

STATE FFA DEGREE APPLICATIONS ARE DUE POSTMARKED MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2010

Don't forget to encourage your eligible members to submit an application for the 2010 State FFA Degree. Also encourage students to apply for the State Star Awards - Star Awards include: Star Farmer, Star in Agribusiness, Star in Agricultural Placement and Star in Agriscience - Star Information is located further down on this e-mail.

THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR MORE APPLICATIONS - so please have your students consider applying for Star. **NOTE: In order to be eligible for Star Finalist judging, all Star state degree applications must meet minimum requirements without appeal and all required pages of the Star Battery must be included as well as all supporting materials.**

Avoid Missing State Degree Minimum Requirements

Here are some pointers so that hopefully your members can avoid mistakes on their state degree applications. Please also use the 2009 State Degree Review Sheet that the evaluators will be using to make sure minimum requirements are met for each state degree. Please review so that you know what they will be looking for and you and your students can avoid some common mistakes.

1. Applications are **due postmarked February 1, 2010** to the Wisconsin FFA Center.
2. Make sure that the most current applications are now being used. **ALL APPLICATIONS NEED TO BE THE 2006-2010 APPLICATIONS.**
3. No passwords are needed. Start by entering the student's name, etc. on the American Degree page of the application and then that will transfer to the State Degree Cover.
4. Make sure the scope of your program reflects what you put in your application especially hours that you indicate on Page 2 matching Page 3 and 4.
5. Make sure that if you make changes in numbers on any of the financial pages that you print off ALL financial pages on the same day. Sometimes people will change a number on a page and not realize that the number transfers to another page of the application. So to avoid problems, print off the financial pages of your final application all on the same day so all numbers correspond properly.
6. Have all required signatures.
7. Candidate must have 24 months of membership in the FFA at the time of applying in order to receive the state degree. - Several degrees in the past have been disqualified because of this requirement. If the member is going to take the time to fill out their application make sure they have the membership months to qualify based on your chapter rosters.
8. Candidate must have 360 hours of HIGH SCHOOL agricultural classes in order to qualify. College hours do not count for the state degree. One semester of ag is 90 hours; One year is 180 hours. Make sure that the candidate clearly indicates the years of membership and the class hours to qualifying for the state degree.
9. Do not count financial records or hours after January 1, 2010. The financial records end of December 31, 2009. Please do not include 2010 hours or dollars. A candidate can indicate the scope of their SAE on page 2 and simply list "Records in Progress. No hours should be included on pages 3 and 4 for hours worked.

10. Candidates must have 5 activities above the chapter level to qualify. (See State Degree Handbook for approved activities.) A student cannot count an activity more than once unless they are in a competition and move from district to sectionals to state, etc. Each level is counted in this situation. However if a member competes in the same CDE or Speaking contest at the district or regional level multiple years, that is one activity. If a member competes in different CDEs or speaking contests at the district or regional level, these can be counted each as an activity - However they must be clearly identified on the state degree application with the names of each of the CDEs or speaking contests.

11. Candidates must have AGRICULTURALLY-RELATED speeches for their two speech requirement.

12. Candidates applying for State Star recognition must include a complete Star Battery (except the personal history pages) and supporting material along with their State Degree Application. **All minimum requirements for the State Degree must be met at the time of applying AND all additional materials must be included or the application will not be considered in the Star Judging Process.**

Additional Application Needed for FFA Members Applying for State Star Awards

If you have an FFA member who is applying for a State FFA Degree "Star" Award, there is additional information that is required to be considered for "Star". Students applying for "Star" recognition must not only complete their State FFA Degree application and check the front page for which "Star" Award they would like to be considered for, these students must also complete the Star Battery found with the American Degree application. There are four "Star" categories - Star Farmer, Star in Agribusiness, Star in Agricultural Placement and Star in Agriscience. A chapter can submit only one candidate for each of the "Star" areas.

What needs to be submitted?

The applications submitted for "Star" need to include additional information. The candidate must complete the Stars Over America Battery. The candidates must include all the additional information in that application, plus attach the SAE agreements, resume, three recommendations and supporting photographs. Candidates do not have to include the Personal History pages.

How are the Stars selected?

