

The Michigan FFA Creed

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Issue 3 Volume 7

I believe in...

Throughout your life
to be your confidant
to be your confidant
to be your confidant

The Michigan FFA Creed



Issue 3 Volume 7

The State FFA Office
108 Natural Resources
East Lansing, MI 48824
www.michiganffa.com
association@michiganffa.com
(517) 353-9221
(517) 432-5632 (fax)

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Creed Staff

Managing Editor Dustin Petty
Staff Editor Kaitlyn Hard
Writers Dustin Baker
Jillian Holdwick
Marie Hruby
Andrea Kerbuski
Alyn Kiel
Dustin Petty
Andrew Walker
Advising Editor Michelle Sidel

State Officers

President Dustin Baker
Vice President Andrea Bommarito
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Sentinel Clint Steketee
Region I State VP Aaron Balowski
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Region IV State VP Elizabeth Krhovsky
Region V State VP Marie Hruby
Region VI State VP Maria James



Are We Protected? I believe in...

...never outgrowing the FFA experience.

Throughout your time in FFA, you will have countless memories, some good and some not so good. Whether it is competing in your favorite contest, going to state and national convention, attending leadership conferences or simply just attending your chapter meetings, FFA opens many doors of opportunity that otherwise would not be available to us.

Let's face it: what other organizations give away two million dollars in scholarship per year and allow members to earn over four billion dollars in their SAEs per year? I don't know any other than the FFA.

Throughout all of your FFA experiences, friends are made, memories are gained and many lessons are learned. These lessons may be as simple as not procrastinating or delegating work to learning that the people that love you the most are always going to be there through the thick and thin, no matter what happens. Your friends and family are never going to stop

believing in you. Throughout your life they will continue to be your confidants and help you achieve your goals. As an FFA member you are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to meet amazing people throughout the nation that understand how hard you work to succeed in a certain contest or to obtain that wanted degree. Those friends that you make will not only make you laugh, be your shoulder to cry on but will cheer for you when you achieve that wanted goal.

As you move on in life, remember all of the FFA memories you have had, the friends that you have made along the way and all the goals that you have achieved. Remember the lessons that you have learned along the way no matter how big or small. Don't forget to thank all of those who may have stood by your side through leadership and skills contests, speeches, degree ceremonies and banquets. Last but not least remember that even if you grow out of your jacket you will never outgrow the experience!

Dates to Remember...

January

7-10	Regional Degree Scorings
26	Applications due to State FFA Office
29	National Chapter Scoring

February

4-5	District leadership contests
12	Regional level state FFA officer interviews
18-19	Regional leadership contests
20	State Convention registrations due
20-22	State level state FFA officer interviews

Are We Protected?

By: **Dustin Baker**
MSU Pre-Vet Major



September 11, 2001.

Just the mere mention of that date brings haunting memories to all Americans. It was the day that the unthinkable happened. We were savagely attacked on our own soil. How could this happen? Do you remember where you were when you heard the news?

I remember I was in the sixth grade and my teachers spent the day trying to assure us that we were safe, nothing like this could ever happen in the middle of Michigan. These attacks would only happen in the big cities, not in the country, not in the agricultural heartland.

Or, could it.....?

In his retiring address, Tommy Thompson, the U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services stated, "I, for the life of me, cannot understand why someone has not attacked our food supply, because it is so easy to do."

With that in mind, then just how real is the threat of agroterrorism in America today?

In order to fully understand the sheer magnitude of destruction and its ensuing consequences, let's begin by defining agroterrorism.

According to the USDA, agroterrorism is defined as the malicious use, threat, or intimidation using plant or animal pathogens to cause devastating disease in the agricultural sector. These attacks would most likely be conducted through the use of bio terrorism.

The Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002 created an official list of pathogens. There are 23 animal diseases listed by APHIS as posing as emerging health risks through terrorism. The list includes brucellosis, anthrax,

foot and mouth disease, and the newest emerging threat, Rift Valley fever. There are seven plant diseases that pose a great threat of being utilized in a terrorist attack. These viruses, bacteria and fungi include brown stripe downy mildew of corn, bacterial leaf streak of rice and bacterial wilt of potatoes.

Agriculture poses unique incentives as a target for terrorism.

