

# Future Farmers of Tennessee



## Proposed Bylaws

Approved March 28, 2022  
94<sup>th</sup> Tennessee FFA Convention

# Future Farmers of Tennessee

## Bylaws

### Article I

#### Name

The name of the organization shall be the Future Farmers of Tennessee, hereafter referred to as the Tennessee FFA. Recognized chapters of the organization may officially use the letters “FFA” and/or “Future Farmers of America” to designate the organization, its chapters, or members.

### Article II

#### Objectives

The objectives of the organization shall be consistent with the organization’s federal charter, Public Law 116-7 (formerly Public Laws 105-225 and 81-740). The organization shall cooperate with national and state government agencies and officials in career and technical education to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To be an integral component of instruction in agricultural education, including without limitation, agriculture, food, and natural resources. As such, the corporation shall be intra-curricular to the agricultural education program, and will work with contextual classroom/laboratory instruction and work-based experiential learning in furtherance of a complete and comprehensive agricultural education program;
2. To be an integral component in agricultural education, to prepare students for successful entry into productive careers in agriculture, food and natural resources, or connect students to relevant postsecondary educational pathways, focusing on the complete delivery of classroom and laboratory instruction, work-based experiential learning and leadership development;
3. To be a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities. The corporation will develop educational materials, programs, services and events as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies;
4. To seek and promote inclusion and diversity in its membership, leadership and staff to reflect the corporation’s belief in the value of all human beings;
5. To create, foster and assist subsidiary chapters in state-or territory-approved agricultural educational programs and associations of those chapters in the States, territories, and possessions of the United States;
6. To build character and develop competent and assertive agricultural leadership;
7. To increase awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture, food and natural resources and its contribution to our well-being;

8. To promote the intelligent choice and establishment of a career in agriculture, food and natural resources;
9. To make available to state associations, local chapters and members, all official supplies, equipment, programs and services of the corporation;
10. To cooperate with others, including state boards and officials for career and technical education, in accomplishing the foregoing purposes; and
11. To engage in other activities, consistent with these purposes, determined by the governing body to be for the best interests of the corporation.

### Article III

#### Organization

##### Section A.

The Future Farmers of Tennessee is the organization of, by, and for students in school-based agricultural education (SBAE) programs. It shall consist of chartered chapters. More than one chapter may be chartered in a school when deemed appropriate by the state governing body.

##### Section B.

Chapters of the Tennessee FFA shall be chartered only in such schools where recognized systematic instruction in agricultural education is offered under the guidance of Tennessee Department of Education. Such chapters shall operate as an integral part of the instructional program of agricultural education.

Schools with large enrollments and/or multiple programs in agricultural education may establish subsidiary chapters of the parent chapter. Each subsidiary chapter shall be organized and operated in accordance with all the provisions of the national, state, and local constitutions and/or bylaws. Subsidiary chapters shall be coordinated by the officers and advisors of the parent chapter.

### Article IV

#### Procedures for Determining Standing of Chapters

##### Section A.

A chapter shall be in good standing with the Tennessee FFA when the following conditions are met:

1. All annual state and national dues have been paid to the Tennessee FFA by February 1 of each year. The Tennessee FFA membership year runs from August 1 to July 31.
2. All reports have been submitted as requested by the Tennessee FFA.

3. Provisions of the chapter constitution and/or bylaws do not conflict with the Tennessee or National FFA Constitution and Bylaws and chapter activities are in harmony with the ideals and purposes of the Tennessee Association of Future Farmers of America and the National FFA Organization.

#### Section B.

The governing body of the state association shall have the power to suspend the charter of any chapter, which violates the State or National FFA Constitution and Bylaws. A report on all suspensions shall be presented to the delegates at the next succeeding state convention. In the event a chapter is not in good standing with the state association at the time of the opening of a state convention, the delegates in session at the state convention shall have the power, upon recommendation of the state association governing body, to withdraw the charter and refuse such chapter official representation at the state convention. When such action is taken, the chapter in question and members thereof shall be denied privileges of membership in the state association. Upon meeting the requirements for good standing, a chapter may be reinstated by action of the state association governing body.

In the event a local department of agricultural education is discontinued, its chartered FFA chapter may officially operate for a period not to exceed three years (36 months) from the date of discontinuance, provided proper supervision is given by a person having the approval of the local school administrator and the state FFA advisor. The chapter's charter must be surrendered to the state advisor at the end of the period if a local department of agricultural education is not in operation at that time.

### Article V

#### Members

#### Section A.

Membership in the Tennessee FFA Association shall be of three types: active, alumni, and honorary.

