



NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The new coronavirus (COVID-19) became a worldwide pandemic in early 2020, prompting businesses and organizations to close throughout the United States. Perhaps two of the most impacted groups by the closings and limits on social gatherings were teachers and students. When schools closed, many faced the challenge of transitioning to e-learning to finish the school year. Canceled conferences and events also impacted participants. National FFA took the following actions to ensure that the FFA mission was still being delivered to members and teachers in the wake of COVID-19:

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

National FFA recognized the potential difficulty of moving all learning online in a short time. To help ease the burden on agriculture educators, FFA took actions ranging from providing the 2017 National FFA Student Handbook online for free to creating a guide on distance learning.

Analytics* revealed that the 2017 Official FFA Student Handbook (English) was one of the top 10 accessed educator resources in both March and April, along with supervised agricultural experience (SAE) videos, the generic activity worksheet for SAE videos, and SAE choice boards. This is likely because these resources are easy to assign to students virtually. In April, the E-Learning Tips and Tricks document cracked the top 10. In both March and April of 2020, educator resources received between 31,000 and 38,000 impressions.

Knowing that 43 percent of school systems we serve do not offer one-to-one technology** and not all student members have internet access at home, the FFA team made changes to the Table of Contents document to indicate which resources were exclusively digital.

NATIONAL FFA OFFICERS

While COVID-19 grounded National FFA Officers from visiting sponsors and chapters, the officers continued to conduct business virtually and maintained a strong online presence to connect with sponsors, donors, and members alike. Request forms for virtual engagements became available in March 2020.

According to estimates from the national officers, as of May 21, 2020, they have conducted a combined total of:

- 145 speaking opportunities
- 26 keynote speeches
- 36 workshops
- eight videos for platinum sponsors
- three sponsor visits

The officers reached an estimated 235,000 individuals through social media efforts since the beginning of social distancing.

National FFA Officers also showed support to state FFA officers by joining over 50 percent of all state officer teams through Zoom calls.

COMPETITIVE EVENTS

The difficult decision to cancel all in-person National FFA Career and Leadership Development Events was made in April 2020 after results from a survey to state FFA staff*** revealed that many states could not conduct their competitive events. However, opportunities will be offered with direct ties to each Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources pathway:

- Agribusiness Systems
- Animal Systems
- Biotechnology Systems
- Plant Systems
- Environmental Service Systems
- Food Products and Processing Systems
- Natural Resources Systems
- Power, Structural and Technical Systems

*National FFA uses Google Analytics to monitor impressions of online resources found on FFA.org.

**[FFA Advisor Needs Assessment](#). (2019).

***The 2020 State FFA Staff CDE/LDE survey was emailed to 55 state FFA staff. This survey asked state FFA staff to inform National FFA of their state's plans and challenges regarding state qualifying events and anticipated national participation in career and leadership development events. There were 43 total responses.



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STATE FFA OFFICER PROGRAMS

State FFA Officer programs previously scheduled for spring 2020 took place online. A survey to state FFA staff† revealed that 98 percent of surveyed state FFA staff indicated they would plan to attend a virtual State Officer Summit and Delegate Experience while 89 percent were unsure if their state could attend an in-person event. As of May 30, 2020, the state officer programs team completed:

- five virtual Base Camps serving 28 state FFA officers
- three webinars: "Virtual Workshop 101," "Navigating COVID-19, Mental Health, and the State Officer Experience," and "How to Be a Stand-Up Comic...Or Maybe Just a Good Person" and created:
- three online courses: "Base Camp End-of-Year Booster," "Virtual Capstone: Personal Growth," and "Virtual Capstone: Transitions"
- one virtual book study group reading "Start With Why"

NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO

National FFA staff continues to work on a contingency plan for the convention and expo, scheduled for Oct. 28-31, 2020.

The organization's associate director of convention and events, Mandy Hazlett, provided an interview in May of 2020 to Inside Indiana Business highlighting the planning process.

"We're taking advantage of the time to make sure we're really thinking through every single angle to make sure what we do offer—whether it's in-person or online—that the students are getting a good experience this year no matter what."

-Mandy Hazlett, Associate Director of Convention and Events

ADVOCACY AND LITERACY

The FFA team transitioned National Ag Day efforts, scheduled to be in-person events in March, into virtual events. In March, the National Ag Day virtual programming and the activities that went along with it received the highest number of total impressions of all educator resources for the month with more than 1,000 impressions, according to Google Analytics.

†State FFA staff were asked about potential postponed dates for the 2020 State Officer Summit and Delegate Experience. Forty-seven responses were either partially or fully completed.