First, farms are geographically dispersed in unsecured environments. Livestock are frequently concentrated in confined locations, such as open-air pens with thousands of cattle or barns with hundreds of thousands of poultry. Second, the number of lethal and contagious biological agents is greater for plants and animals than for humans. These agents are generally environmentally resilient, endemic in foreign countries, and not harmful to humans. Third, animals, grain, and processed foods are routinely transported and commingled in the production and processing system. Fourth, international trade in livestock and grains is also often tied to disease-free status. Finally, and perhaps the most frightening reason for an attack, is that past success of keeping many diseases out of the U.S. means that many veterinarians and scientists lack direct experience with foreign diseases, which would delay diagnoses and response time.

Historically, there have been at least five acts of agroterrorism in the United States and 17 worldwide. The earliest was in 1915 by Dr. Anton Dilger, a German-American physician, who worked in the United States for Germany. He harvested cultures of anthrax and glanders with the intention of biological sabotage to American livestock on behalf of the German government. Other German agents are known to have undertaken similar sabotage efforts during World War I in other countries. Luckily, those efforts were wiped out before they could take place, saving American agriculture

untold millions of dollars in losses.

In California, a radical group released Mediterranean fruit flies on more than 250 varieties of fruits, nuts and vegetables. The impact was substantial and put billions of dollars worth of crops at stake. More recently, the intentional contamination of 10 restaurant salad bars in Oregon in 1984 by the Rajneeshee cult using Salmonella cultures resulted in the hospitalization of 751 people. To this day, the total direct cost of this attack is unknown.

In each of these examples, the immediate cost, whether it is loss of livestock or crop yields, is only the beginning. It is agroterrorism's potential of causing crippling ripple effects that makes it so devastating. When you add health care, income loss, quarantines, eradication, and higher food prices, the total cost to human health and well-being is nearly impossible to calculate but most certainly astronomical!

Leaders in government have passed legislation aimed at helping protect American agriculture. Since 1999, Congress has held five hearings devoted entirely to agroterrorism or agricultural biosecurity. These hearings have led to the passage of several acts and increased financial support. The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act, passed in 2002, expanded the FDA's authority over food manufacturing and imports, tightened control of biological agents, and required the FDA to register all America bound food processing facilities around the world. Since 2002, Agriculture Appropriations Acts have been passed in Washington. In 2007, \$818 million was appropriated.

The USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service has a complex safety-net to help prepare for, prevent and respond to an agroterrorism event. It involves intra-agency cooperation, anti-terrorism training of more than 5,000 agency employees, industry workshops, and random vulnerability checks of the food supply. In addition, the hiring of additional Import Surveillance Liaison Officers will help improve defense of imported food products at ports-of-entry, border entries, and in commerce around the nation.

Agricultural leaders and lawmakers alike agree that agroterrorism is a realistic threat to our nation. America's agriculture is the most efficient in the world. It plays a pivotal role in today's economy by employing more than 22 million people and generating \$1.24 trillion annually. Each and every one of us is affected by agriculture. Today, consumers who describe themselves as confident in the food supply is at a 20 year low of 66 percent.

If we, as producers, do not have the confidence of the consumer, we will no longer be in business. Our agriculture sector needs to work diligently to ensure our livelihood is safe from all threats.

After all, our industry does not want to ever experience its own version of 9-11.



There's a Horse of a Different Color!

By: Alyn Kiel
MSU ANR Communications Major

Splashed with spots of black and white and standing a mere five feet tall, Flash is not your typical superhero.

Yet, he gives legs to those who cannot walk, and voice to those who will not speak. Flash saves lives everyday, but he's no comic-book character.

Flash is a therapy horse.

Equine-assisted activities are a popular form of therapy for individuals with physical, emotional and learning disabilities. Working with therapy horses improves muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, motor development and emotional well-being in individuals with special needs.

Therapeutic riding centers across the country offer riding, driving, vaulting, groundwork, and other activities for students with special needs. Flash is a lesson horse at Tri-State Therapeutic Riding Center, located in Cleveland, Tenn.

Therapy horses are donated, volunteered or leased by horse owners. Horses can be of any breed, depending on the services provided by the riding center, says Glenn and Nancy Schmidt, managers of Tri-State.

