



*An exciting and challenging Reading Literacy Program developed by the  
2005-2006 Tennessee Association FFA State Officer Team*

**“The plow is the symbol of labor and tillage of the soil. Without labor, neither knowledge nor wisdom can accomplish much.”**

These lines are contained in the opening ceremony in the Official Manual of the National FFA Organization. These powerful and meaningful words are the inspiration for PLOW. All of us who inhabit the earth are completely dependent upon the soil for our survival. The essentials of our existence on our precious planet are found in our soil. How we utilize it, manage it, and preserve it determines our very destiny while we live. As progressive agriculturalists and FFA leaders, we accept the responsibility for its cultivation, conservation, and preservation. Future generations are depending upon us to preserve and conserve this precious life-giving foundation of our existence.

Like the soil, we must labor to till or cultivate the mind in order that knowledge and wisdom can accomplish the great achievements of mankind. We must labor to insure that the foundation of our minds, the ability to read, is cultivated and passed onward from generation to generation. Reading is the key to all educational processes. It is the foundation from which we explore so many new opportunities, hopes, and dreams. Without labor, we cannot accomplish much. The gift of literacy is the foundation of life of the mind, the soil from which we cultivate our lives. Future generations are depending upon us to labor in preserving and promoting the ability to read, learn, and apply our knowledge and wisdom in promoting and preserving mankind.

PLOW is an organized effort to promote the excitement and improvement of literacy in our agricultural education programs in Tennessee. PLOW encourages FFA members to join with their fellow chapter members and others across the state in developing their reading skills to a level of confidence and competency never achieved by mandatory programs. PLOW establishes an awards process through which FFA members and chapters are recognized for their accomplishments on an annual basis. Members and chapters are eligible for Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum awards. Every member and chapter is eligible for the awards and recognition each year.

The objectives of PLOW are established to promote reading literacy and comprehension in our agricultural education programs and associated agencies across the state of Tennessee.

The purposes of PLOW coincide with many of the statewide literacy efforts that are currently being organized and implemented through regular education programs.

The scope of PLOW is comprehensive. It includes every agricultural education program and FFA chapter in Tennessee. Every student and member is eligible to participate in the awards and recognition phase of the program. All participants are encouraged to maximize their reading potential and assist in helping others to strive for excellence in developing their individual competencies.

The goals of PLOW are specific and measurable. Achievement is obtainable and rewarding. Available options permit a variety of literacy attainment projects through individual and team activities for personal and group involvement.

Through PLOW, agricultural education students and FFA members can share in an exciting and rewarding process, while acquiring and passing literacy competencies onward to our current and next generation of students and FFA members.



*The PLOW Program is sponsored by:*



**The Tennessee Farm Bureau  
Agriculture in the Classroom**

**Tennessee Association FFA**  
**PLOW Recognition and Awards**

Students and chapters participating in the PLOW (Passing Literacy OnWard) program are eligible for individual and chapter recognition for their achievements in improving their reading skills and literacy during the school year. Chapters are encouraged to develop individual student recognition programs to best fit their local chapter membership. All recognition programs should be designed to encourage and motivate the members to include all members in the chapter to participate and be recognized.

Chapters will be recognized for their participation at the state convention. In order for chapters to receive awards, they must organize and conduct the basic PLOW program at the local level. Chapter awards will be based on the number of chapter, school, and community activities conducted by local chapter members during the year which are in addition to the basic literacy activities done within the chapter membership. Chapters that do not meet the requirements of the basic PLOW reading and literacy program, are not eligible to receive any awards at the state level.

**PLOW (Basic Program) Requirements**

The basic PLOW program conducted at the local chapter level consists of the following requirements:

1. A PLOW committee shall be established at the chapter level. This committee will assist the chapter officers and advisor(s) in planning, promoting, and conducting the PLOW program.
2. Documentation of student involvement shall be recorded and maintained in the chapter files.
3. A member participant recognition program shall be established at the chapter level that meets the following categories of recognition:

**BRONZE** Award: 30 Hours of personal reading beyond the regular academic requirements.

**SILVER** Award: 45 Hours of personal reading beyond the regular academic requirements.

**GOLD** Award: 60 Hours of personal reading beyond the regular academic requirements.

**PLATINUM** Award: 75 hours of personal reading beyond the regular academic requirements.

Note: The requirements listed above are for individual participation. Activities conducted by a group of members working together on a project or in a team effort are to be included as chapter participation rather than individual performance. Student certificates are available on the agricultural education/FFA download folder.



*Chapters participating in the PLOW program at the local level may apply for state awards to be presented at the State FFA Convention. Chapter awards are based on teams or groups of members organizing and conducting activities and projects at the chapter, school, and/or community levels. The awards are progressive depending upon the degree of participation and the number of activities conducted. Chapters interested in receiving state recognition must submit an application on their regional website by the designated deadlines.*

### **PLOW (Chapter Recognition) Requirements**

**State BRONZE:** Winning chapters must meet the requirements of the basic PLOW program at the local chapter level plus a minimum of one (1) reading literacy activity within the chapter membership promoting membership involvement in the PLOW program.

**Examples could include:**

- \* Chapter book drives, book fairs, donation of reading materials to the chapter library.
- \* Establishment of a chapter library or resource center for reading skill improvement.
- \* Donation of articles from magazines, websites, etc. to the resource library.
- \* Setting up displays, bulletin boards, posters, and making presentations promoting reading literacy in the agriculture classroom or lab.
- \* Reading tutorials, assisting fellow members in development of reading skills.

**State SILVER:** Winning chapters must meet basic PLOW, State BRONZE, plus organizing and conducting a minimum of one (1) school-wide reading literacy activity.

**Examples could include:**

- \* School book drives, book fairs, book donations to the local school library.
- \* Putting up literacy exhibits, displays, bulletin boards, etc. in the school.
- \* Making presentations and promoting reading literacy in school assemblies, classrooms, and school functions.
- \* Conducting or participating in school-wide reading campaigns.
- \* Participating in after-school or other organized reading tutorial programs at the school.

**State GOLD:** Winning chapters must meet basic PLOW, State SILVER, plus organizing and conducting a minimum of one (1) community reading literacy activity.

**Examples could include:**

- \* Traditional Power of Reading Program activities, reading to students in elementary or middle schools, sharing reading materials, and related interactive projects.
- \* Making donations of books to city, county, and/or community libraries.
- \* Actively participating in community reading literacy projects and activities.
- \* Organizing and conducting successful literacy campaigns in the community.
- \* Putting up reading literacy displays, educational exhibits, and other promotional materials in city hall, libraries, businesses, and other locations.
- \* Participating in reading tutorial programs such as after school day care centers, etc.

**State PLATINUM:** Winning chapters must meet basic PLOW, State GOLD, plus any four of the following specific requirements:

1. Include in the application the documentation and validation of a level of improvement of student reading skills attributable to the PLOW literacy program. This would include skill level results recorded at the beginning of the program and at its conclusion.
2. Documentation of additional projects beyond the requirements of the award categories. This could include participating in two or more projects at the chapter, school, and/or community level. List these projects.
3. Developing and participating in innovative reading literacy projects. Submit a description of the project.
4. Submitting copies of newspaper articles or other publicity gained by conducting the PLOW program in the school or community.
5. Submitting at least two letters of recognition from local school or community officials recognizing the success of the chapter's PLOW program in the school or community.
6. Sponsoring or assisting other school or community clubs or organizations in the development of a reading literacy program.

State PLOW awards will be ranked at the regional level. Applications should be submitted on your region's website. Contact your regional consultant for more info, <https://tnffa.org/staff-association>.

