



Lesson Plan

Wild About Animals

Created: 04/2026 by the National FFA Organization

Description of Lesson: Learn about exotic animal farms through this animal systems supervised agricultural experience (SAE) from a student in Arkansas.

Student Learning Objectives:

After completing these activities, students will ...

1. Differentiate between domesticated, wild and exotic animals and explain how domestication can impact agricultural production.
2. Apply animal science concepts to develop a best care practices brochures for a legal exotic species in their state.
3. Analyze how an SAE can support career preparation, skill development and record keeping in the animal systems pathway.

Suggested Grade Level:

Grades 9 and 10 (This lesson is written so instructors can scale up or down based on class needs.)

Suggested Time: 60 minutes (*Time requirements may vary based upon student understanding and class schedule.)

Resources/References:

1. Video: "Exotic Animal SAE," <https://vimeo.com/1148724825>
2. Article: "Exotic, Domesticated and Wild Pets," <https://vetmed.tamu.edu/news/pet-talk/exotic-domesticated-and-wild-pets/>

Related Resources:

1. Denisha Washington – Pet Store, <https://FFA.box.com/s/wo7bwgspixpe0xe1e640y99wrg19dpl7>

Equipment and Supplies Needed:

1. A copy of the "Wild About Animals" worksheet for each student
2. Internet access to play the video in real time or embed it in a PowerPoint ahead of time

Vocabulary:

1. Agritourism
2. Animal Systems
3. Domestication
4. Enrichment
5. Exotic Animal
6. Permit
7. Record Keeping
8. Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE)
9. Wild Animal

Cross-Curricular Connections:

Science	English/Language Arts	Technology
Examine animal classification, nutrition, disease prevention, habitat needs and the biological differences between domesticated and non-domesticated species.	Read an informational text, answer text-dependent questions, conduct research and develop a structured informational brochure.	Use digital tools for research and to design a professional brochure.

SAE and FFA Connections

1. Identify how an exotic animal enterprise could function as an entrepreneurship, placement or research-based SAE.
2. Connect record keeping, skill development and career goals from the video to their own potential SAE plans.
3. Explore related FFA proficiency areas and career pathways in Animal Systems.

Student Activity Sheets:

Direct access to student activity sheets without lesson plan or answer key for easy upload to a learning management system or printing for classwork.

<https://ffa.box.com/s/wi7tx6j887x2cw06al5vziyo4c40ieu> (Word)

<https://ffa.box.com/s/57fakltobe0ktbdjrqqiqxbqdr7ic1ha> (PDF)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/19Zok-hiCPa02LOVLuwM62KYE0qPBnUrF23p6xXzCwsc/copy> (Google)

These Activities Are Aligned to the Following Standards:

AFNR Performance Element

- FPS.01. Analyze how issues, trends, technologies and public policies impact systems in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Cluster.
- FPS.02. Evaluate the nature and scope of the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Cluster and the role of agriculture, food and natural resources (AFNR) in society and the economy.
- FPS.03. Examine and summarize the importance of health, safety and environmental management systems in AFNR workplaces.
- FPS.05. Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources career pathways.
- FPS.07. Recognize the value of a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) as Work-Based Learning.
- FPS.08. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- FPS.09. Recognize the options within and participate in immersive supervised agricultural experiences.
- FPS.14. Evaluate opportunities to develop leadership, citizenship and career skills.

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action A1. Work independently and in groups to get things done.
- FFA.PL-A.Action A3. Plan effectively.
- FFA.PL-A.Action A4. Identify and use resources.
- FFA.PL-A.Action A5. Communicate effectively with others.
- FFA.PL-A.Action A8. Evaluate and reflect on actions taken and make appropriate modifications.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth I1. Plan and implement professional goals and priorities.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth I2. Make clear decisions in my professional life.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth I3. Demonstrate professional ethics.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth I5. Demonstrate exemplary employability skills.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth J1. Think critically.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth J2. Think creatively.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth J3. Practice sound decision-making.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth J4. Solve problems.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth J5. Commit to life-long learning.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication M1. Demonstrate technical and business writing skills.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication M3. Make effective business presentations.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making N1. Demonstrate the decision-making process.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making N2. Demonstrate problem-solving skills.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making N4. Choose a career based on passion, abilities and aptitudes.