"We've used nearly every type of horse breed at our center, from Arabians to Quarter Horses to Thoroughbreds to Paints," says Glenn. "We've even used Trakehners and other warm-blood breeds."

According to the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc. website, different horse breeds offer the builds needed for therapy activities. Horses of all shapes and sizes, from Miniature Horses to Shires to donkeys, are used.

Soundness characteristics are important for therapy horses. Horses must be able to move freely, willingly and evenly at a walk and trot, the horse's two-beat running gait.

"Being sound is especially important in therapy horses because so much of their movement stimulates strength and reactions in the rider," says Glenn.

Good temperament is another essential quality found in therapy horses. Horses must possess good ground manners. According to NARHA, horses are observed for positive attitude, reliability and adaptability before being selected as therapy horses.

According to the Schmidts, therapy horses are often older, usually over ten years of age. By that age, the horse has some experience in the show ring or on the trail and has been exposed to many different situations, says Glenn.

"A program would prefer horses that have been shown and have experiences with lights, sounds and crowds," says Glenn. "Experienced horses have learned to panic in place."

Horses selected for therapy programs undergo a 30 day orientation program. If a horse cannot handle the stresses of the conditioning program, it is sent back to the donor.

Horses are exposed to everything they would encounter during a real therapy session. Trainers stretch on the horses, throw balls in front of them, and even bump them with wheelchairs, says Nancy.

Able-bodied volunteers also position and stiffen their bodies like physically-challenged students and practice mounting the horses.

"Basically, we expose the horses to what will happen when the students are mounting, dismounting and everything in between," says Nancy.

When a student arrives for a riding lesson, the horses are usually saddled and ready. More advanced students may

help with certain aspects of grooming and tacking.

The equipment used on the horse depends on the rider. Saddles may be of the English or Western styles. Western saddles are traditional cowboy-style saddles, while English saddles are distinguished by their smaller size and lack of a horn. Some riders use a bareback pad, a simple pad shaped like a saddle.

Beginning students ride horses in a halter with reins attached. As students advance, they may begin to use a bridle and bit.

“Before they [the students] begin to use a bit, they need to learn to gain control and to steer the horse,” says Nancy.

When the therapy horses are not being used for lessons, they are sometimes ridden by volunteers, says Joan Lange, a volunteer at Tri-State.

“Riding just for fun helps to give the horses a break from training and lessons,” says Lange.

Therapy horses are used for a two to three year period, and then need a break from lessons. A typical break can last from six months to one year. After a break, therapy horses are brought back and given a short refresher training course.

During the break, horses are turned out on pasture to “be horses”, says Glenn.

“The horses just plain get tired of being led and constantly being messed with by students, trainers and volunteers,” says Glenn.

Just as the horses must undergo a test before lessons, riders must also pass an assessment before they begin therapy. Every rider needs a doctor’s statement giving them the “okay to ride”, says Nancy.

Once the lessons have a doctor’s approval, the riding instructors conduct a student assessment. They create a lesson plan with achievement goals, depending on the student’s disability and needs.

A lesson plan is usually over a six-week span, depending on the center. Progress is evaluated every six weeks, and then the instructors draw up a new lesson plan.



Volunteers also play a major role in the therapy sessions. They help to lead horses, walk alongside riders to offer support, and also assist with grooming and tacking horses.

“The volunteers receive just as much benefit from the program [as the students],” says Lange. “We are giving back and we get to see the students grow, basically right in front of us.”

Jennifer Chen has seen the positive effect of riding therapy as a volunteer at Beekman Therapeutic Riding Center in Lansing, Mich.

“It’s amazing to see students arrive in a wheelchair, with straps to hold them in and medical equipment attached, and then sit on a horse with only two people supporting them,” says Chen.

Chen, a sophomore pre-veterinary medicine student at Michigan State University, began volunteering at Beekman in January of this year. She has observed a growing self confidence among the students she works with.

“As they [the students] learn to control the horse, they not only become more assertive, but also increase in their physical capabilities,” says Chen.

The Schmidts echo Chen’s sentiments. Besides strengthening a student’s muscles and increasing flexibility, the horses teach concentration and trust, says Glenn.

“The students respond to the animal, they remember to give commands, and connect the horse’s reaction to the words they [the student] speak,” says Glenn. “Sometimes, the students even learn to trust the horses more than people.”

