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84th Georgia FFA Convention Had a Record Attendance

A record crowd of 4,500 members, advisors, sponsors and guests attended the 84th Georgia FFA Convention in Macon on April 26-28. The Convention featured a 75 vendor Trade Show, community service projects, award presentations, motivational speakers, state Career Development Event competitions, the state FFA Agriscience Fair, a concert, and the delegate business of the Georgia FFA Association. The 2012 FFA Stars Over Georgia were named, eight students were elected to serve as the 2012-2013 State FFA Officer team, 628 FFA members earned the prestigious State FFA Degree, and hundreds of FFA members earned state proficiency and career development event awards. A complete set of results from the 84th Georgia FFA Convention can be found at www.georgiaffa.org on the State Convention Results link. Photos from the Convention can be found in the Photo Gallery on the Georgia FFA site.

“628 FFA members earned the prestigious State FFA Degree and hundreds of FFA members earned state proficiency and career development event awards”



State FFA President, Ben Bennett of the Lowndes County FFA chapter, called the Convention to order before a record crowd at the Opening Session on Thursday evening, April 26 at the Arena in Macon.

2012 FFA Stars Over Georgia



From Georgia's 628 State FFA Degree recipients in 2012, four were selected as State Stars based on their outstanding Supervised Agricultural Experience programs. The 2012 FFA Stars Over Georgia are (from left) Star in Agriculture Placement, Jonathan Mobley (Colquitt County); Star in Agriscience, Jacob Schindler (Lowndes County); Star in Agribusiness, Ansley Akin (Franklin County); and Star Farmer, Cole Roper (Franklin County).



The New Georgia FFA State Officer Team

The delegates of the 84th Georgia FFA Convention elected 8 of their peers to serve as the 2012-2013 State FFA Officers team. A field of 31 candidates interviewed and campaigned for State FFA Office in 2012. The students chosen to serve will travel across the state of Georgia and the nation representing Agricultural Education and the FFA for the coming year.



The 2012-2013 Georgia FFA Officers are: *(from left):*

- State V.P. - Joseph Branch (Manchester)*
- State V.P. - Timothy Hubbard (Gordon Central)*
- State V.P. - Mogan Smith (Worth County)*
- State V.P. - Sierra Milligan (Swainsboro)*
- State President - Dolly Melton (Echols County)*
- State V.P. - Brandon Poole (Franklin County)*
- State V.P. - Anna Hartley (Colquitt County)*
- State Secretary - Nicole Holden (Veterans)*



Georgia FFA Foundation 5th Annual Blue & Gold Gala



The 5th Annual Georgia FFA Foundation Blue & Gold Gala was held on Friday, March 16 at the St. Regis Hotel in Buckhead. Over 520 people attended the Gala. Special guests included Governor Nathan Deal, First Lady Sandra Deal, Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Black, State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge, National FFA Organization CEO Dwight Armstrong and National FFA Foundation Executive Director Rob Cooper.

Serving as the Gala emcee was Joel McKie, a former Georgia FFA state officer and former National FFA Vice President. Joel was a member of the Wilcox County FFA Chapter and was an attorney with Hall Booth Smith and Slover. Featured speaker for the evening was current National FFA Vice President from Georgia, Cain Thurmond. Cain is a member of the Jefferson FFA Chapter and took a one-year leave from his studies at the University of Georgia to serve the National FFA Organization.

The Blue & Gold Gala is a special project of the Georgia FFA Foundation Sponsors Board, made up of industry representatives that work to promote and support agricultural education and the FFA in Georgia.



Annual National Teach Agriculture Day

In celebration of the 3rd Annual National Teach Agriculture Day (TAG) on March 15th Georgia Agriculture Education state staff share their passion about agriculture with in-school students. National Teach Agriculture Day is designed to raise awareness of the need for more agriculture education teachers. To encourage others to consider a career as an agriculture teacher, and celebrate the positive contributions these teachers make in schools and communities. Everyday agriculture teachers help students develop the skills necessary to become leaders and contributing members of society. These educators teach by doing not by just telling and by sharing their passion with young people they prepare students for successful careers rather they choose to go into the field of agriculture or not. There are currently over 10,000 agriculture education teachers serving almost 1 million students in all 50 states and Puerto Rico but it is estimated there will be hundreds of unfilled positions across the United States this year. National Teach Agriculture Day is a nationwide effort to bring the attention to the need for more agriculture educators in the U.S. and raise the awareness of the valuable role these teachers fill in our society.



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“Making Agricultural Education Work for All Georgians”

From the Agricultural Education Program Manager

As we conclude another school year, many of you are already busy planning for next year. I really appreciate the great support and encouragement that each of you have provided to agricultural education and FFA during the school year. It should never go unnoticed that support from great CTAE administrators is a very important part of any successful agricultural education program. Before we get too caught up in making plans for next year, I would like to share some great moments from the 2011 – 2012 school year.

- ◆ The agricultural education program was able to conduct three major career development event programs at three of the major post-secondary institutions that offer advanced training in Agriculture. The University of Georgia (Athens), Ft. Valley State University, and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College & UGA – Tifton were the site of these events. On each day, at each campus, hundreds of students from across the state gathered to showcase their technical skill attainment. These events were also important because it helped consolidate events so that your school systems could help cut travel expenses. Hopefully the next year events will be even more successful.
- ◆ It was a record setting year for agricultural education in Georgia again this year. FFA membership will set all time record highs for the 2011-2012 school year. The State FFA Convention saw increased attendance and record numbers. Participation in agricultural education and FFA events across the state is at all time levels. All aspects of the program are growing – except for the budget.
- ◆ The focus of agricultural education teachers across the state to reinforce academics and integrate core subjects into regular program course work is creating some positive results and making agricultural education more relevant than ever. The data shows that students with a well rounded, three circle model, Ag-Ed program are better prepared for a successful future with leadership skills that will be attractive to future employers.

Now as we end this year and begin to focus on another great opportunity, my wish is that we always remember the most important reason we are members of this profession. I assure you that we will continue to offer quality opportunities for students.

Chip Bridges

