

The Michigan FFA Creed



Summer 2014



D 86th State Convention

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L to R: Alyssa Tyrrell, Region III State Vice President; Laryssa Bates, State Sentinel; Alan Green, State President; Abigail Schreur, Region I State Vice President; Nick Webster, Region IV State Vice President;

The Michigan FFA State Officers have been keeping busy these past couple of months; doing everything from chapter visits to district and regional contests, and preparing for the state convention.

We look forward to conducting chapter

visits. We, as a team, worked hard to put together a program that would be entertaining and informational for members. This year we focused on the basics of FFA for first

and second year members and the Ag Experience Tracker for third through sixth year members. Our chapter blitz program also focused on careers in agriculture, an agriculture facts quiz, and a wrap-up chats, that was able to focus on the member's questions. For me, the best parts of the visits were the wrap up chat, and I am pretty sure the same can be said for my teammates. While we enjoy presenting the information, we enjoy interacting with members of this great association even more. I enjoyed being able to answer any questions that members may have and being able to have an open and honest conversation. While visiting chapters, being a full time student, and many other duties a state officer has to fulfill, we



were preparing for state convention. The three days that everyone sees at convention come from months of practice and preparation by state officers, convention staff and state staff. This preparation includes writing retiring addresses (RA) and scripts, memorization of those parts as well as ceremonies, staging, video making, and so much more. Most of this work is done on our own time, but we also have all-day convention practices. At these practices, we work with past state officers, who now make up our convention staff, on perfecting things like our RA and speaking parts, figuring out different assignments in a session, staging of sessions, and running through sessions.

The life of a state officer has been quite a busy one during this past few weeks. The state officers have been working hard to make sure that this year's convention was one to remember. From a unique reflections program to some inspiring keynote speakers and the recognition of many member's outstanding work from academics to their outstanding SAEs this convention really was able to bring the FFA motto to life. We hope that you have taken a step since attending the 86th Michigan FFA State Convention.

Michigan FFA 86th State Convention

By: Laryssa Bates

Each day 10,657 babies are born. Within months they are able to crawl, smile and even laugh. After just a few attempts at walking a baby builds the courage and strength to take its first step. As FFA members, we wear our traditional black dress shoes but in those shoes we take some of the biggest steps of our lives. We take steps for education and for agriculture. We strive for *premier leadership, personal growth and career success*. Since we took our first steps as infants we have taken many more, each one determining the direction of our lives. Whether we become a farmer or doctor, a sponsor or firefighter, this organization will help us take each and every step.



The 86th Michigan FFA State Convention was held on the fifth through the seventh of March on the campus of Michigan State University. This year's convention theme was "Take A Step." We had guest speakers ranging from Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon, the President of Michigan State University, to the Dean of MSU's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Fred Poston and even U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow.

At convention we highlighted many of our outstanding chapters in the state by presenting these chapters with their Building our Michigan Communities certificate and Food for America certificates. We highlighted the chapters receiving their National Chapter awards and were able to present the Bryon FFA Chapter with a state winning plaque and a cash award.

Students across the state were recognized for their outstanding dedication to their respective leadership contests. The state winners earn a chance to move

on to the National FFA leadership contest held in Louisville, Kentucky this coming fall. We presented 149 members with proficiency awards, 335 Outstanding Junior Awards, and 377 State Degrees.

Convention sessions were brought to life with impactful retiring addresses from our state officers, exciting session welcomes and keynote speakers, and pre-session activities that were sure to get us up and excited to "Take a Step." This year at convention we also heard from many of our wonderful talent acts and FFA chorus and band performances that were sure to get your toes tapping! The gavel was tapped to close the



last session of the 86th Michigan FFA State Convention on Friday afternoon after the announcement of the newly elected state officers, the results of numerous leadership results, and the awarding of the Washington Leadership Conference scholarships and many other scholarships that were presented.

The Michigan FFA State Convention was a huge success thanks to the convention staff, the agricultural advisors and teachers, and members of FFA who were able to attend.

Congratulations to all of those outstanding chapters and members who were recognized throughout the week!



More Than Food

By: Addie Spolyar,
Ag Careers.com Campus Ambassador
Michigan State University



Eighty-six years ago when FFA began, I would imagine that not many people would have guessed that it would grow to be the successful, awesome, inclusive organization that it is today. With so many opportunities for students from supervised agricultural experiences, to leadership contests and community service events, it is unbelievable the skills that it allows members to gain that will benefit them the rest of their lives.

However, what about after your time in the blue jacket has ended? Have you thought about the next step in your life and how you can apply these skills you gained in a real world setting?

