

# HEMPSTEAD FFA Chapter Constitution/By - Laws

Revised 2022

## ARTICLE I - Name, Mission and Strategies

**Section A.** The name of this organization shall be the HEMPSTEAD FFA Chapter of the National FFA Organization and the Texas FFA Association.

**Section B.** The mission and strategies for this chapter are as follows:

FFA makes a **positive difference** in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through **agricultural education**.

1. Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
2. Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well-being.
3. Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
4. Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
5. Encourages achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
6. Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
7. Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
8. Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
9. Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
10. Promotes healthy lifestyles.
11. Encourages excellence in scholarship.

## ARTICLE II - Organization

**Section A.** The HEMPSTEAD Chapter of FFA is a chartered local unit of the Texas Association of FFA, which is chartered by the National FFA Organization.

**Section B.** This chapter accepts in full the provisions in the constitution, bylaws and policies of the Texas Association of FFA and the National FFA Organization and the policies and regulations of the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District.

## ARTICLE III - Membership

**Section A.** Membership in this chapter shall be of four kinds: (1) Active; (2) Alumni; (3) Honorary and (4) Junior, as defined by the National and Texas FFA Constitutions and by Texas FFA Association membership policies.

**Section B.** The regular activities of this chapter shall be carried on by the active membership.

**Section C.** To be eligible for active membership in this chapter, a student must meet the membership eligibility requirements of the National FFA Organization and the Texas FFA Association. Active members in good standing may vote on all business brought before the chapter. An active member shall be considered in good standing when he or she:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agriculture, food and natural resources course, as defined in Texas FFA Association membership policies, 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 agriculture, food and natural resources career.
2. FFA Enrollment eligibility is from 8th Grade to 12th grade and must be enrolled in at least one agriculture, food and natural resource course.
3. Shows 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.
4. Pays all current local, district, area, state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.
5. Displays conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization, Texas FFA Association and with the school district's code of student conduct and closely follow UIL eligibility requirements regarding grading periods, and extracurricular activities.
6. Meets all other local standards and requirements described in this chapter's bylaws and policies.
7. Unsportsmanlike conduct by any student members will not be tolerated.
  - 1st warning will consist of a verbal warning from the agriculture science teachers
  - 2nd warning will consist of a write up
  - 3rd warning will consist of removal from the FFA Chapter and membership status

**Section D.** This chapter may elect to have a junior FFA organization. Junior members must meet all junior FFA membership requirements described in the Texas FFA Association Constitution and policies. A junior member shall be considered in good standing when he or she:

1. Shows an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending junior member meetings.
2. JR FFA Enrollment Eligibility is 3rd grade or 8 years of age to 7th grade
3. Pays local and state dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Displays conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization and with the school district's code of student conduct.
5. Junior members must be at least 8 years of age by the deadline for dues to be paid.
6. Has an older sibling who is currently a member, in good standing, with the FFA chapter.
7. A parent or grandparent is a current employee or retired employee or school board member of Hempstead I.S.D.

8. Junior membership privileges are limited to: exhibiting livestock at the local, county, and major show level, and attending regularly scheduled meetings.
9. Unsportsmanlike conduct by any student members will not be tolerated.
  - 1st warning will consist of a verbal warning from the agriculture science teachers
  - 2nd warning will consist of a write up
  - 3rd warning will consist of removal from the FFA Chapter and membership status

**Section E.** Names of applicants for membership shall be filed with the secretary and/or the chairman of the membership committee.

**Section F.** The membership year for this chapter shall begin on September 15 and end on September 14 of the following year.

**Section G.** Honorary Membership – Farmers, school superintendents, principals, school board trustees, advisory committee members, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in agriculture, food and natural resource education, business peoples, support group members and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and FFA and who have rendered outstanding service may be elected to honorary membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting. Honorary membership in this chapter shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree. Honorary Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official silver or gold emblem pin. Procedures for nominating and electing honorary members shall be described in this chapter's bylaws or rules.

