

The Michigan FFA Creed

Spring 2012







The Michigan FFA Creed

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The Michigan FFA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation or disability. Any student requiring an accommodation as a result of a disability should contact the chapter advisor to arrange such accommodation.

I Believe In...

By: Casie Forbush

I believe in living each day like it's your last.

Life is short, and there's no reason not to soak up every last bit of it while we're here. I believe that Lee Brice sums up what I believe in, in his single debut "Love Like Crazy", very well:

Be a best friend: in life, we ALL need someone there to lean on and to gain support from. In order to get that support, we have to give it. Give everything you have to your friends and it will be returned. Reach out, to and help others who may not have many friends, gain new ones. Be the best friend you can be and you will truly be blessed with best friends yourself.

Tell the truth: You will get nowhere in life if you aren't trusted and respected by those around you. People will listen to those they trust, and if you make a mistake, just admit it. Don't let things drag out forever. Be the most trustworthy person you can be, even if others around you aren't doing so. Keep your integrity gauge in check and people will remember you as such a person.

Overuse I love you: today could be your last day. You never know when it will end, so every chance you get, tell people how you feel. Remind them of it all the time, because it's better to be tired of hearing it than to never be told at all.

Go to work: whether going to work is plowing the fields, finishing your homework, bussing tables at the local restaurant or studying for your FFA contest, nothing ever gets handed to us for free. Somewhere along the way, work was done by someone to accomplish something. Always work hard and in the end, the results are far sweeter when you helped contribute to the finished product.

Do your best: my dad always told me to do your best and the rest will work out in the end. Even when others see it as a failure, just remember: if you did your personal best, there is nothing more anyone can ask of you. If you do your best in everything you do, no matter how difficult it may be, then you will always be successful.



Don't outsmart your common sense: there aren't enough breaths in your lifetime to waste it away. Believe and trust in your common sense, and follow your heart wherever it takes you, all the while keeping your head on straight. The path to your destination will remain straight and true despite all of the curves you'll encounter on this road called life if you follow your common sense.

Never let your praying knees get lazy: remember that everyone has different values, but God has a plan for all of us in one way or another. Don't forget to thank him and all those around you for all that you have. Take advantage of all of the opportunities he offers you and accept the challenges he presents with determination.

Love like crazy: put passion, hope and trust into all aspects of your life. Don't be afraid to celebrate the small accomplishments because they lead to bigger ones. Laugh like you've never laughed before, smile like it's the last time you can, tell those around you thank you, believe in yourself and most importantly love like crazy in every aspect of your life.

Life isn't meant to be spent standing outside the fire. We were made to do tough things. The beauty behind all of the emotions we experience in life helps mold us into who we are, and who we want to be. Believe in yourself and your own abilities, and the successes will line up one at a time. When you can learn to do that, then you are living each day with purpose; each one to its very last second; and like it could be your last.

Dates to Remember:

March

7-9: State FFA convention MSU Auditorium

22: FFA Board of Directors Meeting MSU 5-8 p.m.

April

1: FFA Alumni College Scholarship Applications due to the State Alumni Office

2: Marketing Plan Papers Due & Ag Skills Contests Registration Due

20: Ag Skills Contests

21: Horse Judging

May

TBA: Lansing Lugnuts Game

8: FFA Board of Directors Meeting - MSU 5-8 p.m.

15: Agri-Entrepreneurship, Proficiency State Winner's, National Chapter and American Degree Applications are due to the state FFA office

Chapter Chatter

Region 1 Hastings FFA

The Hastings FFA chapter is experiencing recent commitment and activity with several students attending National Convention and hosting a well attended Halloween bonfire and hayride. However, they are just starting to get busy as they have four students participating in the Fall Leadership Conference and their whole chapter is busy selling Christmas wreaths as a fund-raising activity. They are also excited to host a contest at their school this year. Give it up for such a hard working and dedicated group of FFA members!



Region 2

Jackson Area Career Center FFA

This past summer the Jackson Area Career Center FFA Chapter raised over 12,000 dollars in scholarship funds to help cover animal costs for students. This money was raised by auctioning off the steer of a former classmate, Hollie Riggs, who passed away earlier this year. The FFA was important to Hollie, so JACC's advisor, Jason Gerkhe, asked one of Hollie's classmates to take care of the steer and show it at the fair. The JACC FFA Chapter was very proud to raise money in memory of Hollie.