Careers in agriculture are booming, and we aren't just talking about jobs that involve cows, plows, and sows. There are opportunities for students with a broad range of interests from marketing, to research to mechanics and everything in between. AgCareers.com, the leading ag-specific career website for the industry, recently released their annual job outlook

report. The report shows a 30 percent growth, in the last year in the number of job opportunities available and that number is expected to keep growing. On average there are 4,600 new jobs posted each month that cover a wide range of opportunities out there for all different interests. Internship opportunities doubled in the past year for students interested in pursuing a job in the agriculture industry.

It is a very exciting time to be a young person involved in agriculture and each FFA member should be proud of the fact that they are the future of American agriculture. In other market research conducted by AgCareers.com, the 2013 enrollment and employment outlook, AgCareers.com reports that in 2012 there were nearly 40,000 open positions available in the industry, at all degree levels, but less than 20,000 agricultural graduates at the two and four year levels to fill those openings. It is more important that we have bright and talented people in our industry now more than ever and the opportunities for

growth and advancement are limitless! So what job might be right for you? If you have no idea right now, that's perfectly okay. Take some time to check out the job postings on AgCareers.com and look into the many unique opportunities. Start exploring your options early by looking for possible trainee positions, summer work experience, or job



shadowing in an area that you feel you may be interested. To get a better idea of the job in agriculture that you might like, log onto AgCareers.com and take their career quiz, you might be surprised at your results. While the site is designed for users to find and apply for employment, it can also be a great resource for researching the variety of opportunities that exist in the industry. You can search for jobs by keyword and location so you can really narrow down the search results and pinpoint something you might be interested in doing and see where in the state, region, country or world it is available. While 66 percent of the jobs posted on AgCareers.com require a Bachelor's degree

or more, you'll also find jobs you can do right out of high school or with a two-year or technical degree. According to data from the education and enrollment report entry level employees with a two year degree in agriculture can expect to earn on average a starting salary of \$36,500 while those with four year degrees can earn \$41,000 and if you think you may be interested in staying in school to earn your Master's degree you can start off earning \$47,000 per year. Take the opportunity to use the time you have in FFA to help you to navigate a career path. With all the opportunities you have to explore unique areas in ag take a look at the many SAEs you have the option to participate in and look at how they could tie into a future career. Whether you are pursuing communications, mechanics, livestock, agronomy, or education, there are jobs in the agriculture industry out there for you.

In addition to be the source for researching careers in agriculture, AgCareers.com also provides a variety of information and tools via social media. Check out their Facebook page, Twitter feed, Pinterest and YouTube channel. You might associate these sites as ways to keep up with your friends, watch funny videos or discover the latest craft craze but they can also be helpful when you are looking for advice on a resume or interviewing techniques. Remember, today's agriculture is much more than cows, sows and plows.

AG
Careers.com

Uber Tubers

By: Michigan Potato Industry Commission

Shining Bright Stars

By: Laryssa Bates

Call it what you like: tubers; spuds; taters; earth-apples; super-delicious-good-for-you-objects-that-look-like-rocks; whatever, the point is potatoes come in as many names as they do recipes. Hash browns with breakfast, chips with lunch, mashed potatoes with dinner, that's a great day! It's a nutritional one too. Potatoes have more potassium than a banana and are full of vitamin C.

Have you ever stopped to think where those potatoes come from? It rhymes with Gichigan. That's right-Michigan loves growing potatoes! Most of the spuds that are turned into chips come from the Great Lakes State. Michigan is the largest potato chip grower in the nation. You're welcome, America. Michigan dedicates 45,000 acres to growing

to our states GDP. The agriculture industry provides many Michigan residents with lifetime careers. Take a look at potatoes. No matter what your interest, the potato industry has a job for you. There are many potato scientists working on better tasting, disease resistant potatoes. Some people buy potatoes for companies as a job. Some people design and improve that bag of potato chips that you had for lunch.

You could work on marketing for the potato chip company developing TV ads, or managing the social media accounts for a chip company. Is politics more your thing? Potato chip companies and the industry as a whole hire legislative consultants and attorneys.

Once a year, all of these people get together and discuss better ways to farm. The Winter Potato Conference, next year at Shanty Creek, is a time for researchers and scientists, growers and chip processors to meet and help one other make the best potatoes in the world. It is a booming industry for Michigan and for America. Through all these different research avenues we are able to feed the world with a tasty, nutritious, and inexpensive food.

