



National FFA SAE Award Program

Q&A

This document provides general answers regarding the changes to the former Agricultural Proficiency Award Program.

Question: Why did National FFA change the Agricultural Proficiency Award Program?

Answer: The change in the name of the Agricultural Proficiency Award Program is a direct reflection of the program's purpose. Since its inception, the Agricultural Proficiency Award Program has been designed to recognize outstanding SAEs. Over time, the program has expanded from production agriculture to other agricultural careers. In recent years, the Agricultural Proficiency Award Program added research and service-learning SAE award areas.

The National FFA Organization is excited to share a new SAE Award program that recognizes the five types of SAEs found in [SAE for All](#). Historically, the National Organization has offered only placement/internship, entrepreneurship/ownership, and research SAE award types. The expanded program will continue to recognize these three SAE types plus two more, service-learning and school-based enterprises. FFA members are evolving and stepping up to the challenge of thinking critically and looking for career opportunities, National FFA is offering more award areas to benefit everyone.

Question: What are the five SAE types that will be recognized?

Answer: Entrepreneurship, Placement, Research, School-Based Enterprise, and Service-Learning.

Question: How many students will be recognized?

Answer: Up to 101 national winners and 606 national finalists will be recognized, more than ever before. The 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program Areas and Description document is available on the [Awards and Recognition Program Updates page](#).

Question: How can students with a one-year research project be recognized?

Answer: Students with a one-year research project should consider competing in the Agriscience Fair.

Question: How many years of SAE records are required to qualify for a National FFA SAE Award?

Answer: National-level applications must include SAE records (hours, paid/unpaid or finances) from at least two calendar years, including records from the year prior to applying for the specific SAE project(s) on which the application is based.

Question: Can a team of students apply to the National FFA SAE Award Program?

Answer: Only individuals may apply for National FFA SAE Awards. Students involved in cooperative or partnership SAEs should separate their personal share of the SAE. Research,



School-Based Enterprise, and Service-Learning SAE applications include information about who and how the student collaborated with others.

Question: Can a student who has multiple SAE projects of different SAE types combine all of the projects into a single award area?

Answer: No. The award areas are for only a single SAE type. For example, an applicant who both works at a dairy and owns their own dairy cattle has two projects of different SAE types. The applicant will include only the placement project information for the Dairy Cattle - Placement SAE Award and only the entrepreneurship project information for the Dairy Cattle - Entrepreneurship SAE Award.

Question: Can members include SAE records from SAE projects conducted prior to Aug 1 of their 7th grade year?

Answer: No. Only records starting on or after Aug 1 of a member's 7th-grade year or the year they joined FFA, whichever is the later may be included in SAE Award applications.

Question: I graduated from high school in May 2026, can I apply for an SAE Award in 2027?

Answer: Yes, Members may compete for SAE Awards up to the second National FFA Convention after high school graduation using SAE records through Dec 31 of the year of graduation.

Question: In 2026 I won my state proficiency award in Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement and was a national finalist. Can I apply for Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship in 2027?

Answer: Yes. All previous state and national winners of the Agriscience Fair and Agricultural Proficiency Award Programs, who are still eligible in all other respects, may compete in any SAE Award area for which their SAE project qualifies them in 2027 regardless of having previously competed in an Agricultural Proficiency Award area at the national level.

Question: How many national finalists will be named?

Answer: Up to 6 finalists in each SAE Award area will be recognized on the Main Stage during the National FFA Convention.

Question: Will there be 6 national finalists in all 101 National FFA SAE Award Program Areas?

Answer: Up to 6 national finalists will be named for each of the 101 National FFA SAE Award areas. Less than 6 national finalists will be named in any award area if judges and FFA staff determine that fewer than 6 applications have received sufficient points to be recognized as national finalists.

Question: If I won my state SAE award in Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship in 2027 and was a top 6 national finalist, can I apply for Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship in 2028?

Answer: No. Members ranked as a top 6 national finalists are not eligible to apply in the same National FFA SAE Award area in future years.

Question: If I won my state SAE award in Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship in 2027 and was NOT a top 6 national finalist, can I apply for Sheep Production – Entrepreneurship in 2028?



Answer: Yes. Only students identified as national finalists are not eligible in the same National FFA SAE Award area in future years.

Question: Where can I find sample rubrics for the 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program?

Answer: Draft rubrics for each SAE type are available on the [Awards and Recognition Program Updates page](#). The Entrepreneurship, Placement, and Research SAE type rubrics will be almost unchanged from the current rubrics.

Question: What will the applications for the 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program include?

Answer: The Entrepreneurship, Placement and Research SAE type applications will be almost identical to current applications. The applications for Service-Learning and School-Based Enterprise type projects will be very similar with adaptations for each SAE types. Draft applications are available on the [Awards and Recognition Program Updates page](#).

Question: What areas will be recognized in the 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program?

Answer: The 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program Areas and Description document is available on the [Awards and Recognition Program Updates page](#).

Question: When will the online application be available for the 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program?

Answer: In August 2026, sample applications and rubrics will be available for the 2027 National FFA SAE Award Program.

Question: Does our state have to follow the rules of the National FFA SAE Award program to select our state winners?

Answer: The National FFA does not mandate that states follow the same award or event structure. States can choose the events and awards that best represent their students.