## **ARTICLE IV - Emblems**

**Section A.** The emblem of the FFA shall be the emblem for the chapter.

**Section B.** Emblems used by the members shall be designated by the National FFA Organization.

## **ARTICLE V - Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership**

**Section A.** There shall be five degrees of active membership based on individual achievement. These degrees are: (1) Discovery FFA Degree, (2) Greenhand FFA Degree, (3) Chapter FFA Degree, (4) State FFA Degree and (5) American FFA Degree. All Discovery FFA members are entitled to wear the regulation bronze and blue emblem pin. All Greenhands are entitled to wear the regulation bronze emblem pin. All members holding the Chapter FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation silver emblem pin. All members holding the State FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem charm. All members holding the American FFA Degree are entitled to wear the regulation gold emblem key.

**Section B.** Discovery FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:  
(Refer to Texas FFA Constitution)

1. Be enrolled in a local credit agriculture, food and natural resources class for at least a portion of the school year while in grades 7-8.
2. Have become a dues paying member of the FFA at local, state and national levels.
3. Participate in at least one local FFA chapter activity outside of scheduled class time.
4. Have knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Be familiar with the local FFA chapter program of activities.
6. Submit written applications for the degree.

**Section C.** Greenhand FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:  
(Refer to Texas FFA Constitution.)

1. Be enrolled in agriculture, food and natural resources course as defined by Texas FFA membership policies for high school credit and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the meaning of the FFA Creed, Motto, and Salute.
3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate a knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws, and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Personally own or have access to the Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook.
7. Submit a written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

**Section D.** Chapter FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:  
(Refer to Texas FFA Constitution.)

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least two semesters of systematic school instruction in agriculture, food and natural resources education at or above the ninth grade level, have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program and be enrolled in an agriculture, food and natural resources course.
3. Must have participated in the planning and conducting of at least three official functions in the chapter Program of Activities.
4. Must have earned and productively invested at least \$50 by the member's own efforts and worked at least fifty hours in excess of scheduled class time and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program. The combination of hours and dollars must equal or exceed the number 200.
5. Must have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
6. Must have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Have participated in at least 10 hours of community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid SAE hours.
8. Must show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA award programs.
9. Must have a satisfactory scholastic record.
10. Must submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.

**Section E.** State FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:  
(Refer to Texas FFA Constitution)

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree.
2. Have been an active FFA member for at least two years (24 months) at the time of receiving the State FFA Degree.
3. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least four semesters of systematic school instruction in Agriculture Food and Natural Resources at or above the ninth grade level, which includes a supervised agricultural experience program.
4. Have earned and productively invested at least \$200 and worked at least 200 hours in excess of scheduled class time, in a supervised agricultural experience program. The combination of hours and dollars must exceed or equal the number 800.
5. Have demonstrated leadership ability by:
  - a. Performing ten procedures of parliamentary law.
  - b. Giving a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or the FFA.
  - c. Serving as an officer, committee chairperson, or participating member of a major committee.
6. Have a satisfactory scholastic record as certified by the local agriculture, food and natural resources instructor and the principal or superintendent.
7. Have participated in the planning and completion of the chapter program of activities.
8. As of April 1, have completed ten activities above the chapter level in at least three of six different categories: leadership development events, career development events, conventions and meetings, project shows, student awards and leadership and service as described in policies adopted by the Board of Directors.
9. As of April 1 of the year the member is to receive the degree, have participated in at least 25 hours of community service within at least two different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid SAE hours.

Written records of achievement of all requirements, verified by the chapter FFA advisor, shall be submitted to the State Association at least one month prior to the state FFA convention at which the State FFA Degree is to be received. The State FFA Executive Director shall provide for a review of the records and submit a recommendation to the State FFA Board of Directors, which shall nominate at the State FFA convention the candidates who have been found worthy to receive the honor.

**Section F.** American FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for selection:  
(Refer to Texas FFA Constitution)

1. Have received the State FFA Degree, have been an active member for the past three years (36 months), and have a record or satisfactory participation in the activities on the chapter and state levels.
2. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least three years (540 hours) of systematic secondary school instruction in an Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources program or have completed the program of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at the school last attended.