Region 3

Alma FFA

Alma FFA kicked off the new year with their summer garden program. The program taught over 25 students in fourth and fifth grade about food and fiber. Activities included: planting a garden, learning healthy food choices, along with learning how to work together to be successful. Current chapter president, Caleb Loomis said that "some of the other activities included going to a farmer's market and skill building games." Alma FFA continually builds their chapter by reaching out and educating the youth in their community.



Region 4 Mason FFA

Mason FFA has been busy lately. Recently, 17 members participated in the chapter co-op and exhibited pigs, lambs and poultry at the Ingham Co. Fair. Animal waste that is produced is composted and used in the greenhouse. Here, members have the opportunity to grow, care for and harvest produce that is marketed. One main event for the chapter is harvesting maple sap for syrup. Members tap trees and give tours. Mason FFA has many dedicated members and we look forward to their continued success.



The Montcalm Area Career Center is embarking on a new endeavor that highlights the county's agricultural heritage. The project is headed by Seth Wolfe, a MACC alumnus, and Lane Grieser, a MACC student. The two work with Heritage Village volunteers and the Montcalm Community College. The "Threshing Project" will provide students with experience in the restoration of unused land and equipment The project has already provided the class with practical skills in soil testing.



The Stephenson FFA Chapter is 420 miles away from the state FFA office but remains active. Members show livestock and compete in leadership and skills contests. Each November, chapter officers present the official flag folding ceremony at the Veterans Day assembly in front of the school and local veterans. FFA promotes leadership and good citizenship, the flag folding ceremony shows the members care. Stephenson FFA also participates in a few FFA activities with the state of Wisconsin including sectional workshops and chapter visits.







Learning to Do

By: Katie Jo Gentner &
Bethany Schreur

The Cass City FFA chapter is truly living out what learning to do is all about. For the past 21 years the chapter has been nonexistent but they knew that it was time to bring it back! Especially since Cass City is a rural and agriculturally active community. This has been made possible by a few important people including FFA advisor Ms. Gibson and their agricultural advisory committee.

This first year, the chapter has done some amazing things. The most impressive is the FFA barn that was built at the school. This barn was built completely by donated money and products from community members and past Cass City FFA members. When the barn was first being revealed they had a celebration where donors, community members and current and past members were in attendance. Within the barn they have had 160 broiler chickens for the state broiler contest, seven calves, sheep and goats, along with six feeder pigs and a sow. With these animals the students are trying different feed trials and management practice. Also the six feeder pigs that are being raised are to be shown at the Green and White show at Michigan State University by students.

Many of the members are interested in participating in FFA events at the local, state and national levels. They took 10 students to National FFA Convention in October and during that trip they attended the sessions, career show, FFA shopping mall, Purdue



University and a hypnotist show. They also had a few different entries in the broiler contest this November. The members are also excited for leadership contests. Recently, the members were working on putting together a parliamentarian procedure and demonstration team. It was great to see that these new high school members are so interested in all of the opportunities that FFA has to offer to them. Chapter president, Macey Messing, said that she wants to see the chapter grow into a chapter that can achieve and succeed at anything that is thrown at them.

The chapter is also participating in different events and activities. One of those events is a turkey trot. This event was a food drive for a Thanksgiving dinner. They were going to try to have a United Way presentation at the event and also honor all of the people who participated in the Thanksgiving dinner. Another event that they are planning on doing is Food for America which would be similar to Project R.E.D. (Rural Education Day). During this event they want to set up different types of agricultural and food stations in their barn. This event will take place in the spring or summer and will be meant for second grade students. The last activity that they would like to do is a drive your tractor to school day. For this event, anyone in the high school can participate and different awards will be given out.

Advisor, Ms. Gibson deserves a lot of credit for her chapter's success in this first year. She has gotten a lot of members interested in trying new things. She said that she wants to see the chapter grow and people getting more involved. She also wants to keep the members interested in agriculture because of the area they live in. She said it has been a lot of work trying to establish the program and push it to the limits and do as much as possible.

We are always excited to have new FFA chapters in our state. Thank you to Cass City FFA chapter for pushing it to the limits and taking the advantage of having an FFA chapter in your school. Good luck with all of your undertakings.

Doing to Learn

By: Mallory Weber & Sara Fosburg

Mandie and Katie Collier are two 18 year old seniors who grew up on their family farm in Hopkins, Michigan. From raising and caring for their 60 head of cattle, more than 3,500 pigs, to working in their fields of corn, soybeans, wheat and hay, they are two busy and proud farm girls. Although the twins have worked side by side on the farm their whole lives, they have their own identities on the farm.

