets organized and generating revenue (possibly through membership dues, fundraisers, grants, etc.). This is the idea time to engage members of your community in offering financial gifts or donating their services/resources to cover these initial costs.



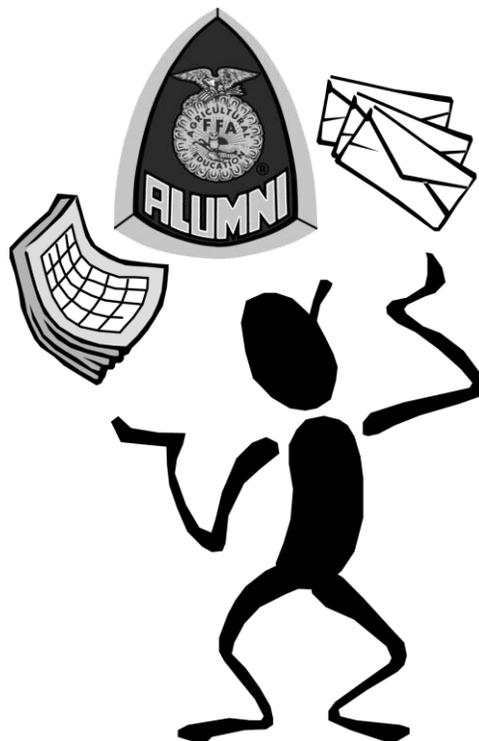


Hosting the organizing meeting

Once you have the preliminary pieces in place, it's time to call the organizing meeting to order. Be sure you promote the time, location and purpose of the meeting to a broad audience (parents, former members, agriculture businesses, etc.).

See page 11 for an overview of how to conduct the organizing meeting step-by-step. Here are few things to consider in preparation for the event:

- Make the time and location convenient for most people
- Invite a state FFA Alumni representative/ or neighboring Alumni group to attend, bring greetings on behalf of the state, present benefits and answer any questions.
- Have food! You'll draw more people in with snacks and beverages.
- Have printouts for attendees of the preliminary constitution & bylaws, officer job descriptions, and membership structure. This will allow people to peruse the information as you make the presentation and be prepared to discuss each item.
- Be prepared to collect membership information and dues onsite once the group has voted to establish an affiliate and approved the membership structure. Note: you may need to initially deposit dues checks in the school account until you get your Employee Identification Number from the IRS and a bank account open





Chartering with National FFA Alumni

Following the organization of your local affiliate, have your newly elected officers and the local teacher sign the Application for charter. Submit the following documents to your state FFA Alumni Association (contact the national office for further direction if a state association does not exist):

- 1) Signed Application for Charter
- 2) Copy of your adopted Constitution & Bylaws
- 3) Membership Information and dues for at least 10 members

Note: Application for charter, blank Excel roster and sample Constitution and Bylaws are available online at www.ffa.org/alumni and select “Start an Affiliate”. After the initial chartering process, roster management will be run through the Agricultural Career Network.





Obtaining tax exempt status

The FFA Alumni Association (local, state, and national) is considered for Internal Revenue Service exemption purposes as a subordinate to the National FFA Organization, which at time of non-profit exemption approval in 1976 was the Future Farmers of America Organization. Article I, Section A of the FFA Alumni Association Constitution defines the FFA Alumni Affiliate as an affiliate of the National FFA Organization. Article V, Section A of the FFA Constitution also lists the FFA Alumni as a division of membership followed by Section C giving a definition of eligible persons for Alumni membership.

Internal Revenue Tax Number

the central organization, according to the Internal Revenue Service, is FFA Organization. FFA has been designated a group exemption number (GEN) by the Internal Revenue Service. All subordinates of FFA, which includes all chartered and active local and state FFA Alumni Affiliates, must use this GEN number to verify tax exempt status on all reports to the IRS. Local and state FFA Alumni Affiliates must file for their own employer identification number (EIN) which is required when filing the IRS Form 990. The EIN is also required when bank accounts are opened or other investments are established that generate interest or dividends for the local or state FFA Alumni. The EIN is obtained by filing an SS-4 form with your regional Internal Revenue Service Center. The SS-4 form has 18 questions and will take only a few minutes to complete. Under 9A, check box “other nonprofit organization” and write in Future Farmers of America. Line 16, check “other” box and list educational support as the principal activity. Submit application to IRS, once you have been assigned an EIN this information needs to be provided to National FFA on the appropriate form. FFA will then contact the IRS to link your affiliate to the GEN.

