



VATAT

News

A Texas Team Ag Ed Publication | Volume V, Issue VI

Points to Ponder

Charles Prause, Bosqueville

Stock show season is upon us! The Fort Worth Stock Show has had another successful year. Everyone is preparing for San Antonio Livestock Show, Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo and Stars of Texas in Austin and of course county shows. I would like to wish everyone the best of luck and most important, be safe in your travels.

The VATAT officer team, Mr. McClure and I attended the Texas FFA Association second quarter board meeting on January 6th. During the meeting we had great discussion and approved changes to Supervised Agricultural Experience Program. The recommendations that brought about these changes came from the SAE adhoc committee that was established during the first quarter meeting in September. During the first meeting the committee discussed the definition of SAE, types of SAEs and new standards and procedures in recording unpaid hours for FFA awards; due to the new standards adopted by delegates at the 2013 State FFA Convention. After a lengthy telephone conference and a second face to face meeting the committee respectfully submitted several proposals to the Texas FFA board of directors.

SAE, or experiential learning, is an essential component of the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) program and relates to all courses in agricultural education or the student's designated educational pathway. An SAE is comprised of three essential elements:

- 1) Planned series of activities that account for time beyond normally scheduled class.
- 2) A documented project where resources are invested (time or time and money) related to AFNR curriculum.
- 3) Supervised by a teacher and graded (evaluated) as part of their course(s)/ FFA.

Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) provides experiential learning activities that connect school-based learning to real-world situations and enhance career development. Types of SAEs include: Exploratory, Improvement or Supplemental, Research, Placement (paid or unpaid) and Entrepreneurship.

SAEs relating to Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) Pathways include the following: Agribusiness Systems, Animal Systems, Biotechnology Systems, Environmental Service Systems, Food Products and Processing Systems, Natural Resource Systems, Plant Systems and Power and Structural and Technical Systems. Examples of each of these pathways can be found on the AET and Educational Excellence Resource Center websites. A document was adopted for recording unpaid hours for FFA awards. This document provides teachers guidance to work with students to successfully record unpaid hours, which are focused on documented SAEs. The committee recommended and the board adopted developing a new web-based Texas Lone Star Application that incorporates the new requirements as well as aligns the



newly developed American FFA Degree application. This process will connect student records and export them directly into a web-based application versus exporting in to MS Excel. Developing a 2014 online application process will also provide Texas teachers an opportunity to prepare for upcoming national and proficiency awards. This also will support many Texas programs that have adopted new technologies of Chrome Books and other PCs that do not include Microsoft Excel.

Developing a 2014 online application process will also provide Texas teachers an opportunity to prepare

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Points to Ponder

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for upcoming national and proficiency awards. This also will support many Texas programs that have adopted new technologies of Chrome Books and other PCs that do not include Microsoft Excel.

How do we prepare our teachers for these new changes? For many of you these changes will have no effect on what your students are already doing in their record keeping systems. For others it will be a learning experience. There will be opportunities between now and district degree checks to view professional development provided by AET through video clips. Other areas to review updates will be the Educational Excellence Resource Center website (<http://educationalexcellence.tamu.edu>), Texas FFA website and Agricultural Experience Tracker website. Professional Development will also be provided at the VATAT Professional Development Conference in Abilene in July. We are fortunate to have many ag teachers who are experienced with the AET record keeping system and would be helpful to those who have questions. These changes will go into effect immediately and will apply to 2014 award applications.

Many of us are reluctant to change. I have no doubt that these changes will help many of your students who do not have the traditional SAE project. Our student population is becoming so diverse and the changes that have been adopted will benefit all FFA members throughout the state of Texas. So, I ask you, are you reluctant to change? See you down the road!

**VATAT
SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATIONS
DUE
APRIL 1st
FOR MORE INFO VISIT
VATAT.ORG**

 

Managing Expectations

Barney McClure, VATAT Executive Director

I have often stated that teaching agriculture today is one of the most challenging jobs in Texas. What factors make it that way? I believe one of the issues is that we have many stakeholders that, depending on their point of contact, have very different expectations for high school agriculture programs. Successful teachers learn how to manage these different expectations.