#### Section B. Active membership

To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a school-based agricultural education program. The Tennessee FFA Association considers "school-based agricultural education programs" to be grades 6-12. To become an active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.

4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

A member may retain active membership until November 30, following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school.

A member in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America shall be in good standing during the period of active service without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces shall not be considered as elapsed time in determining the maximum period for four conventions following graduation from high school or leaving high school. Members using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advanced degrees of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service and indicate such a desire by paying dues and attending meetings. Members participating in a six-month armed services program shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual may retain active membership beyond his or her twenty-third birthday.

#### Section C. Alumni Membership

Alumni Membership is open to former active members, and honorary members, present and former professional agricultural educators, and parents of FFA members, and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

#### Section D. Honorary Membership

Farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in agricultural education, business people, and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and the FFA and who have rendered outstanding service, maybe elected to honorary membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention. Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree in the local chapter, Honorary State FFA Degree in the state association, and the Honorary American FFA Degree in the national organization.

## Article VI

### Degrees of Membership

#### Section A. Degrees of Active Membership

There shall be five degrees of active membership based upon achievements. These grades are: (a) Discovery FFA Degree, (b) Greenhand FFA Degree, (c) Chapter FFA Degree, (d) State FFA Degree and (e) American FFA Degree.

#### Section B. Discovery FFA Degree

On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the National Constitution, the Discovery FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

Section C. Greenhand FFA Degree

On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the National Constitution, the Greenhand FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

Section D. Chapter FFA Degree

On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the National Constitution, the Chapter FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

Section E. State FFA Degree

On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the National Constitution, the State FFA Degree may be conferred by the State Association.

Section F. American FFA Degree

On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the National Constitution, the American FFA Degree may be conferred by the National Organization.

## Article VII

### Officers

Section A. Elected Student Officers

The elected officers of the Tennessee FFA shall be a President, East Tennessee Vice President, Middle Tennessee Vice President, West Tennessee Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel.

Section B. Advisor

The Advisor shall serve as an ex-officio officer of the Tennessee FFA. The Advisor shall be an employee of, and appointed by, the Tennessee Department of Education.

Section C. Terms of Office

All elected state officers shall hold office for one year and until their successors are elected. Their term of office shall begin at the close of the annual state convention at which they are elected.

Section D. Qualifications

The elected officers must hold the State FFA degree at the time of election and must be active members for the duration of their term of office.

Section E. Nomination and Election

A nominating committee appointed by the Board of Directors shall interview all eligible state officer candidates. The committee shall place in nomination the name of a candidate for each elected officer position. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the delegates at the annual state convention.

Section F. Vacancies

Elected officers may be suspended or removed from office for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may fill any vacancies in officer positions for the remainder of the officer's term and until the next annual convention.

Article VIII

Meetings

Section A. Annual Convention

Except in cases of extreme emergency, a convention of the Tennessee FFA shall be held annually at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors. The purpose of the state convention shall be to conduct business of the state association and to recognize outstanding achievements of FFA members and chapters.

Section B. Convention Format

In the case of emergency, the Board of Directors shall have the power to conduct the annual convention and/or delegate business sessions in a virtual format, without in-person face-to-face meetings. The convention may be held face-to-face, by conference call, or virtually using a web-based meeting platform in which all delegates may simultaneously hear each other and participate during the business session.

Section C. Delegates

Each chapter shall be entitled to two official delegates from its active membership. The delegates shall be selected by the local chapter. Delegates shall represent their local chapter in conducting state association business and electing state officers.

Section D. Quorum

The quorum for the annual delegate business session(s) shall be a majority of the official delegates registered at the convention.

Article IX

Board of Directors

Section A. Board Composition

1. State FFA Advisor (ex-officio with vote) – the State FFA Advisor shall be an employee of the Tennessee Department of Education and shall serve as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