The IRS sends the National FFA Organization a list of all affiliates using FFA’s group exemption number for their EIN on an annual basis. The national office is required to verify this list for the IRS and add/delete FFA chapters or Alumni affiliates as necessary. If an affiliate becomes inactive (less than 10 dues paying members) with the National FFA Alumni, they will be in violation if they use the GEN for non-profit status.

Newly chartered affiliates will receive a tax information packet along with their charter certificate and scroll.

How do we obtain Federal Tax-Exempt Status for our affiliate?

Visit www.ffa.org/alumni and click on the “Start an Affiliate” link from the left menu to obtain paperwork for starting/reactivating a local affiliate and to obtain tax-exempt information and documents.



Step 1: Ensure “active” status with the National FFA Alumni Association by either starting or reactivating a local FFA Alumni affiliate. To start/reactivate submit an Application for Charter, copy of your constitution and bylaws and dues for at least 10 members. “Active” affiliate status requires at least 10 members annually to maintain status and qualify for tax-exempt status under FFA umbrella.

Step 2: Obtain an Employee Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. Obtain an SS-4 application and instructions from www.irs.gov or by contacting National FFA Alumni at alumni@ffa.org. Visit our website’s “Start an Affiliate” page and select from the right hand menu, “Tax Exemption Information.” This document provides instruction on what to write in various boxes on the application. Submit the application via phone, online or mail. DO NOT ATTACH A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR BE CONCERNED WITH INCLUDING THE REQUESTED GROUP EXEMPTION NUMBER (GEN).

Step 3: Complete and submit the “Return Form to FFA” found on the “Start an Affiliate page” from the right hand menu. Once received by FFA, they will contact the IRS and have your EIN linked to FFA Group Exemption Number. A letter will then be sent to the affiliate indicating they’ve been linked and provide information verifying the GEN.

Step 4: Obtain state tax-exempt status. In order to be **sales tax exempt** in your state, your affiliate will have to contact the state agency that manages sales taxes. This is the State Department of Revenue in some states; it may be a different agency in your state. The agency should have a form for you to use to request exemption from sales tax and you can indicate that you are exempt from federal income taxes under the National FFA's GEN and include that information with your application. That may be enough to get the exemption. Has your affiliate applied for **income tax exemption** in your state? If not, you may need to do so in order to be eligible for sales tax exemption. Each state has different requirements so visit your government websites to learn more.

Step 5: ALL affiliates must file annually with the IRS to maintain your EIN. Pay dues annually to National FFA Alumni to maintain your active status. Each year the IRS requires FFA report any affiliates that no longer qualify.

Where to go for help?

Please visit the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov/charities for the new Form 990 and instructions, as well as other helpful materials at www.stayexempt.org.

Opening a bank account

Once you’ve obtained your EIN, you can take the number along with a listing of your officers and a copy of your constitution and bylaws to a financial institution to open a bank account in the name of the affiliate.

NOTE: We strongly recommend you include two signatures on the checks to protect the affiliate from mistreatment of funds.



Dues and other contributions are tax deductible

Membership dues and other contributions to the FFA Alumni are eligible IRS deductions for the contributor when the support to the organization and its activities do not derive benefits of more than the nominal monetary value. As outlined in the FFA Alumni Constitution, the organization is designed to support and serve rather than to provide monetary benefits to its members which normally mean that contributions are tax exempt. **Refer to your tax consultant for additional information and clarification.**

Personal charitable contributions, under the revised tax laws beginning 1987, may only be claimed as itemized deductions on Schedule A, Form 1040. Items that are normally considered charitable contributions to the FFA Alumni are:

- **Life and annual membership dues**
- **Cash contribution**
- **Out-of-pocket expenses** you paid to do volunteer work for FFA Alumni. This includes attending conventions and meetings as an official representative, delegate or award winner. Out-of-pocket expenses such as lodging, meals and registrations are normally deductible. For more information, see IRS Publication 526 (www.irs.gov).
- **Car or truck travel (see IRS website for current mileage calculations)** or actual cost of gas and oil for driving on approved FFA Alumni activities or to FFA Alumni meetings when you are the approved representative.
- **The appraised value of material items donated to FFA Alumni.** This could include items donated to an auction, animals donated for FFA livestock chains, or equipment donated to the classroom/shop/barn. Items worth more than \$5,000 must be appraised by a professional appraiser.

You cannot deduct the cost of raffle tickets, events from which you receive personal benefits, entertainment or the value of your time or services. If an individual contributes more than \$3,000 to FFA Alumni, the contributor must list FFA Alumni and amount on line 14b of Schedule A, Form 1040. The EIN number of the FFA Alumni Affiliate will be required for contributions over \$3,000. If non-cash contributions are more than \$500, Form 8283 must be completed.