The Michigan potato industry has a large impact on the state of Michigan. From boosting Michigan's GDP, to providing jobs for local residents, the potato is essential to Michigan's future. For your future, consider all the possibilities that Michigan potatoes have to offer. Like us on Facebook, or visit mipotato.com for more information!

potatoes and produces over 800,000 tons of taters! That's like seven billion tater tots. Want another large number? 200 million. The potato industry generates about 200 million dollars a year in Michigan alone. Agriculture is the second largest contributor



Cameron Hayden

Cameron Hayden is a senior at Cassopolis-Ross Beatty High School. Cameron was named the 2014 Michigan FFA State Star in Agriscience. Cameron's agriscience project

was testing direct transfer bovine embryos pre-thaw air times to observe and document the affects that pre-thaw air time has on the Zona Pelucida integrity. Cameron plans to attend Lansing Community College majoring in graphic communications. Congratulations, Cameron on your outstanding accomplishments.



Ethan Haywood

Ethan Haywood is a senior at Hastings High School.

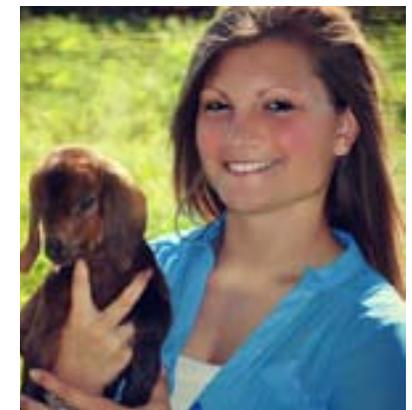
Ethan was named the 2014 Michigan Star State Farmer. Ethan's SAE includes dairy, dairy beef, beef, cheese, sweet corn, pumpkins, and an employment at Sand Creek Dairy Farm. Ethan Haywood plans to attend Michigan State this fall, planning to major in animal science, crop and soil sciences, and food processing, and then plans to return back to the family farm. Congratulations Ethan Haywood on your State Star Farmer! Good luck on your future plans in agriculture.



Joel Diebel

Joel Diebel is a senior at Elkton Pigeon Bay Port Laker High School. Joel was named the 2014 Michigan FFA State Star in Agribusiness. Joel's SAE consisted of a 24.9 percent ownership of Diebel Enterprises where he fixes broken

equipment and manufactures special equipment to meet the customers preference. In the next ten years, Joel would like to aquire his accounting degree so that he will be able to help operate the business more efficiently for billing and general business practices. Congratulations Joel on your State Star in Agribusiness. Good luck with your future business plans.



Amy Leitch

Amy Leitch is a senior at Elkton Pigeon Bay Port Laker High School. Amy was named the 2014 Michigan FFA State Star in Agricultural

Placement. Amy's SAE is working on Zwemmer Dairy Farms feeding Calves. Amy also works for her families maple syrup business while raising her own hogs, goats and chickens. Amy hopes to attend Michigan State University or Iowa State University where she plans to major in animal science. Congratulations Amy Leitch on your State Star in Agricultural Placement. Good luck on your future endeavors.

The President Has Arrived

By: Andrew Walker

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to witness President Barack Obama sign the Agricultural Act of 2014 into law, which is also known as the Farm Bill. Being able to be a part of this historical event was a very exciting and memorable experience as the event was attended by very important and influential individuals such as Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon, President of Michigan State University; Senator Debbie Stabenow and Senator Carl Levin, as well as Tom Vilsack, the current Secretary of Agriculture. This following article is written by Andrew Walker, a past state officer for the Michigan FFA Association. Walker is currently a law student at Michigan State University

- Alan Green

Michigan State University was able to play host to history in-the-making, at least in terms of agriculture, this past February. President Barack Obama visited MSU on Friday, Feb. 7 to sign into law the



Agricultural Act of 2014, commonly referred to as the Farm Bill. And the Michigan FFA Association was on hand to witness the event, as state president Alan Green was in attendance at the signing ceremony.

The new law is an

expansive piece of legislation that allocates \$956 billion to be spent on programs over the next ten years. The significant majority of this chunk of change will be spent on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which offers food assistance to millions of Americans, as well as other nutritional programs and aid for food banks. Comparatively lesser amounts will be spent on crop insurance, commodity programs, conservation and multiple areas in between.

“Now, despite its name, the Farm Bill is not just about helping farmers,” stated Obama in his speech at MSU. “Secretary [of Agriculture] Vilsack calls it a jobs bill, an innovation bill, an infrastructure bill, a research bill, a conservation bill. It’s like a Swiss Army knife.” The bill has strong ties with Michigan, as its guiding drafter was the Chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry committee and Senator from Michigan, Debbie Stabenow. She had worked on drafting the bill for multiple years, seeing it through to its passage last month. The entire state stands to reap benefits from the bill as well. Michigan is still led by its automotive industry, but agriculture plays an important part in the state economy, as its second largest industry. The bill could benefit the state by offering better crop insurance to specialty crop growers, ensuring price stability for consumers



purchasing dairy products while protecting the state’s dairy industry and potentially offering funds to aid in conservation of areas such as the Great Lakes. MSU, the nation’s pioneer land grant institution and Senator Stabenow’s alma mater, was a fitting place for the president to sign the bill into law. MSU is at the forefront of bio-based research and development, and the new farm bill will offer millions of dollars to institutions for such research.