2. FFA Executive Secretary (ex-officio with vote) – The FFA Executive Secretary shall be an employee of the Tennessee Department of Education.
3. FFA Regional Consultants (3) (ex-officio without vote) – Three Regional Consultants; East, Middle, and West regions.
4. Agricultural Education Teachers (6) – Six (6) agricultural education teachers. Two from each region of the state (East, Middle, West). Three (3) teachers, one from each region, will be selected each year to serve a 2-year term. A teacher may serve for only two consecutive terms.
5. Teacher Educators in Agriculture (5) – Five (5) university teacher educators in agriculture. One from each Tennessee institution that offers a degree in agricultural education. Only 1 teacher educator will be a voting member. The voting member will rotate each year from the list of institutions. Other teacher educators will be ex-officio, non-voting members.
  - a. Middle Tennessee State University
  - b. Tennessee Tech University
  - c. Tennessee State University
  - d. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
  - e. The University of Tennessee – Martin
6. Tennessee Association of Agricultural Educators (TAAE)
  - a. TAAE President (or other representative)
  - b. TAAE Vice President – East (ex-officio, non-voting)
  - c. TAAE Vice President – Middle (ex-officio, non-voting)
  - d. TAAE Vice President – West (ex-officio, non-voting)
7. Tennessee FFA Alumni & Supporters Association
  - a. President (or other representative)(ex-officio, voting)
  - b. Alumni & Supporters Representative (non-voting)
8. Tennessee FFA Foundation
  - a. Board Chairman (or other representative)(ex-officio, voting)
  - b. Foundation representative (non-voting)
9. State FFA Officers
  - a. President
  - b. East Tennessee Vice President
  - c. Middle Tennessee Vice President
  - d. West Tennessee Vice President
  - e. Secretary
  - f. Treasurer
  - g. Reporter
  - h. Sentinel



## Section B. Proxy Voting

If voting members of the Board cannot attend a meeting, they may select another individual to represent their respective organization and vote in their place during the meeting. A member must notify the Executive Secretary at least 3 days prior to a meeting that they will be absent and provide the name of the individual who will be representing them and be given their proxy vote.

If the voting member of the teacher educators' group is absent, a teacher educator from another institution may represent the group and vote. State FFA Officers who are not able to attend a meeting may not select a proxy to vote in their absence.

## Section C. Officers

The Chairman of the Board of Directors shall be the State FFA Advisor who is an employee of the Tennessee Department of Education. The Secretary of the Board of Directors shall be the Tennessee FFA Executive Secretary who is an employee of the Tennessee Department of Education.

## Section D. Vacancies

Any member of the board who misses two consecutive meetings may be removed from the board by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the board members present and voting at a board meeting at which a quorum is present. Vacancies on the board may be filled by a majority vote of the board members present and voting at a board meeting at which a quorum is present.

## Section E. Regular Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet at least once per year at such time and place as determined by the Board. Meetings may be held face-to-face, by conference call, or virtually using a web-based meeting platform in which all members may simultaneously hear each other and participate during the meeting.

## Section F. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the call, which shall be sent to all board members at least three days before the meeting.

## Section G. Quorum

A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for all regular and special meetings of the board.

## Section H. Action Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors pursuant to the articles of incorporation, bylaws, or state law may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board of Directors shall individually or collectively consent in writing to such action. Such written consent shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the board. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the directors. Any consent filed under the provision of this article which relates to action so taken shall state that the action was taken by unanimous written consent of the Board of Directors without a meeting, pursuant to this section.

## Section I. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall have general supervision of the affairs of the association between meetings of the Board of Directors. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at the discretion of the State FFA Advisor, Chair. The membership of the Executive Committee shall include:

1. State FFA Advisor, Chairman
2. State FFA Executive Secretary
3. Regional Consultants (3)

## Article X

### Committees

#### Section 1. Audit/Finance Committee

The Audit/Finance committee shall be appointed by the chair to review the financial conditions of the association, investigate and make recommendations to the board concerning line items, budget overages, and work with the staff to develop an annual budget to submit to the board of directors. The audit/finance committee will include an adult director, the foundation representative, and the State FFA Treasurer.

#### Section 2. National Officer Candidate Coordination (NOCC) Committee

The National Officer Candidate Coordination (NOCC) Committee is appointed by the board of directors to oversee the screening and preparation of Tennessee's National Officer Candidate. The NOCC committee is responsible for selecting and appointing a National Officer Candidate Screening (NOCS) committee according to established Board policy, coordinating the application process, and overseeing the candidate's execution of a plan of action for preparing as the association's representative. The committee will include three adult volunteers, appointed by the board of directors, and the FFA Executive Secretary. The NOCC committee will elect a chair from the group. The board will fill any vacancy that occurs on the NOCC committee.

#### Section 3. State Officer Nominating Committee

The State officer nominating committee shall be comprised of six FFA members and six adults. The state FFA officers will select a Nominating Committee Chair from the group of six FFA members. A nominating committee coordinator will be appointed by state staff to coordinate and manage the nominating process.

## Article XI

### Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Tennessee FFA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, or any special rules of order the association may adopt.

## Article XII

### Amendment

Proposed amendments to the Tennessee FFA Bylaws may be submitted by an FFA chapter, state FFA officer(s), or the Board of Directors. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the State Executive Secretary at least 60 days prior to the annual state convention. All proposed amendments must be submitted to FFA chapters and delegates at least 30 days prior to the annual state convention. Proposed amendments may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the official delegates at the annual convention.