Expenditures for political purposes

A political expenditure, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, intends to influence the selection, nomination, election or appointment of anyone to public office or a political organization. The FFA Alumni is a 501(C) 3 organization and must file Form 1120-POL if their political expenditure exceeds \$100 per year. The National FFA Alumni policy states that it is non-political and does not make political expenditures as described above. Individuals of FFA Alumni can make political donations at any time without involving the organization.



FFA Alumni membership induction ceremony

FFA Alumni President:

In 1969 the National FFA Alumni Association was established in support of National FFA Organization. Since that time, thousands of individuals at the local, state and national levels have joined the FFA Alumni to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education for future generations.

Cooperation is the foundation upon which we build success. Only through our efforts together are we able to reach new heights.

As FFA Alumni members we are entrusted with the greatest tasks: to help educate our youth and ensure the success of their future. As parents, community leaders, and friends, each of us has a responsibility and we must fulfill that duty. Each student will need you, help when you can, be trustworthy and honest, but most importantly make each moment a positive learning experience.

Service as an FFA Alumni member is an honor and privilege, through which we counsel, guide, support, listen, and mentor. We can secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education through premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. Will all FFA Alumni member candidates please rise?

(FFA Alumni Member Candidates Rise)

Alumni President:

Do you pledge to be an advocate for agricultural education and FFA by being diligent in your endeavors to ensure the success of FFA and FFA Alumni in our community? If so, answer 'I do'.

Alumni Member Candidates:

I do.

Alumni President:

I, (Name), President of the (Affiliate, State, or National) FFA Alumni (Affiliate or Association) confer upon you membership within the FFA Alumni organization, with all rights privileges and responsibilities!

Let us welcome our new members with a round of applause.

(Round of applause)

Alumni President:

FFA Alumni Members may be seated.

Congratulations! Membership within FFA Alumni is essential in securing the success of FFA and agricultural education. Through our continued cooperation, we will realize new visions and goals and achieve tremendous success.



Sample activities at the local level

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Take part in local activities.
- Inform chapter of service opportunities which will benefit the community.
- Encourage the continuation of agricultural opportunities for youth.
- Enable FFA chapter to use its skills and steer youth toward constructive projects in the community.
- Develop an outdoor laboratory for chapter and community use.
- Initiate a recycling program with local municipality.
- Start a nature center for the elementary/middle schools.

COOPERATIVE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Work together with FFA members on a safety project.
- Develop a local chapter cooperative with FFA members.
- Sponsor an FFA member to the Washington Leadership and Made for Excellence Conferences.
- Chaperone and sponsor FFA members to greenhand workshops.
- Assist in financially supporting FFA members attending the state FFA convention.
- Provide field trips to successful production and agribusiness programs.
- Provide training stations for high school agricultural education students.
- Judge record books for awards to be presented at the annual parent-member awards banquet.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Make the news media aware of FFA Alumni and FFA activities.
- Strive to get FFA youth featured or interviewed on local talk shows or public information programs.
- Use the FFA Alumni Association to introduce friends of FFA to your efforts.
- Make special efforts to publicize the accomplishments of the chapter or individual members.
- Encourage sponsors and contributors to continue their support of FFA Foundation.
- Make the community aware of any state and federal plans or legislation concerning agricultural education which could either help or hinder FFA.
- Keep community leaders aware of the value of the local FFA Chapter.
- Sponsor an outdoor billboard during National FFA Week.
- Develop informative folder for eighth grade visitation day.



SCHOOL BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

- Identify Alumni who are on or have been on the school board.
- Develop a channel of communication with the board immediately.
- Study the board's actions and discuss them with other Alumni members.
- Provide the board members with guidelines and goals for the school's agricultural education program.
- Know how to present your case to the board before you are confronted with problems.
- Publicize the scope, influence and support of your FFA Alumni group.
- Present an annual report of the agricultural education program to the board.

EARNINGS, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

- Assist with FFA Chapter sales.
- Provide Alumni members to audit FFA accounts.
- Share in financial support of FFA community promotions.

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- Provide parliamentary procedure workshop for local members.
- Interview local FFA officer candidates.
- Provide refreshments for FFA meeting.

MORE...