Our students expect to enjoy our classes as they learn the curriculum. Few take our classes for the pure joy of learning. While I don't believe kids need to be entertained constantly, if students and teachers aren't having fun, programs can become pretty stale.

Parents of our students expect that the teacher should put their child in position to win a scholarship, achieve success in the show ring, be on a winning team or simply assist the child in becoming a successful young person. School administrators expect the teacher to maintain classroom order, teach the curriculum, follow all school policies and procedures, motivate student to achieve great things and manage the program with as few problems as possible.

Finally, we all have expectations for ourselves and our programs. Everyone wants to think of themselves as successful. Every good teacher has professional pride in what they do. Don't forget that our families sacrifice and give up personal time for the sake of our careers. Their needs should also be considered.

The happiest and most successful teachers I know have learned to manage these different expectations. I believe learning to prioritize our time is the key to all this. Knowing which to focus on is sometimes the problem. This semester, give some thought to this process and you may find it is time well spent.



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Texas FFA Update

2013-2014 Texas FFA Second Quarter Board Meeting

Tom Maynard, Texas FFA Executive Director

The Texas FFA Association Board of Directors met in Austin on Monday for their second quarter board meeting and addressed the following actions and discussion items:

- In accordance with the Texas FFA Scholarship Policy, the board approved allocation of state scholarship qualifiers. The number of qualifiers per area will remain at 25 for 2014.

- The board considered and discussed a proposal to overhaul the officer selection process. The proposed process would be a rigorous audition, requiring candidates to apply competencies and skills similar to what is needed to successfully serve as a state FFA officer. An apt comparison might be an NFL scouting combine, during which players are evaluated on skills and talents needed to succeed at that level of play. The proposed process, including area selection of student officer representatives, would occur, in its entirety at the state FFA convention. No action was taken, but the proposal will be further researched, developed and presented again at the third quarter meeting in March. After further study, the proposal will be posted for public comment prior to the meeting in March.

- The board adopted recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Supervised Agricultural Experience Documentation. The committee recommendations are intended to better reflect the SAE instructional piece as it functions today in the agricultural education model. The recommendations will also purify the SAE identity by removing from the documentation process, items that are not SAE-related. The new documentation guidelines are to be posted on the TEA Educational Excellence website.

- The board received an update regarding issues and recent issue resolutions with the National FFA Organization's Agriculture Career Network, a comprehensive portal system through which all members, chapters and state associations interface with the national organization.

- The board received student officer and operational updates from the FFA, Foundation, Texas Education Agency and VATAT.

- The board approved the current audit report and IRS-990 presented by independent auditor Don Steinle.

- The board approved a policy amendment to Texas FFA Policy Handbook Section 18 related to national convention delegates. With the amendments, the policy now precludes members who are competing in career development

events, agri-science fair or competitions of similar time commitment from serving as national delegates. This policy change will allow students to focus their energies on achieving excellence in one thing at the national level, rather attempting to distribute time and effort between two very time-consuming activities.

- The board approved a student officer proposal to create and implement a leadership conference program that will constitute a second step in the association's leadership development continuum. The leadership development continuum is a four-step process with progressive levels of leadership skills. The ultimate goal is to create a system through which members have the opportunity to develop specific competencies through a series of student – officer-delivered conferences which will supplement and complement local leadership development.

- The board received a data report relating to geographic membership distribution patterns and appointed a task force to further study the needs of the association related to area alignment. Any formal re-alignment process would not be initiated until the first quarter meeting of 2014-15.

- The board received a report and update related to a legal opinion regarding intellectual property related to scripted competitive events and directed staff to continue study and to encourage further deliberation of the matter with the Leadership Career Development Event Advisory Committee.

- The board reviewed possible policy and procedure language that would give the association and event providers clearer guidance related to inclement weather and lightning for outdoor events.

Minutes from the Board of Directors meeting are posted at TexasFFA.org.





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Texas FFA Foundation Update

Are We Going to Get Eaten?

Aaron Alejandro, Texas FFA Foundation Executive Director

A young man wanted to buy his mom the perfect Mother's Day gift. After much shopping and deliberation, he walked by a pet store and found "the perfect gift." It was an African Grey Parrot (regarded as one of the most intelligent birds in the world with an incredible vocabulary and range). This parrot had a 200 word vocabulary and he thought this would be perfect helping keep his mom entertained and with an ongoing conversation. The price tag was a little much - \$5,000 - but worth it. He bought the bird and shipped it to her for Mother's Day. A couple of weeks later he called to check up on her and the bird.