Common Core – Reading: Informational Text

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3. Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed and the connections that are drawn between them.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7. Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

Common Core – Writing

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.6. Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.

Common Core – Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4. Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance and style are appropriate to purpose, audience and task.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning and evidence and to add interest.

Common Core – Language

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech or its etymology.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking and listening at the college and career-readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.02. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason.
- CRP.05. Consider the environmental, social and economic impact of decisions.
- CRP.07. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
- CRP.08. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- CRP.10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals.
- CRP.11. Use technology to enhance productivity.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Global Awareness
- Information Literacy
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Leadership and Responsibility
- Productivity and Accountability
- Technology Literacy
- Think Creatively

Lesson Plan:

1. **Bell Ringer:** If you could raise any animal you wanted, what would it be, and why would you want to raise it?
2. **Introduction:** *Animal science doesn't have to look like just livestock, equine or poultry. The exotic animal industry can also tie back to animal science and even agriculture. Many exotic animal farms consider themselves to be agritourism and are sometimes overseen by the department of agriculture. Learn more about one student's SAE that includes helping to manage his family's exotic animal farm. Then, you'll conduct research on exotic animals in your own state.*
3. **Activity:** Each student needs a copy of the worksheet "Wild About Animals."
 - a. **Part 1:** Play the video "Exotic Animal SAE" available at <https://vimeo.com/1148724825>. Students will watch the video and answer the questions on the student activity sheet as they follow along. You may choose to show the video to the entire class or have the students view it individually on their own devices.
 - b. **Part 2:** Students will research the difference between exotic, domesticated and wild pets by reading an article from Texas A&M University's Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences called "Exotic, Domesticated and Wild Pets." (<https://vetmed.tamu.edu/news/pet-talk/exotic-domesticated-and-wild-pets/>)
 - c. **Part 3:** Students will research and choose one exotic animal species allowed to be owned in their state. They will create a brochure highlighting the best care practices for their selected species. Brochures can be made by hand or digitally using a program such as Canva.
4. **Follow-up:** *Today, you saw how animal science, laws and real-world management all connect through an SAE. Every successful operation, whether it raises traditional livestock or exotic animals, depends on research, responsibility and record keeping.*
5. **Optional – Extended Learning Opportunities (Not factored into time requirement):**
 - a. Have students dream up their own mini-SAE plan for the exotic animal species they researched. They will determine the type of SAE, facilities needed, a feed and health management plan, estimated start-up costs and one related FFA area.
6. **Exit Ticket:** Name one skill Grant developed through his SAE, and explain how that same skill would be important if you owned or managed an exotic animal enterprise.

Name: _____

Wild About Animals

Aligned to the following standards: FPS.01, FPS.02, FPS.03, FPS.05, FPS.07, FPS.08, FPS.09, FPS.14, FFA.PL-A, FFA.PG-I, FFA.PG-J, FFA.CS-M, FFA.CS-N, CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.1, CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.2, CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.3, CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.7, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.2, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.6, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.7, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.8, CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.10, CCSS.ELA.W.9-12.9, CCSS.ELA.SL.9-10.2, CCSS.ELA.SL.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA.SL.9-10.5, CCSS.ELA.L.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA.L.9-10.6, CRP.02, CRP.04, CRP.05, CRP.07, CRP.08, CRP.10, CRP.11

Part 1

Directions: Answer the questions below as you watch the video “Exotic Animal SAE,” available at <https://vimeo.com/1148724825>.

1. What chapter is Grant from? Draw the back of an FFA jacket and include his chapter name and state just like a real jacket.

2. Circle the pathway his SAE is in.

Agribusiness Systems	Agricultural Education Systems	Agriculture Technology Systems	Animal Systems
Biotechnology Systems	Environmental Service Systems	Food Products and Processing Systems	Natural Resources Systems
Plant Systems	Power, Structural and Technical Systems	Skilled Trade Systems	Sustainability Systems

3. What is unique about the farm he works on?
4. What are two types of events they host at the farm?
 -
 -
5. Describe a typical day for Grant at the farm.
6. What is an example of enrichment for the lemur?