Do you or someone you know have an impressive SAE? If so, please email pettyd@anr.msu.edu and let us highlight the student!!!

Member



Region I Lance Fritz, Van Buren

With a penchant for leadership and a drive to serve, Van Buren FFA Chapter's Lance Fritz is leading his chapter as this year's treasurer.

The senior has extensive SAE programs, ranging from Fruit Production Placement to Ag Processing Placement and Beef Entrepreneurship.

Fritz has competed at the state level in the Nursery and Landscape Career Development Event and for his hard work, been awarded a silver proficiency in Fruit Production Placement by the Michigan FFA Association.



Region II Mackenzie Price, Waldron

The high school junior, Mackenzie Price of the Waldron FFA Chapter, likes to consider herself a typical kid, involved in almost everything in her small town. Outside of the FFA, she is involved in basketball, volleyball, softball and cheerleading.

Serving as her chapter's reporter, she appreciates all of the opportunities that the FFA has to offer, especially in her SAE of Turf Grass Entrepreneurship and working in her school greenhouse.

During her rare free moment, Price enjoys hanging out with friends and reading anything by Jody Picolt.



Region III Darcy Lipskey, Ubley

The description of "active" is an understatement when it comes to Darcy Lipskey of the Ubley FFA Chapter.

With SAEs including Beef Production and Small Animal Care & Production, Lipskey has served as a role model for other members in her chapter looking to excel in those fields. She has even taken to supplying her chapter with rabbits for market pens as well as for show and breed classes.

Recently, Lipskey was awarded the first ever Sweet Heifer Award, an honor bestowed by the Thumb Jackpot Association and the Michigan Angus Breeder's Association.

Highlights



Region IV Beth Oliver, Byron

Senior Beth Oliver of the Byron FFA Chapter has served as a junior vice president, committee chair and the Region IV Secretary.

In her SAE, she has gained incredible experience while raising, showing and selling registered and crossbred Maine-Anjou and Chianina cattle. All while competing in the Creed Speaking, Demonstration, Prepared Public Speaking, Farm Business Management and Livestock Judging CDEs.

After graduating high school, Oliver wants to attend Michigan State University, majoring in Kinesiology with a minor in Spanish, hoping to have a career in Pediatric Physical Therapy.



Region V Kevin Newell, Montcalm Area CC

Kevin Newell, senior, is a second-year member of the Montcalm Area Career Center FFA Chapter, a newly chartered chapter within the organization.

During his time in the FFA, he has participated in the MSU Crop and Soil Science Department's Crop-O-Rama while planning on competing in the Dairy Cattle and Nursery and Landscape CDEs this April.

Newell's SAE in Dairy Production has helped him decide to attend Michigan State University after graduation, enrolling in the Ag Industries program, hoping to go back to his family farm, continuing it for a third generation.



Region VI Vanessa Oliver, Alcona

Alcona FFA Member Vanessa Oliver has been a busy woman during her time with her chapter.

Currently serving as her chapter president and the Region VI Treasurer, she has actively served in two of her chapter's programs. In PALS, she has helped mentor students that are socially and academically at-risk.

Oliver has been active with Alcona's maple syrup production operation, identifying and tapping sugar maple trees, ending up with delicious maple syrup and candies.

The Rest of the Story...



Kaitlyn Hard
State Reporter

Chapter: Branch Area Career Center

SAE: Agriscience Research & Diversified Livestock Production

College: Michigan State University

Major: Crop and Soil Science freshman

High school activities: volleyball, softball, National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, 4-H, student council, Quincy High School Bowling Team, drama society, Fellowship of Christian Students

Who inspired you to join FFA: "FFA is a family thing for me. My grandpa was in FFA and my dad was a past state officer."

Favorite TV show: M*A*S*H

One word to describe you: bubbly

Favorite FFA activity: national convention

Favorite homemade meal: beef and noodles with mashed potatoes and gravy

Message to the members: "There are so many opportunities for FFA members. Take full advantage of them because you never know when it will help you down the road."