He calls his mom and ask, "Did you get the Mother's Day gift I sent?" "Yes son, thank you so much!" she said. "Well did you like it?" he inquired. "It was delicious!" she said. "WHAT?!" Mom, you ate it? That was an African Grey Parrot with a 200 word vocabulary and you ate it?!" he exclaimed. "Yes," she calmly replied. "I didn't know he could talk. He should have spoke up." Wow. Could this happen to us, to agricultural education, the Texas FFA because we do not speak up and tell the incredible stories of agriculture and the Texas FFA?

If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear does it make a noise? We would assume so, but no one is there to detail the sounds it made. For far too long, agricultural education and the Texas FFA program are making incredible noise - noise in the terms of students on scholarship, students with sustainable careers, students who serve their country, serve on ranches/farms, in classrooms in business and industry. But do all Texans really know the impact? Have we adequately told the story?

In addition to the impact of the Texas FFA on the Lone Star State, I also contend students enrolled in agricultural science education also have a story to tell. Texas is blessed with three vital, and renewable, resources: agriculture, youth and leadership. We can be proud the Texas FFA is a part of public education by public law and that our students are learning about agricultural science and obtaining leadership skills which serve Texas communities today while empowering them for a bright future. Our story is a great one, but if not told - did it happen?

Are we Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture? Are you proud of Texas agriculture? As a member of FFA, your answer is probably YES! However, there are those who do not share your enthusiasm or may just not know how agriculture

impacts their lives. Learn more about Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture at www.texasproudoftexasag.org. Texas, and American farm and ranch families—as well as modern agriculture—feed the world. Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture is a program to help inform consumers and policy makers to understand the importance of agriculture and its impact on Texans, Americans, and the world.

Our goal is to communicate with a public that has not heard enough from farmers, ranchers, FFA and 4-H members. The answer—whether you live in town or country—is to tell the credible, proven and honorable story of Texas agriculture, and that's what Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture is all about! The Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture initiative is focused on telling the story of agriculture: What it's like to grow up on a farm or ranch, the joys of raising show animals, learning practical agriculture in the classroom and putting those practices to work on the farms, ranches and agricultural laboratories of Texas. These stories will win the argument against those who do not share your pride in Texas agriculture. Valuable resources are provided to you on this page to help promote agriculture's cause. Here are some of the helpful tips for effectively telling your story.

We have an incredible story to tell. Let's not get "eaten" by in the press, public policy or corporate board rooms because we do not tell the story of the positive difference agriculture, agricultural education and the Texas FFA makes in Texas. Thank you for your support and all you do in this mission.

On A Personal Note:

I'd like to send out a special "thank you" to all the spouses of agriculture teachers and the spouses of the Executive Directors of Texas Team Ag Ed. Being an educator is about passion to empower young people with knowledge and skills for personal and professional growth. To do this job right, requires effort, commitment and time away from home. While it may not always be understood - it is appreciated. I'll say a special "thank you" and "I love you" to my wife - Rebecca. My job requires me to travel and be away from home on occasion. She provides the "glue" to hold things together in my absence. To her and all the other spouses, "Happy Valentine's Day" and "thank you" for the support to help make dreams come true.

AGVOCATE

Texas Proud of Texas Agriculture



What message do I share?

Texas Leadership - Texas agriculture leads America to food security with a safe, affordable and sustainable food supply.

Trust - We trust our farmers and ranchers to take care of the land, preserving and improving this priceless resource for future generations.

Sustainability - Texas farm and ranch families feed the American people and provide jobs for many of them.

How will I say it?

- Call local reporters about your events and suggest stories to them.
- Letters to the Editor are a great way to promote agriculture's cause! They are well read, so editors love them!
- Social media sites, like Facebook and Twitter, can be used to start a conversation. Teachers encourage your students to participate via Facebook at [TexasProudofTexasAg](https://www.facebook.com/TexasProudofTexasAg)



February is iCEV Judging Month!