3. Have graduated from high school at least twelve months prior to the national convention at which the degree is to be granted.
4. Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program through which a member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise.
5. Have earned and productively invested at least \$7,500 or earned and invested at least \$1,500 and worked at least 2250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours x \$3.33 plus dollars must be equal to or greater than the number 9000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet the minimum requirements of the degree.
6. Have a record of outstanding leadership abilities and community involvement and have achieved a high school scholastic record of "C" or better as certified by the principal or superintendent.
7. Have participated in at least 50 hours of community service, within at least 3 different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid SAE hours.
8. Submit an application and supporting documentation pursuant to the deadlines and requirements described in Texas FFA policies and procedures.

## **ARTICLE VI – Officers and Executive Committee**

**Section A.** The offices of an FFA chapter shall be: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter and sentinel. Other officers or executive committee members may be elected as deemed appropriate by the chapter. The teacher(s) of agriculture, food and natural resources shall be the FFA advisor(s). Procedures for electing officers and specific duties of each office are described in the bylaws of this chapter.

**Section B.** Pursuant to the provisions of the national and state constitutions, all chapter officers shall have attained the chapter FFA degree. The president and vice president must be a junior or senior in class standing.

**Section C.** Officers shall serve from the end of the chapter meeting at which they are installed to the end of the next succeeding chapter meeting at which officers are installed.

**Section D.** The elected officers of the chapter shall constitute the executive committee which shall convene to plan the activities of the chapter. Standing committee chairpersons may also be named as members of the executive committee. All policy decisions of the executive committee must be approved by the chapter. Telephone conferences of the executive committee may be called and considered meetings provided that all participating members may participate and be heard simultaneously.

**Section E.** Pursuant to the applicable constitutional, bylaw and policy provisions of the district, area and state associations and of the National FFA Organization, this chapter may nominate candidates for offices above the chapter level in a manner consistent with the provisions of its bylaws and policies. Candidates for district and area office shall have attained the chapter degree at the time of the district or area election. Candidates for state office shall hold the state

degree at the time of the state election. Candidates for national office shall hold the American Degree at the time of their election to office.

## **ARTICLE VII - Committees**

**Section A.** The standing committees of the chapter shall be described in the bylaws. The chapter may, at any meeting, create additional standing committees.

**Section B.** The chapter president shall appoint all committees and committee chairs. Unless specified by the chapter or the chapter executive committee, the terms of all committees shall expire at the end of the chapter's officer terms. The president shall have the authority to remove any committee chairperson, with the consent of the advisor.

**Section C.** No committee shall have the authority to expend chapter funds (unless expressly authorized to do so), amend the chapter's constitution, bylaws or policies, appoint or remove a committee member, or take any action outside the scope of authority delegated to it by the chapter.

## **ARTICLE VII - Dues**

**Section A.** Local dues in this chapter shall be fixed annually by a majority vote of the active members.

**Section B.** Full local, district, area, state and national dues shall be paid by all active members.

**Section C.** No member shall be considered as active and in good standing unless he/she pays full local, district, area, state and national FFA dues.

## **ARTICLE VIII - Meetings**

**Section A.** Regular meetings shall be held on the second Monday of each month, unless extenuating circumstances prevent convening a regular meeting on this date. Special meetings may be called by the president, by a majority vote of the executive committee or by the chapter advisor(s).

**Section B.** A quorum shall exist when 38% of the chapter membership is present.

**Section C.** Proxy and cumulative voting are prohibited.

## **ARTICLE IX - Amendments**

**Section A.** This constitution may be amended or changed at any regular or special chapter meeting by a two-thirds vote of the votes cast by a quorum of active members present providing it is not in conflict with the National FFA Organization or Texas FFA Association constitution, bylaws or policies. Amendments must not conflict with the policies and/or regulations of the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District. Members shall be notified by mail, electronic mail or classroom announcement at least 30 days prior to a meeting at which any constitutional amendment is to be considered.