Maria James
Region VI State VP

Chapter: Alcona

SAE: Equine Science & Veterinarian Assistant

College: Michigan State University

Major: Animal Science & Pre-Vet

High school activities: basketball, softball, National Honor Society, 4-H, student council

Favorite sport: basketball

Favorite personal hobby: riding horses

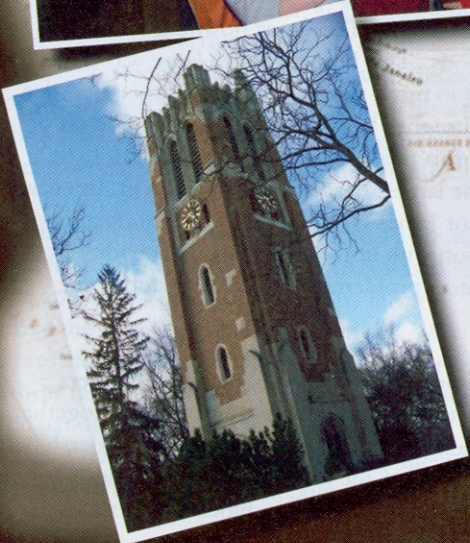
Favorite FFA activity: making maple syrup

Who do you look to for strength: parents and Ag teacher

Personal goal for the future: become a doctor of veterinarian medicine

Favorite quote: "Take life with an unbridled passion, living in the present. Appreciate your surroundings and make the best of it - you only get one chance." - Anonymous

YOUR JOURNEY STARTS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY!



Get where you're going with one of the two new majors from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources CARRS (Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies) Department!

In the Fall of 2008, two new majors will be revealed within the CARRS Department: Environmental Studies and Agriscience & Park Recreation and Tourism Resources.

In the Environmental Studies and Agriscience major, options will include: Communication, Community Engagement and Education, Science and Policy, as well as Agriscience and Natural Resources Teacher Education.

In the Park Recreation and Tourism Resources major, options will include: Community Engagement and Education, Commercial Recreation and Tourism, Community Recreation and Zoo and Aquarium Sciences.

For more information please contact: Dr. Randy Showerman (showerma@msu.edu), Dr. David Krueger (kruege20@msu.edu) or Dr. Jen0 Rivera (jeno@msu.edu).

The Agricultural Depression



By: Andrew Walker
MSU College of James Madison

When the Future Farmers of America was still creating an identity in the early 1930s, an epidemic was creeping into American society that would haunt Americans for most of the decade. The Great Depression was one thing that affected all Americans, no matter what class or profession, but it hit the agricultural community with immense force. Farmers were victims of their overproduction, which led to low food prices. This took away the ability for many farmers to be able to pay for their homes and taxes. The banks, with support of local authorities, were able to take many farms and properties from the farmers, because of their inability to pay for things. The conditions that farmers had to suffer through caused them to band together in rural forms of unions. However, it was the action taken by the government that truly helped farmers bump along during the depression. The Agricultural Adjustment Act was at the forefront of the legislation helping to aid farmers. This key piece of policy was vital in keeping the agricultural industry alive in the United States. Although public policy did not fully pull farmers out of the suffering from the Great Depression, it surely helped them manage through some of the hard times.

The force of the Dust Bowl was a major contributor in the downturn of crop production for farmers on the Great Plains. The area had been suffering from harsh conditions of drought, so when farmers loosened the soil, they increased the probability of erosion. Erosion was a severe problem for the land because it made the top soil erode, with nothing for plant roots to grab on to. The granulated pieces of soil were then left victim to the strong winds of the plains. Large dust storms would sweep across the area covering everything. The dry weather did in fact make soil loose and unable to stick together. This was the reason that numerous dust storms flew across the Great Plains in the 1930s, hurting the farmers ability to grow crops.

In a Department of Agriculture report in 1938, the effects on farmers are explained. Due to the decrease in crop yields, incomes for farmers had decreased by 66 percent in Sherman County, Nebraska. The unfortunate fact that farmers had less income was prominent in many areas of the nation. The decrease in income made it much harder for farmers to pay their bills and support their families. This led to foreclosures, which in turn left some people homeless. The natural conditions that farmers faced only hindered their ability to produce crops; not only to feed their families, but to sell and profit from as well.