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- \$10 Carnival Pack** (\$30.50 Value)
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- \$20 Discount Food Card** (\$30 Value)
Enjoy \$30 worth of midway refreshments for only \$20! Valid only at RCS midway food and beverage stands. Not valid at food and beverage stands operated by ARAMARK or HLSR commercial exhibitors. Not valid with any other promotions.
- WCBBQ Admission Ticket** (Valid Feb 27 - Mar 1, 2014)
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Adult (Age 13 & over) | \$15 |
| Child (Age 3-12) (2 & under free) | \$5 |
- Reliant Park Admission** (Valid Mar 4 - Mar 23, 2014)
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Adult (Age 13 & over) | \$10 |
| Child (Age 3-12) (2 & under free) | \$5 |
- Season Pass** (Valid Feb 27-Mar 1 & Mar 4 - Mar 23, 2014) **\$25**

Half-Price Carnival Packs may be used during the WCBBQ (Feb 27 - Mar 1, 2014) or the Show (Mar 4 - Mar 23, 2014). Rides and games require multiple tickets. To enter the carnival during the WCBBQ, you must have a Reliant Park Admission Ticket or a Season Pass. To enter the carnival during the Show, you must have a Reliant Park Admission Ticket, Season Pass or Rodeo/Concert ticket for that day. Admission Tickets and Season Passes are not valid for Reliant Stadium or Rodeo Uncorked! events.

WAYS TO BUY TICKETS OVER THE WEB:

- Buy online with credit card at www.hlsr.com
Select "Tickets" icon at the top of the page
Click "Half Price Carnival Packs"
Click "Buy Now"
Select Sales Person: Soule, James Pat
- Select direct link:
<https://secure.rodeohouston.com/carnivaltickets/?salescode=1076585>

Mail Orders must be postmarked by **Wed. Feb 19, 2014**
Internet, Phone & Fax Orders accepted through **Fri. Feb 28, 2014**
Allow 7-10 business days for processing

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\$10 Carnival Pack	_____	@ \$10 each = \$
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WCBBQ Admission Ticket (Valid Feb 27 - Mar 1, 2014)

Adult (Ages 13+)	_____	@ \$15 each = \$
Child (Ages 3-12)	_____	@ \$5 each = \$

Reliant Park Admission (Valid Mar 4 - Mar 23, 2014)

Adult (Ages 13+)	_____	@ \$10 each = \$
Child (Ages 3-12)	_____	@ \$5 each = \$

Season Pass (Valid Feb 27-Mar 1 & Mar 4 - Mar 23, 2014) _____ @ \$25 each = \$

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Attn: Carnival Ticket Sales Committee

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Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, fax (832) 667-1064

For more information, please contact HLSR volunteer:
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Texas FFA Alumni Update

Happy New Year from the Texas FFA Alumni Association

Kelly White, Texas FFA Alumni President

Each year, FFA members from all over the United States travel to Washington, D.C. to attend the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC).

During the five-day event, attendees learn how to become effective leaders by teaching them to know their purpose, value people, take action and serve others. This is no ordinary leadership experience. You will spend a week putting these skills into practice as you make new friends from across the United States, tour our nation's capitol and visit with members of Congress.

This action-packed week will help you gain self-confidence and leadership skills to take back to your FFA chapter and share with other members. They leave the Washington Leadership Conference with the knowledge and the confidence to act in ways that help their schools, community, and their country.

The Texas FFA Alumni has traditionally granted four (4) \$500.00 scholarships to deserving FFA members whose local affiliate are in good standing with the Texas FFA Alumni. We are currently awaiting word from the National FFA more scholarship information.

Applications are online at www.texasffaalumni.ffa.org under Applications. More info about the Washington Leadership Conference can be found at www.ffa.org.

Don't forget State and National FFA Alumni dues are due by February 15, 2014 to be considered for the Washington Leadership Conference scholarship.

Roster information can be found online at the National FFA Alumni website. They have updated their website with some AgCN resources for your use and to which you can start <https://www.ffa.org/GetInvolved/Alumni/Pages/MembershipRosters.aspx>

Eligibility and Deadlines 2014 Scholarship:

- Only one FFA member per chapter can submit an application for the Washington Leadership Conference scholarship.
- Recipients must attend a Washington Leadership Conference workshop for the year the scholarship is awarded.