Name: _____

7. Which animal is Grant's favorite? Why?
8. What is one main skill that Grant has learned through this SAE?
9. Who owns his farm? What generation farmer does this make him?
10. How does Grant use record keeping?
11. What is Grant's future career advice?
12. How have Grant's responsibilities changed over time? Explain why you think that is.
13. Which agriculture class has been most helpful to him for his SAE?
14. Explain how that agriculture class has been most helpful.
15. What does Grant want to be one day?
16. Describe one way his SAE has prepped him for this career goal.
17. Why did Grant join FFA?

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions: Read the article “Exotic, Domesticated and Wild Pets” from Texas A&M University’s Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (<https://vetmed.tamu.edu/news/pet-talk/exotic-domesticated-and-wild-pets/>). Answer the questions below.

1. What is the difference between a domesticated animal, a wild animal and an exotic animal?	2. Which animals are considered truly domesticated species, and what makes them different from the others?
3. Why does raising a wild animal around humans NOT make it domesticated?	4. How does geographic location determine whether an animal is classified as wild or exotic?
5. What legal responsibilities are involved in owning wild or exotic animals?	6. Why is it important to research laws before obtaining a wild or exotic animal?
7. What level of commitment is required to care for a wild or exotic animal compared to a domesticated species?	8. Why might governments regulate the ownership of wild and exotic animals?
9. How does understanding domestication help people make better decisions in animal agriculture?	10. How does domestication make animals more suitable for agricultural production systems?

Name: _____

Part 3

Directions: Research exotic animals in your state. Answer the questions below. Then, choose one animal to create a best-care-practices brochure about.

1. Draw your state below.

2. Which agency regulates exotic animals in your state?

3. List at least two for each:
 - a. Legal exotic animals without a permit:

 - b. Legal exotic animals with a permit:

 - c. Prohibited exotic animals:

Choose one legal exotic animal allowed in your state to focus your brochure on.

The following information should be included in your brochure, in addition to photos:

- Animal scientific and common names:

- Use or purpose (agricultural or not):

- Type of diet and what they eat:

- Specific housing requirements (fencing, shelter, temperature):

Name: _____

- Common diseases:

- Safety considerations:

- Cost considerations:

- What permits are required, if any:

Brochure Rubric

Criteria	2 Points (Proficient)	1 Point (Developing)	0 Points (Incomplete)
Animal Science Content	Includes accurate information on diet, housing, health and safety	Includes some information but some is missing or partially inaccurate	Little to no accurate animal science information
Legal and Agricultural Connection	Clearly explains legality in state and agricultural use/purpose	Mentions legality or use but lacks detail or clarity	No mention of legality or agricultural purpose
Research and Detail	Thorough, specific details showing strong research	Basic information with limited detail	Minimal effort or missing key information
Organization and Clarity	Well-organized, easy to read, clearly labeled sections	Some organization but may be unclear or cluttered	Disorganized or difficult to understand
Visual Design and Effort	Visually appealing with images/graphics that support content	Some visuals included but limited effort	No visuals or very little effort

Name: _____

KEY: Wild About Animals

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Part 1

Directions: Answer the questions below as you watch the video “Exotic Animal SAE,” available at <https://vimeo.com/1148724825>.

1. What chapter is Grant from? Draw the back of an FFA jacket and include his chapter name and state just like a real jacket.
Picture should show Lamar FFA Chapter, Arkansas.

2. Circle the pathway his SAE is in.

Agribusiness Systems	Agricultural Education Systems	Agriculture Technology Systems	Animal Systems
Biotechnology Systems	Environmental Service Systems	Food Products and Processing Systems	Natural Resources Systems
Plant Systems	Power, Structural and Technical Systems	Skilled Trade Systems	Sustainability Systems

3. What is unique about the farm he works on?
It is an exotic animal farm.
4. What are two types of events they host at the farm?
 - Birthday parties
 - Field trips
5. Describe a typical day for Grant at the farm.
He feeds and waters the animals and then cleans buckets and pens.
6. What is an example of enrichment for the lemur?
He places a mirror in the lemur pen for the lemur to play with its reflection.