Obama praised the university’s work during his speech on campus. “Here at Michigan State, by the way, you are helping us to do even more,” said Obama. “So I just got a tour of a facility where you’re working with local businesses to produce renewable fuels. You’re helping farmers grow crops

that are healthier and more resistant to disease. Some students are even raising their own piglets on an organic farm. When I was in college, I lived in a pig sty, but I didn’t work in one.” Now, with the help of the newly passed Farm Bill, not only will the pork industry benefit, but the whole spectrum of agriculture in Michigan and the nation as a whole will feel the ripple effects.



impact
 lead
 success
 community
 volunteer
 advocacy
 education
 mentor
 support
 service
 development
 agriculture
 youth



Show Your Support for Michigan Youth in Agriculture



Purchase the Michigan Agricultural Heritage License Plate

The Agricultural Heritage License Plate is symbolic of agriculture's past, present and future. Each license plate bought in the state invests in Michigan's youth—our most important commodity. By purchasing this commemorative item, motorists will be a part of preserving the future of agriculture. Wearing the title of "Agriculture Heritage," the license plate will generate dollars to grow the Glassbrook FFA Endowment and create more opportunities for K-12 agriculture and natural resources education.



For just \$35 (plus your normal plate fees) you can help promote agriculture education and the Michigan FFA. With each Agricultural Heritage plate sold, \$25 goes directly to the Michigan FFA Glassbrook Endowment. The plate can be renewed annually for \$10, in addition to the annual vehicle registration fee, with the \$10 going to the endowment.

How Can I get one? Simply go to your local Secretary of States Office and purchase an Agricultural Heritage license plate. Even if you don't have to renew at this time, you can still purchase the plate. For more information contact the Michigan FFA Foundation at (517) 432-2482.



In communities across the state, FFA alumni members are coaching, mentoring, fundraising and preparing the next generation of leaders and agriculturalists.

Join them. No jacket required.

For more information on creating your own alumni affiliate or to join one already established, contact alumni@michiganffa.org.

FFA Word Search Fun

By: Alyssa Tyrrell

R E M R A F S P I H S R A L O H C S P R
 I Y G C U M F C R C N A T S V T F T V O
 I G W M I V T A K O L G B T I W O L L S
 B Y V K C G A U C M F A V W C P C E A I
 Y W T J B Y K K Y D W I S R E K C O N V
 C H S L Q S E M F G F A C S P A W U O D
 O F F I C I A L D R E S S I R L M V I A
 P S C L T T S X M K N U H B E O J A G C
 N Z N N D P T M J O U A M E S N O F E Y
 H O M O Y M E O I Z G E W M I R C M R Z
 D Q I L Z P P T A R P R Q B D O C I X C
 D E U S P I N C I W I E D L E C X S E O
 O S E W I E R C U S A E L E N I T N E S
 G R V R V V U O I J G R I M T S H O N W
 Y H T N C L N N H R E B D V Q A M T H V
 M J O Z T M G E E W N L N S V E T Z F Y
 U C W U U S W E P R E S I D E N T G I O
 D Y R F U B N H S C B N W Z R E A F A P
 R A C N J O U R N E Y G O A L L J P U Y
 L R J N Q B F L R V Q L L Q F F X U R Y

ADVISOR
 CLASSROOM
 CREED
 EMBRACE
 FFA
 JOURNEY
 OWL
 REGIONALVP
 SCHOLARSHIPS
 VICEPRESIDENT

AGRICULTURAL
 CONVENTION
 DEGREE
 ENVISION
 FLAG
 NEWHORIZONS
 PRESIDENT
 RISINGSUN
 SENTINEL

AWARDS
 CORN
 EMBLEM
 FARMER
 GOAL
 OFFICIALDRESS
 PROFICIENCIES
 SAE
 TAKEASTEP



She wants to be a seed salesperson or crop scout.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Institute of
 Agricultural Technology

He wants to be an electrical technician.

They'll both do it at Michigan State University's Institute of Agricultural Technology.

Find out how at www.iat.msu.edu





In the classroom

and on the field



The MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) offers academic options that range from four-year bachelor degrees to two-year certificate programs.

Students apply their interests in the classroom and in the field to gain experience and education for rewarding careers.

Contact the CANR Office of Academic and Student Affairs at 517-355-0234 to schedule your visit to campus to learn what MSU has to offer.

Learn more by visiting www.canr.msu.edu.

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