

Stockton FFA



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What's in an emblem?

INDIANAPOLIS — The FFA emblem is one of the most iconic images in the agricultural industry and dates back nearly 100 years. However, the creation of this emblem is shrouded in both history and mystery. While the current emblem features five icons representing the history, goals and ambition of the National FFA Organization, other symbols were considered throughout the years and could have changed everything from the patches on FFA jackets to the words spoken during opening ceremonies.



was whether the plow should be sitting on top of the ground or be in the ground. A plow as an object (sitting on top of the ground) represents the reaping of life. But the significance of plowing (in the ground) represented receiving truth.

One alternative icon considered was the horn of plenty. According to the ancient Greeks, baby Zeus was cared for and fed by Amalthea when he broke off one of her horns. This horn began to emit a constant supply of food for him. For these reasons, the horn of plenty became the symbol of prosperity, wealth and abundance.

Strong academic programs are a cornerstone to successful FFA chapters. This academic angle was meant to be represented by the lamp of knowledge. The lamp of knowledge is derived from the ancient Egyptian lamp, the same symbol used for the genie lamp in Disney's Aladdin. With an eternal flame of knowledge, the lamp often symbolizes academic excellence.

Long before the steel plow became popular, many farmers used a spade in their fields. The original FFA emblem was inspired by a young farmers' organization in Denmark called Landøkonomisk Rejsebureau, which showcased an owl sitting on top of a spade. While there is very little collective symbolism with a spade, it is often associated with hard work.

Once it was decided to move forward with a plow instead of a spade, another major point of contention

One part of the emblem that is often overlooked is the eagle at the top. In early FFA history, the eagle was left off in preference for a simple circular image. Once the trademark of the emblem was secured, the eagle became a permanent feature. However, the debate continued regarding the number of arrows in the eagle's grasp. An original proposal recommended 13 arrows to represent the original colonies. However, this design led to an infringement issue with the National Seal. There was further confusion depending on who manufactured items with the FFA emblem. If you look through your FFA memorabilia, you can see some emblems with three arrows and others with five arrows.

Like any living organization, the symbolism and iconography used to represent the National FFA Organization is ever-changing. While it has been decades since the emblem was last modified, there may come a day when additional changes are made to continue to represent the vastness and great diversity represented by the world's largest agricultural youth organization.

Students celebrate agriculture and leadership around the country

INDIANAPOLIS — This month, FFA members around the country will celebrate agriculture and FFA during National FFA Week.

Today, FFA provides the next generation of leaders who will change the world. As the nation's top school-based youth leadership development organization, FFA helps young people meet new agricultural challenges by encouraging members to develop their unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of career pathways. FFA members are our future leaders, food suppliers, innovators and more!

Whether through service projects or community gatherings, National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to raise awareness about the National FFA Organization's role in developing future leaders and the importance of agricultural education.

National FFA Week always

runs from Saturday to Saturday and encompasses Feb. 22, George Washington's birthday. This year, the week kicks off on Feb. 18 and culminates on Saturday, Feb. 25.

The National FFA Board of Directors designated the weeklong tradition, which began in 1948, to recognize Washington's legacy as an agriculturist and farmer. A group of young farmers founded FFA in 1928, and the organization has been influencing generations that agriculture is more than planting and harvesting — it involves science, business and more.

"National FFA Week is a meaningful week for members across our country as we celebrate the organization, share the message of positive youth development through FFA and promote agriculture," said National FFA Advisor Dr. Travis Park. "During this week, FFA chapters across the country cele-

brate agriculture while thanking their supporters — their local alumni chapters, agriculture teachers, or local businesses. Today, FFA and agricultural education continue to play a key role in developing the next generation of leaders and those who will fill the ever-growing need in the talent pipeline across our food systems."

National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to share agriculture with their fellow students and communities. During FFA Week, chapters also give back to their communities through various service projects.

The six national FFA officers will connect with chapters across the country throughout the week — delivering keynotes, greetings, workshops and more.

President Andrew Seibel will visit with FFA members in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Western Region Vice

President Ryan Williamson will visit FFA members in Delaware and West Virginia. Eastern Region Vice President Gracie Murphy will visit with FFA members in Mississippi and Louisiana. Central Region Vice President Karstyn Cantrell will visit with FFA members in Alabama and Tennessee. Southern Region Vice President MacKenna Clifton will visit with FFA members in Indiana and Michigan. National FFA Secretary Jess Herr will visit with FFA members in Oregon and California.

The National FFA Organization is a school-based national youth leadership development organization of more than 850,000 student members as part of 8,995 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Giving back to help grow future leaders through Give FFA Day

INDIANAPOLIS — Individuals across the country can make a difference in the lives of the more than 850,000 FFA members this month by participating in Give FFA Day during National FFA Week.

For the eighth year, during National FFA Week, individuals will have an opportunity to step up and support FFA and agricultural education through Give FFA Day on Thursday, Feb. 23. Funds raised support various programs on local, state and national levels. During the 24 hours of giving, donors can donate to National FFA and the state FFA associations of their choice.

In February, we will celebrate FFA, advisors and members as part of National FFA Week, which includes giving back during Give FFA Day. For more than 90 years, the National FFA Organization has strived to make a difference in students' lives. Donations help FFA grow the next generation of leaders. Through FFA, members can find their paths to success.

With a membership of more than 850,000, there is a need for sustained funding to provide valuable programs, events, skills training and more; through generous supporters like those on Give FFA Day, FFA members can thrive.

"Every ounce of help and support makes a huge difference in the lives of every

single FFA member across the nation," said Mary Ann Fox, an Iowa state FFA officer. "The experiences you are supporting help make members ready for the next step in their lives."

This year, the organization aims to raise \$500,000 during the 24 hours of Give FFA Day. FFA hopes to achieve this by challenging everyone to contribute throughout the day with a goal of having 2,000 donors participate.

RFD-TV has generously pledged to match the first \$100,000 in donations on Give FFA Day. "No one does a better job of preparing leaders for the next generation than FFA," Patrick Gottsch, president of Rural Media Group Inc., said. "For 22 years now, RFD-TV has supported FFA in every way possible, and I am so proud to be associated with the best of America's youth. Anyone who donates to FFA with their time or money can be assured that it is going to be a great investment."

In addition, American Family Insurance and John Deere will also match donations on Give FFA Day. Matching details will be announced throughout the day.

"Donors at every level ensure we continue to grow the future leaders of agriculture and the world," said Kimberly Coveney, the annual fund manager for the National FFA Foundation.

"Give FFA Day is an opportunity for each FFA supporter to magnify their impact on the lives of young people when they join other donors across the country. Every gift makes a difference, and we are grateful for our donors and their continued support and belief in FFA and agricultural education."

To prepare for Give FFA Day, visit FFA.org/GiveFFADay. See how you can give back to the organization and encourage others to do the same.

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ABOUT NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

The National FFA Organization is a school-based national youth leadership development organization of more than 850,000 student members as part of 8,995 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. For more, visit the National FFA Organization online at FFA.

org and on Facebook and Twitter.

NATIONAL FFA FOUNDATION

The National FFA Foundation builds partnerships with industry, education, government, other foundations, and individuals to secure financial resources that recognize FFA member achievements, develop student leaders, and support the future of agricultural education. Governed by a 19-member board of trustees composed of educators, business leaders, individual donors and FFA Alumni, the foundation is a separately registered nonprofit organization. About 82 percent of every dollar received by the foundation supports FFA members and agricultural education opportunities. For more, visit FFA.org/Give.

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— Kimberly Coveney, FFA fund manager

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