Name: _____

7. Which animal is Grant's favorite? Why?
The camel is his favorite because he thinks it's really cool.
8. What is one main skill that Grant has learned through this SAE?
He has learned responsibility.
9. Who owns his farm? What generation farmer does this make him?
His grandparents own the farm, which makes him a third-generation farmer.
10. How does Grant use record keeping?
Grant uses record keeping to track expenses and time.
11. What is Grant's future career advice?
He recommends that whatever you want to do one day, let your SAE lead into that.
12. How have Grant's responsibilities changed over time? Explain why you think that is.
Over time, Grant's responsibilities have changed from feeding and watering to giving medications and doctoring animals because he has gotten older and can handle more important jobs like that.
13. Which agriculture class has been most helpful to him for his SAE?
Animal science has been most helpful.
14. Explain how that agriculture class has been most helpful.
For example, learning about animal systems, health and nutrition have helped him manage the animals at the farm.
15. What does Grant want to be one day?
Grant wants to be a veterinarian one day.
16. Describe one way his SAE has prepped him for this career goal.
Answers will vary.
17. Why did Grant join FFA?
Grant joined FFA because he felt he belonged there with other students who loved animals.

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions: Read the article “Exotic, Domesticated and Wild Pets” from Texas A&M University’s Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (<https://vetmed.tamu.edu/news/pet-talk/exotic-domesticated-and-wild-pets/>). Answer the questions below.

1. What is the difference between a domesticated animal, a wild animal and an exotic animal? Domesticated animals: Species that have been genetically changed over many generations through selective breeding to live and work with humans. Wild animals: Animals that live in natural environments Exotic animals: Nonnative species to a specific area	2. Which animals are considered truly domesticated species, and what makes them different from the others? Dogs, cats, cattle, horses, sheep, goats and chickens because they have been selectively bred for specific traits and are genetically adapted to live with humans
3. Why does raising a wild animal around humans NOT make it domesticated? Because domestication is a genetic, multi-generation process, not something that happens through taming or training one individual animal.	4. How does geographic location determine whether an animal is classified as wild or exotic? An animal may be native (wild) in one region but considered exotic in another if it does not naturally occur there.
5. What legal responsibilities are involved in owning wild or exotic animals? Owners must follow local and state laws, obtain permits if required and meet specific care and housing requirements.	6. Why is it important to research laws before obtaining a wild or exotic animal? Because laws vary by location and owning one illegally can lead to fines, confiscation of the animal or legal consequences.
7. What level of commitment is required to care for a wild or exotic animal compared to a domesticated species? They often require specialized diets, special housing, more space, veterinary care from trained professionals and long-term advanced care, which makes them more difficult to manage than domesticated animals.	8. Why might governments regulate the ownership of wild and exotic animals? To protect public safety, protect the environment, prevent the spread of disease and ensure proper animal welfare
9. How does understanding domestication help people make better decisions in animal agriculture? Answers will vary.	10. How does domestication make animals more suitable for agricultural production systems? Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Part 3

Directions: Research exotic animals in your state. Answer the questions below. Then, choose one animal to create a best care practices brochure about.

1. Draw your state below.
Answers will vary.

2. Which agency regulates exotic animals in your state?
Answers will vary.

3. List at least two for each:
 - a. Legal exotic animals without a permit:
Answers will vary.

 - b. Legal exotic animals with a permit:
Answers will vary.

 - c. Prohibited exotic animals:
Answers will vary.

Choose one legal exotic animal allowed in your state to focus your brochure on.
Answers will vary.

The following information should be included in your brochure, in addition to photos:

- Animal scientific and common names:
Answers will vary.

- Use or purpose (agricultural or not):
Answers will vary.

- Type of diet and what they eat:
Answers will vary.

- Specific housing requirements (fencing, shelter, temperature):
Answers will vary.

Name: _____

- Common diseases:
Answers will vary.
- Safety considerations:
Answers will vary.
- Cost considerations:
Answers will vary.
- What permits are required, if any:
Answers will vary.

Brochure Rubric

Criteria	2 Points (Proficient)	1 Point (Developing)	0 Points (Incomplete)
Animal Science Content	Includes accurate information on diet, housing, health and safety	Includes some information but some is missing or partially inaccurate	Little to no accurate animal science information
Legal and Agricultural Connection	Clearly explains legality in state and agricultural use/purpose	Mentions legality or use but lacks detail or clarity	No mention of legality or agricultural purpose
Research and Detail	Thorough, specific details showing strong research	Basic information with limited detail	Minimal effort or missing key information
Organization and Clarity	Well-organized, easy to read, clearly labeled sections	Some organization but may be unclear or cluttered	Disorganized or difficult to understand
Visual Design and Effort	Visually appealing with images/graphics that support content	Some visuals included but limited effort	No visuals or very little effort