**Section B.** Bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the chapter at any regular or special chapter meeting by a majority vote of a quorum of active members present providing such bylaws do not conflict in any way with the constitution, bylaws or policies of the Texas FFA Association, National FFA Organization

or the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District. Members shall be notified by mail, electronic mail or classroom announcement at least 30 days prior to a meeting at which any amendment to the bylaws is to be considered.

## **ARTICLE X – Parliamentary Procedure**

**Section A.** The *Parliamentary Guide for FFA* by Jarrell D. Gray shall be used as a guide for all chapter meetings. The latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order* shall be the final authority in governing the actions of all chapter meetings.



# **HEMPSTEAD FFA Chapter Bylaws**

## **ARTICLE I. – Relationship to Constitution**

The Bylaws shall be a part of the Constitution of the HEMPSTEAD Chapter of FFA.

## **ARTICLE II. – Location of Offices**

The headquarters and principal office of the HEMPSTEAD Chapter of FFA shall be at 801 Donoho St. Hempstead, TX 77445.

## **ARTICLE III – Procedures for Electing Officers**

**Section A.** The chapter shall adopt rules related to the election of officers which shall include, but not be limited to, designation of elections committee, filing deadlines, application forms, testing procedures and election date.

**Section B.** Qualified members shall declare intent to be considered for chapter office by filing the required forms by the prescribed filing deadline pursuant to the rules adopted by the chapter.

**Section C.** Officers shall be selected by a combination of written exam score, interview score, and a score derived from a secret ballot vote of the active members of the chapter. Each candidate will be ranked in each of the three areas and the candidates with the lowest overall ranking will be the chapter officers and committee members for that year. The objective test score will be used as a tiebreaker. The interview ranking will be used as a secondary tiebreaker.

**Section D.** All written materials related to a chapter election shall be deposited and retained in a secure location for no less than 30 days following the announcement of election results.

**Section E.** Appeals or protests related to a chapter election shall be filed pursuant to the grievances procedures of the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District.

## **ARTICLE IV – Duties of Officers**

**Section A.** It shall be the duty of all officers to fulfill the responsibilities described in the officer contract adopted by the chapter and agreed to by each officer at the time of declaring candidacy for chapter office.

**Section B.** The president shall preside at all of the chapter's meetings, shall sign all official documents or authorize execution of said documents, appoint student committees and serve as an ex-officio member of all student committees, coordinate all chapter operations, represent the chapter in official functions and perform other such duties as usually pertain to the office of president.

**Section C.** The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the event of the disability, death, resignation, removal or other inability of the president to perform such duties, develop the chapter's program of activities, coordinate the operations of all student committees, serve as an ex-officio member of all

student committees and perform such other duties and further duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the chapter.

**Section D.** The secretary shall make and keep correct records or minutes of proceedings of the chapter and executive committee, prepare and post meeting agendas, file reports, maintain member activity records, issue membership cards, update policy documents as directed and perform such other duties and further duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the chapter.

**Section E.** The treasurer shall have responsibility for accounting of all funds and property of the chapter. The treasurer shall provide direction and oversight to any and all who handle the monies of the chapter, assuring that the financial policies of the chapter and HEMPSTEAD Independent School District are followed completely, shall present a proposed budget at a regularly scheduled or called special chapter meeting, present monthly financial reports at chapter meetings, chair the budget and finance committee and perform such other duties and further duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the chapter.

**Section F.** The reporter shall chair the chapter public relations committee and develop public relations strategies to accurately define the public image of the agricultural education program and FFA chapter, develop or cause to be developed press releases concerning chapter activities, maintain or cause to be maintained a chapter website, develop working relationships with all local and school district media, ensure a complete photographic record of all chapter activities and perform such other duties and further duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the chapter.

**Section G.** The sentinel shall have responsibility for all meeting related equipment and shall maintain an inventory of all such equipment, ensure that all meeting and social venues are ready to receive members and guests prior to each function, take charge of candidates for degree and award ceremonies, assist the president in maintaining order, ensure a welcoming environment for guests and perform such other duties and further duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the chapter.