- Act as advisory board to suggest improvements for local agricultural education/FFA programs.
- Help secure job placement opportunities for members.
- Assist with developing supervised agriculture experience for members.
- Hold joint meetings of FFA and FFA Alumni.
- Attend FFA banquet honoring members, parents, alumni and sponsors.
- Conduct farm and agribusiness tours explaining agriculture for elementary school and civic groups.
- Conduct an Agriculture Career Day, allowing each FFA member to assume a different job for one day.
- Provide equipment/assistance for chapter farm.
- Provide practice facilities and training for FFA judging teams.
- Serve as resource personnel for classroom discussion and demonstrations.
- Help FFA members select livestock for projects.
- Provide judges to select local FFA award winners.
- Provide transportation to FFA convention, contests, fairs and other activities.
- Serve as "big brothers/big sisters".
- Provide scholarships for outstanding FFA members.
- Help FFA chapter conduct fundraising programs.



- Encourage and sponsor an FFA officer to attend a training program.
 - Assist the agriculture teacher in planning and conducting adult classes.
 - Sponsor a safe tractor driving school for FFA members wishing to improve their driving skills.
 - Sponsor a beef and swine carcass show for the entire community.
 - Make your farm or business available for class activities.
 - Be a judge for a local or district FFA public speaking contest.
 - Give a demonstration on orchard pruning.
 - Assist with the local FFA auction.
 - Plan and develop a school greenhouse for the agricultural education department.
 - Provide the agricultural education/FFA department with funds for supplies when school budgets are exhausted.
 - Donate items for use in the agriculture department.
 - Purchase shop projects and buy materials for these projects.
 - Provide chaperones for FFA activities.
 - Provide equipment and discounts on the seed and chemicals for FFA crops.
 - Provide transportation for the animals during FFA Food for America program.
 - Provide a farm forum for FFA members by inviting local machinery and equipment dealers to display their products.
 - Purchase an FFA van for the local department.
 - Develop an alumni slide series to assist other affiliates.
 - Provide guest speakers.
 - Have a cooperative concession stand at the county fair or local youth wrestling tournament.
 - Have a workshop for livestock exhibitors on selecting, judging and fitting animals.
 - Send a letter to eighth grade students and parents explaining the agricultural education program and the value of FFA membership.
 - Cooperate with FFA chapter in hosting an Open House and Orientation for eighth grade students and their parents.
 - Sponsor “After-Prom Bash” for all students in school. Gifts, prizes, games and food will help generate interest and a great attendance.
 - Have a Valentine’s Day Dance for the entire community.
 - Have an FFA Easter Egg Hunt for the children of the community.
 - Provide meat for the annual FFA Parent-Member Banquet.
 - Purchase trees and shrubs for FFA members to plant in the community.
 - Purchase camera and computer items for the agricultural education/FFA department.
- Sponsor part of the cost of an FFA jacket for members in a local chapter.

Other ideas can be obtained through reading the Alumni *New Visions* newsletter.



Additional resources

The following resources are available on the National FFA Alumni website at www.ffa.org/alumni.

National FFA Alumni Manual

Includes the Bylaws of the National FFA Alumni; explanations of national programs, awards, scholarships and grants; offers a historical snapshot of the organization.

Important National FFA Alumni Dates

One page document listing the important dates for application submission, national events, membership submissions, etc.

Membership Recruitment

- Membership Brochures – Available to your affiliate for free in reasonable quantities for use at recruitment events
- Membership Drive Handbook – Guide to conducting a membership drive and member recruitment and retention
- Recruiting PowerPoint template – Customize this template for your local or state use

Volunteer Management

- Volunteer Management Training – ten training modules that cover a wide range of volunteer program development topics
- Webinar Series – Delivered monthly on a variety of topics to educate and inform our membership, each webinar is recorded and available on our website along with upcoming webinar topics and dates
- Past FFA Alumni Development Conference Resources – Following each conference the handouts and presentations that are presented are posted on the website

Promotional Material

Commercial and print ads

Growing Quality: National FFA Alumni Quality Program Guide

This tool allows a local affiliate to evaluate the program and to develop clear goals and objectives for program improvement.

National FFA Alumni Council and Staff

The National FFA Alumni Council are Alumni members elected or appointed from across the country. They, along with the national FFA Alumni staff are available to assist at any time. Visit www.ffa.org/alumni for contact information.



**Access all
Chartering/Reactivation
forms at:
www.ffa.org/alumni
and click on
“Starting an Affiliate”**

National FFA Alumni Association

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268

Physical/Shipping Address:

6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46278

Email: alumni@ffa.org

Phone: 317/802-4332

Fax: 317/802-5332

Stay Connected:

Website: www.ffa.org/alumni

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ffaalumni

Twitter: www.twitter.com/ffa_alumni

Flickr (photos):

www.flickr.com/photos/ffaalumni

The mission of the National FFA Alumni Association is to support and advocate for agricultural education and FFA through gifts of time, talent and financial resources at the local, state and national levels.