The problems that farmers created themselves also took a toll on the agricultural industry. Overproduction was a very severe problem that many couldn't foresee. The production during World War I was very high to accommodate all of the war needs. However, farmers never stopped producing the high quantity of food, which led to a severe amount of overproduction. The markets for goods simply were not present for farmers to use. There was nowhere to turn to in order to sell goods. This hurt them in a large way and many farmers had to move west, toward California, in order to find work because they lost their homes. The amount of migrants to California peaked during the depression to be "proportionally the largest peace-time migration in American history" said author James Gregory. The overproduction of food, in conjunction with unfavorable farming conditions turned farming into a problematic occupation during the depression.

Due to the severe problems that the agricultural laborers were facing, many thought it was important to band together. The Farmers Holiday Association, headed by the leadership of Milo Reno, was one of the most influential of these organizations. They were involved in blocking the roads

that lead to cities to prevent all agricultural goods from being taken to market, as well as preventing foreclosed farms from being sold. Penny auctions were the farmer's way of sticking beside one another. All of the local farmers would come to estate auctions and bully other buyers so that the prior owners were able to buy back their farm for a penny. Although they did create a network of support for each other, they did little to aid their cause directly. What they did do was make the government aware of their situation. This helped start the wheels in motion for some important agricultural legislation.

As the government realized the situation that farmers were in, the need for helpful public policy became apparent. Herbert Hoover did little to help farmers. Hoover did not worry about overproduction, and became lenient in doing much for farmers. On the other hand, President Roosevelt felt that farmers needed help, and had a much better understanding of agricultural policy. Through his help, the Agricultural Adjustment Act was born. The AAA, as it can be referred to, was an extensive farm bill that helped farmers during the depression. It helped farmers by setting up a number of institutions and programs to ease the pain for them all across America.

Two of the main focuses for the AAA were the Great Plains area and the South. However, it dealt with farmers across the entire country, especially those in severe financial hardships. Under the direction and leadership of the AAA, farmers were able to get money to support their family, even if it was at the cost of destroying crops.

The Land of Dixie was home to large amounts of the nation's cotton and tobacco plantations, which suffered from overproduction and some drought. Therefore the AAA attempted to help these farmers as much as possible. Cotton farmers were able to sign up to receive government aid, if they would agree to plow up their cotton in the fields. This entailed the destroying of current crops and the promise to not plant in some areas. The intention was to decrease the supply of products, therefore making the demand rise. Many farmers were less than enthusiastic about destroying their only means of income. However, as the government supplement checks began to arrive, the reality of this program began to set in. The government actually followed through on their end of the bargain to pay for the goods. This also helped to drive the price back up for farmers. The government aid to cotton farmers helped many of them survive through the depression.

Along with the cotton industry, the wheat market found itself in need of help. Similarly, the AAA was successful in cutting the amount of wheat produced by farmers. This was to help drive the price back up. However, the AAA was also important in restricting the amount of expansion for some successful wheat farmers. This stopped the vice of overproduction at the hands of wealthier farmers. The wheat industry needed to curb overproduction and try to get the price back up to its normal levels. The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation bought

large amounts of wheat from farmers as well to stimulate the economy and to give to farmers in the Dust Bowl area to feed their livestock. The grain was important to help the livestock farmers keep their animals alive. This government aid was very helpful in assisting two aspects of agriculturalists.

Another issue that was addressed by the AAA was that of crop diversification. Many farmers had usually planted cotton, wheat and tobacco. However, the government tried to promote crops that would preserve the ground and stop soil erosion. Because soil erosion was one of the main factors leading to the large windstorms and inferior topsoil, it was important to educate agriculturalists about the use of crop rotation and preserving the soil. The use of other types of products was a good tool in helping to save farmland. It encouraged tree planting, as well. The cotton, wheat and tobacco plants all took a heavy toll on the soil and left it in rough shape. Farmers were educated on the importance of crop rotation, to help stop the over-usage of land. This in turn would help not only the wheat, cotton and tobacco markets, but the land as well.

The impact that the Agricultural Adjustment Act had on numerous other farmers was immense. It set out to defeat the problems that stood in the way for farmers and was unsuccessful in completing this task. However, it was able to make sure that farmers were able to sustain themselves throughout the 1930s.