- The Washington Leadership Conference scholarship will cover at least \$500.00 of the registration fee for an FFA member to attend the WLC conference. Travel to and from the Washington Leadership Conference conference site and incidental expenses are the recipient's responsibility.
- Applications are to be postmarked by February 15 of each year. The Washington Leadership Conference scholarship recipients will be announced by March 1st and winners notified by March 15th.
- Each Washington Leadership Conference scholarship recipient is expected to attend the Texas FFA Alumni Association's annual meeting in July. (The FFA Alumni Association Annual Meeting is held in conjunction with the State FFA Convention).



Washington Leadership Conference

Scholarship deadline is
February 15th

Go to www.texasffaalumni.ffa.org or
contact Kelly White at kbwhite63@gmail.com
for more information.



Texas Young Farmer Update

Notes From the Executive Secretary

Don Beene, Texas Young Farmers Executive Secretary

I really hesitate to write this, as I will most likely leave someone out of the article that should be mentioned. In December, Texas Young Farmers hosted the 47th National Institute. Last month I recognized all of those who sponsored the event; we are so thankful for their support. We are also thankful for those that come to our assistance every year and provide the welcome bags and bag contents; River Star Farms, Seitz, LaQuinta, Ag Workers Insurance and M & M of Waco. Tommy and Clovia Ketchum also contacted several firms and individuals to donate items for the welcome bags. I will include these names in next month's newsletter, as I am running late on this one and I am unable to contact Tommy as I write this. He and Clovia may still be resting up as they devoted many hours and finances to make the 47th Institute a success.

This year we picked up another assistant as we, I should say Sandra Choate, met Wendy Stiles of Kiolbassa Sausage. While Sandra was visiting with Sandy she was telling her about the Young Farmer Institute in San Antonio. Kiolbassa Sausage is based in San Antonio, so two weeks prior to the event they decided to take a part in the Institute. That is how we came up with the sausage wraps. As each person loaded the buses on Wednesday morning to go to the King Ranch they were handed two hot and delicious Kiolbassa Sausage Wraps. We greatly appreciate Wendy's assistance.

I also need to thank the Lampasas and Gonzales Young Farmers and FFA chapters for the horseshoe cowboys that we used as center pieces at the banquet Saturday night; they were eventually given away at the banquet. Gilmer FFA provided us with the horseshoes cactus decorations which

were sold in the auction. All proceeds went towards the scholarship; each item sold for around \$250.00. While I am at this I need to recognize Janet Bulger and Sharon Beene for the table decorations that were featured at each of the meal functions.

As I mentioned in the beginning when you start giving recognition you always leave someone out, but I will devote some space in our next newsletter to recognize those. Steve Forsythe and Terry Hausenfluck, one retired and one still teaching, agriculture science instructors were instrumental in making this Institute a success. Because of the inclement weather on Saturday morning two of our panel members were unable to attend, thankfully Doc Forsythe stepped up and served on the panel. Also thanks to Barbara Bonner from Lone Star Ag Credit, for taking the place of the other panel member who was unable to make it.

Thank you to Doak Stewart of James Madison High School, for hosting a tour of their facility and also for having students participate in the Agriculture Communication event on Saturday morning. I also need to mention Matheson, The Gas Professionals and Farm Credit Bank of Texas as they are always there as a sponsor year after year. Farm Credit Bank of Texas also include; AgriLand Farm Credit Services, Weslaco; AgTexas FCS, Lubbock; Capital Farm Credit, ACA, Bryan; Central Texas Farm Credit, Coleman; Great Plains Ag Credit, ACA, Amarillo; Heritage Land Bank, ACA, Tyler; Legacy Ag Credit, ACA, Sulphur Springs; Lone Star Land Bank, ACA, Fort Worth; Texas AgFinance, FLCA, Robstown; Texas Land Bank, FLCA, Waco; Farm Credit, Austin.



MATHESON

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Meet Your Texas Young Farmer 2014 President Elect

Kenneth Brown, Texas Young Farmers President Elect

I'll start this out by introducing myself and letting you get to know me a little better. My name is Kenneth Brown and I am the President Elect for the 2014 year.