## **ARTICLE V – Resignation, Removal of Officers, Officer Vacancies**

**Section A.** The advisor or the executive committee with the advice and consent of the advisor, may, with good cause, remove any officer elected by the chapter. Good cause shall include, but not be limited to, violation of the provisions of the chapter's officer contract, violation of chapter or departmental rules of conduct, violation of the school code of student conduct or violation of state or federal laws.

**Section B.** Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the advisor, president or secretary. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in the notice, and, unless otherwise specified in the notice, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

**Section C.** Should the office of president become vacant; the vice president shall assume the title and duties of president. The executive committee may appoint an interim officer to fill any other vacancy until the chapter elects a qualified replacement.

## **ARTICLE VI – Committees**

**Section A.** The standing committees of the chapter shall be in harmony with the National FFA Organization's Quality Standards for Local Chapters. Each active member of this chapter shall be assigned to a committee which is deemed commensurate to the member's interests, talents and skills. The chapter shall not be obligated to staff all committees, but any of the standing committees may be activated by the chapter president without the action of the chapter.

**Section B.** Each standing committee shall develop and submit to the executive committee a plan within the committee's scope of responsibility and a corresponding budget within the timelines prescribed by the president. Each committee shall make regular and timely reports to the chapter concerning progress towards its respective goals.

**Section C.** The standing committees of the chapter and their respective duties are:

- (1) Student Development-Leadership shall plan and execute strategies which help each member develop technical, human relations and decision-making leadership skills to enhance personal success.
- (2) Student Development-Healthy Lifestyles shall plan and execute strategies which promote the well-being and self-esteem of each student, mentally and or physically.
- (3) Student Development-Supervised Agricultural Experience shall plan and execute strategies which promote universal student engagement and growth through agriculture, food and natural resources related experiences and/or entrepreneurship.
- (4) Student Development-Scholarship shall plan and execute strategies which develop a positive attitude toward lifelong learning experiences and which foster scholastic achievement and improvement.
- (5) Student Development-Agricultural Career Development shall plan and execute strategies which develop occupational and career skills in agriculture, food and natural resources through a progressive learning environment.
- (6) Chapter Development-Recruitment shall plan and execute strategies to increase agricultural education enrollment, FFA membership and student engagement.
- (7) Chapter Development-Budget and Finance shall plan and execute strategies which encourage thrift and sound financial management among members through earnings, savings and investments, shall develop and present an annual budget to the executive committee, coordinate fundraising projects and present an annual financial report to the chapter.
- (8) Chapter Development-Public Relations shall plan and execute strategies to promote a positive image of agricultural education and FFA and to inform students, parents, school officials and the community about chapter and member accomplishments.
- (9) Chapter Development-Leader Development shall plan and execute strategies to develop fundamental leadership, teamwork and cooperation skills among chapter officers, committee chairs and all members.
- (10) Chapter Development-Support Group Relations shall plans and execute strategies to develop and maintain positive relations among the FFA, parents, community leaders and industry.

- (11) Community Development-Economic Development shall plan and execute strategies designed to improve the economic welfare of the community.
- (12) Community Development-Environmental Awareness shall plan and execute strategies to conserve natural resources to develop more environmentally responsible individuals.
- (13) Community Development-Human Resources shall plan and execute strategies intended to improve the welfare and well being of members and citizens of the community.
- (14) Community Development-Citizenship shall plan and execute strategies to encourage members to become active, involved citizens in their school, community, county, state and nation.
- (15) Community Development-Agricultural Awareness shall plan and execute strategies to help the public become better informed about the food system and related issues.

## **ARTICLE VII – Transactions of the Chapter**

**Section A.** The fiscal year of the chapter shall begin on September 15th and end on September 14<sup>th</sup> of the following year.

**Section B.** The chapter shall adopt policies and procedures consistent with the fiduciary policies, procedures and audit standards of the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District.

## **ARTICLE VIII – Grievances and Appeals**

Grievances and appeals shall be addressed under the auspices of the student grievance policies and procedures of the HEMPSTEAD Independent School District.