Although some believed that the AAA was not the right direction for farm policy during the 30s, there were many in favor of the plan. Groups, such as the Farmers Independence Council, were formed in order to advocate for less government involvement in the agricultural sphere. However, without the help of the federal government, many farmers would not have been able to support themselves financially. Although it would have been ideal to have minimal government interaction in the industry, it was necessary for some control on the production of agricultural goods during the Great Depression. The Department of Agriculture was able to institute the AAA and keep farmers stabilized until the Second World War took hold and brought farmers out of the depression. The role that the department played made them invaluable to the time period.

As an unknown author once said, "Man owes his existence to a half inch layer of topsoil and the fact that it rains." Agriculture is often called the backbone of society, because it directly affects all citizens. This seemed to be the case as well during the 1930s. The farmers played a vital role in the country during the Great Depression. They supplied food for the people of the United States during one of the hardest economic times in the history of the nation. Dealing with drought and wind, as well as overproduction, these honorable people devoted themselves to the oldest occupation known to mankind. Through their endeavors, they were able to press on and maintain their professions until they were able to thrive once again.

Green Jobs: Green Economy

By: **Andrea Kerbuski**
Capital Area Michigan Works

Green jobs.

You've heard the buzzword everywhere from a celebrity endorsement of a hybrid vehicle to a politician's hasty rhetoric. It seems everyone has jumped on this bandwagon to "save the earth", but really what does it all mean?

The greening of industries is creating new careers, according to forbes.com. Green jobs offers a solution to the nation's unstable economy and to the environment. But what exactly is a green job? Quite simply, it is any job that is environmentally friendly or offers eco-friendly services or products. This can include careers in alternative energy industries including wind, solar, geothermal and biofuels. This could mean anything from a construction worker building green homes to an organic farmer or farm manager. For Michigan, the idea of green jobs is a perfect fit with its existing natural resources and agricultural industry.

It's become a bipartisan issue that no legislator can ignore and has offered many people a glimmer of hope for not only the environment, but for a job. With the economy slowing down, energy prices on the rise and other issues affecting the environment, it's become a priority among not only environmentalists, but for everyone.

Governor Jennifer Granholm has introduced the Michigan Green Jobs Initiative, which will focus on helping to train and educate people for positions in the green industry. The initiative will focus on three sectors: alternative energy production and efficiency, green building construction, and agriculture and natural resource conservation. This initiative will invest six million dollars into developing alternative energy and green jobs.

Congressman Mike Rogers initiated a national plan of expanding nuclear energy plants to add at least 30 new nuclear plants and create a total of 72,000 jobs in the U.S.

The greening of industries has not been segregated. Everyone from entrepreneurs, smaller green companies and large corporations all have invested time, money and energy into creating a more sustainable environment which has added jobs

and fueled the growth of more green careers.

Whether someone is interested in specifically a career in a green industry or would like to convert a current job into something more environmentally friendly, training and education in Michigan is available. Michigan State University is offering a program and other schools such as Aquinas or Lawrence Tech offer certificate programs and degrees in sustainability.

The future is here.





Alumni in Action

Congratulations Scholarship Winners!

As part of its continuing effort to support the members in blue corduroy, the Michigan FFA Alumni gave the following scholarships to students attending the Fall Leadership Conferences.

Full Scholarships

Ashley Bujalski, Sand Creek
Jordan Henry, Alma
Torri Nighbert, Olivet
Cody Wehner, Stephenson

Partial Scholarships

Amy Gusz, Harbor Beach
Katie Smith, Laker
Susan Stepp, Homer
Amanda Thomas, Sand Creek

Congratulations to all winners! For more information on to get financial support from the Michigan FFA Alumni, please visit www.michiganffa.com/alumni.

You're Invited!

The Michigan FFA Alumni will be hosting its Annual Meeting at Caledonia High School on February 21, 2009. Registration begins at 6:00 p.m. with the banquet starting at 6:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$20 and at the door for \$25.

Those attending can meet alumni members from all over the state, sharing ideas about fundraising, affiliate member retention and methods of supporting local chapters and FFA members.

Also happening at the meeting will be the election of officers for the State FFA Alumni Council, a silent auction and a live auction.

For more information, please contact State FFA Alumni Council Region V Vice President Sherry Kiel at sherry.kiel@charter.net.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Find your fit in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources!

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