I started with the Teague chapter in Area VIII about 5 years ago. My daughter was a Freshman at Teague High and I attended an informational meeting for incoming FFA members. While there the Teague Young Farmer President spoke to us and told us about the program. This looked like a good thing so I figured I'd give it a shot. After just the first few meetings I fell in love with the organization. I saw the good that the group was doing and wanted to be more and more involved. As time went on I was elected President of the Teague chapter two years in a row and I am still a member even though I no longer have a child in the agriculture program.

Knowing that there was more to Young Farmers than just Teague I looked at the state association. Low and behold there was an opening for Area VIII Vice President and knowing what I already did about this great organization I went for it. I have to say it was an eye opener. As you know Texas hosted the NYFEA Institute in San Antonio. It was at the Institute that I was appointed President Elect. I played a very small role in the planning and instituting of that program but was present for many of the discussions. If you see a member who was part of this make sure to tell them "thank you" as they put in massive amounts of time and personal money to make it all work smoothly. These men and women amazed me at the level at which they operated.

During the Institute my wife and I met many people from all across the country. I saw how different Young Farmers programs are carried out in the different states. A common question asked of us was "what type of farming do you do?" That one was a little hard. I come from an agricultural background with my ancestors being farmers and ranchers however I'm a generation removed from that lifestyle. Raised in a rural area but living in town I had opportunity (not really fond of it but it was the appropriate word) to haul hay, cut firewood and work in a fruit orchard for "spending money" as a youth. Fast forward to early adulthood. I'm in my early twenties living in an even smaller rural community and my wife just loves horses so therefore by default I must love horses too. So we purchase a nice horse for her and a small pony for our daughter. Next thing you know I have several horses and I'm buying land. The daughter grows so she is involved in 4H (and later FFA) where she shows goats, rabbits, chickens and participates in many different activities. That kid is now grown and at college however we have a 12 and 5 year old also. We still dabble

in the goats as we both really like them. We have a very large garden that we grow year round which makes for great fresh food. As our kids interests change, so does the type of farming we do. Imagine telling this to a man that has a 475 horsepower combine with GPS, A/C, and a Sirius radio who farms 75000 acres....

Thinking this would be a good place to wrap this all up. However, I'll add a few more thoughts. Our primary income is non-farm related however if you've been to a "Quality Counts" meeting you know we are all involved in agriculture in some fashion. No matter how small a role you may play you have a place and purpose in your local Young Farmer chapter. I can assure you that if your chapter wants to try to do something, some chapter somewhere else has probably tried it. I would encourage our chapters to speak out to each other and share ideas. Years ago this was called the "good ol' boy system" however today we correctly refer to it as "networking". Networking is one of the most productive uses of time and resources that we can use. I highly encourage you to use each other, your areas board, and your state Directors to benefit your local chapter. With that being said I say good bye and good luck.

Are you looking for a program?

Contact Mr. Mischa Popoff

Greenville, Texas
903-456-1368

Mr. Popoff attended the National Institute as an exhibitor and has many interesting areas you may be interested in. He is a former USDA contract organic inspector, policy advisor for The Heartland Institute, research associate for The Frontier Centre for Public Policy and author of *Is it Organic?* For consulting and expert testimony visit polyphase.us. For public speaking engagements contact the National Speakers Bureau.





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TEXAS TEAM AG ED EVENTS

February 2014

1st Texas FFA Payment
Deadline for ALL Fees

6th San Antonio Livestock
Show and Rodeo Begins

15th National FFA Scholarship
Deadline

15th- 22nd National FFA Week

25th Day at the Capitol

March 2014

1st Best of Texas Applications
Due

1st Spring FFA Membership
Submission Deadline

6th Star of Texas Fair and
Rodeo Begins

4th Houston Livestock Show
and Rodeo Begins

24th Texas FFA Board of
Directors Meeting, Austin

April 2014

1st VATAT Scholarship
Applications Due

15th State FFA Chorus
Applications Due

15th Foundation Ambassador
Applications Due

15th Convention Chronicle
Applications Due

23rd- 26th State CDEs

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Teachers Association
of Texas

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