The FFA Board of Directors reviews all "Star" applications. Applications that meet the minimum requirements are considered. It is important that all minimums are met and that the application is complete when submitted. These applications are then forward to the review committee. Any mistakes found on the application or information/pages missing will take the application out of consideration for "Star" recognition.

A committee will review the Star Applications on Friday evening, March 6 and will select up to 10 finalists in the Star Farmer category, up to 10 finalists in the Star in Agricultural Placement category, up to 5 finalists in the Star in Agribusiness category and up to 5 finalists in the Star in Agriscience category. At the State FFA Convention, a panel of

judges interviews the star candidates. The judges select the winners and winners are announced on stage. State winners do not move on for National competition as this award is state level recognition based on the State Degree.

Key Items to Remember about FFA Award Applications - YOU MUST READ!!

1. No old applications will be accepted for any of the degrees or awards, you must have your students use the 2006-2010 versions of the applications. State applications (State Degrees) can be found on the Wisconsin FFA website and National FFA applications (American Degrees, Proficiency Applications and National Chapter) on the National FFA website. **Any old applications that are submitted will not be accepted and will be returned.**

2. The 2006-2010 State FFA Degree application is located on the following website. <http://www.wisconsinffa.org/pg-sae.php>. YOU MUST USE THIS APPLICATION FOR YOUR STUDENTS!! Do not use the American Degree application on the National site for your state degree application. The American Degree has been revised for our state degree and this application is located on the FFA website.

3. Wisconsin State Star Applicants must include the American Degree Star Battery with their State Degree Application. The American Star Battery can be found on the following site <http://www.wisconsinffa.org/pg-sae.php>. Of this Star Battery, you do not need to include the personal history pages.

4. National FFA updates its award applications as it finds glitches in the technology or minor changes needed to the applications. Get the most current updated applications from the National FFA site <http://www.ffa.org>

5. For Wisconsin FFA Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award applications, you need to include the extra assets page developed by the WAAE SAE Committee. This extra page is located on the Wisconsin FFA website at <http://www.wisconsinffa.org/pg-sae.php>

6. E-mail addresses are now REQUIRED on the American Degree and Proficiency Award Applications. The Proficiency Award applications have been updated from National FFA to now include this instead of the social security numbers. See item 4 above.

7. You cannot alter the award applications - State and American Degrees, Proficiency and Star Applications. This includes the photo pages. You must use the application as it comes to you from FFA. Every page of the electronic applications have the wording DO NOT ALTER APPLICATION IN ANY WAY OR APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO DISQUALIFICATION. This includes creating your own picture pages in Word as opposed to using the regular and unprotected photo sheets in the application.

8. There is no longer a limit of 50 words for each caption on the photo pages. The description can fill the text box in the 2006 and beyond applications. However, DO NOT change the font size of Arial 14 and the entire caption must fit in this text box.

9. The **State FFA Degree Handbook** is on the Wisconsin FFA Website. Make sure to download the most recent copy off of the Wisconsin FFA website <http://www.wisconsinffa.org/pg-sae.php> You will find important information in this handbook to double check that your students have met the minimum requirements to receive the Wisconsin FFA State Degree. **Get Your American Degree Handbooks -** The American Degree Handbook, divided into sections, is available on the American Degree home page. This will allow you to view the section you need rather than downloading the entire handbook. For details, visit http://www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.AmericanDegree/. **Proficiency Handbook Now Available** - The Proficiency Handbook, divided into sections, is available on the Proficiency home page. This will allow you to view the section you need rather than downloading the entire handbook. For details, visit http://www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_programs.Proficiency.

10. State and American Degree applications do not need to be placed in a folder when you submit them to the Wisconsin FFA Center. Please make sure that they are well stapled in the upper left hand corner and all pages are included.

11. Folders still need to be used for the Proficiency Award Applications and the Star Applications.

Mail Your Degrees and Proficiencies to the Wisconsin FFA Center

All State and American Degrees and Proficiency Award Applications need to be mailed to the Wisconsin FFA Center. Cheryl Zimmerman, State FFA Executive Director, will be overseeing the processing of these award applications. The address is Wisconsin FFA Center, P.O. Box 110, Spencer, WI 54479.

The following are the postmark deadlines:
State FFA Degree - February 1, 2010
State FFA Proficiency Awards - February 20, 2010
American FFA Degrees - March 5, 2010