Katie keeps herself busy working with the pigs and this year she will be able to fill out the proficiency application for swine production. The Colliers have been raising pigs all their lives. They have always bred their own pigs and moving them from the farrowing barn into the nurseries is one of Katie's favorite parts of raising pigs. Katie is also busy making sure that all the pigs stay healthy, fed and comfortable. Amongst all the work, Katie makes sure that she leaves time to play with the animals. Katie says "the more they get used to you, the easier they are to train and the more they will listen to you when the time comes." Katie says that she knows all this hard work from her supervised agricultural experience will pay off in the long run.

While Katie is sharpening her skills with the pigs, Mandie is busy working with the cattle and filling out her proficiency application in beef production. Although the Collier family has only been raising cattle since the twins were 7 years old, there is no doubt that they have a special place on the farm. Mandie takes care of all her own cattle. From feeding and bedding to administering all their medications, Mandie takes the lead. However, what Mandie is most proud of is that they breed and show all of their own cattle. "When I walk into the show ring, it isn't just to walk out with a big ribbon. I'm there to showcase all the hard work I've put into the animals from the day they were born."

Showcasing that hard work is something both of the girls love to do and they are no strangers to the show ring. Mandie and Katie have been showing pigs and beef cattle since the age of nine. Not only do they show at the Allegan County Fair, but also at the Michigan Winter Beef Expo and the Allegan County Beef Show in the spring. "Dawn [Punches], who is a family friend, is one of our biggest supporters when it comes to showing. She is always there to help us and has taught us how to go out there and really show our animals," says Katie. "she has taught us everything from the basics to the little things that can make all the difference," adds Mandie. Although they don't get to travel very much to show the pigs, Katie says, "given the chance, I would love to get that experience. Hopefully we can someday soon!"

Their support system doesn't end there. "We have a lot of people standing behind us, all the time," Katie shares. Mrs. Couch, their FFA advisor is always there to encourage the girls to do their best and reminding them that they can do anything they put their minds to. Their dad, Paul Collier, is out in the barn with them every day helping them make sure their animals are healthy and ready to be shown. Pauline Collier, the girls' mother, isn't involved much with the animals but she is always there taking care of the little things the girls need, especially the delicious cookies she never forgets to bring!



Their career goals are another thing that sets the girls apart but they know that the work from their supervised agricultural experiences will help them later on in life. Mandie plans on going to school to be a veterinary technician. She says, "learning the basics of taking care of animals, knowing what to do to take care of them and having an idea of how they are going to react is really important. Being around the animals and learning these things from such a young age will definitely help to get further in my career field." Although Katie isn't going into a field directly related to agriculture, she says her SAE will still help her find success. "I want to work with kids, and even though it's different than animals, they both need time and respect. Not only that, but the work ethic I have learned from my SAE and from working on the farm will help me out a ton wherever I go in life," states Katie.

One piece of advice that Katie says has stuck with her through the years, is just to remind yourself that "what you put into something is what you will get out of it." If you want to gain something from an experience, you have got to put work into it. Mandie said one of the main things she has learned from all her experiences working on the farm is that if you "work hard and set high goals, you'll learn more from that than watching someone else do it." Mandie and Katie Collier are two very good examples of how Michigan FFA is doing to learn.

Earning to Live

By: Brittny Bommarito & Rebecca Gulliver

Growing up on a family owned cash crop farm in Lenawee County, agriculture has always played a major role in Emily Ries's life. Her passion for agriculture was very evident when she stated "as a youngster I loved being out on the tractor and combine." With the loving support and positive influence from her parents she was able to expand her leadership skills and network with students and agriculture professionals around the state and country. Emily continued to further define her interests in agriculture and pursue her personal goal of becoming a communicator for the industry to help make a difference in agriculture.

It was the passion she developed as a child that led to her involvement in 4-H and FFA. Emily played an active role in her local FFA serving as an officer for her chapter along with Region II. In 2006 she had the privilege to serve the Michigan FFA Association as the State Reporter. Michigan FFA Executive Secretary, Mr. Wyrick stated that "Emily brought a positive can-do attitude to state office that was infectious." These opportunities made Ries a more confident speaker and taught her all about what it meant to be an effective leader. With Emily's "FFA toolbox," as she referred to it, stocked full of good advice from mentors and skills she had acquired through the years she was ready for the next step in her life



After high school, Ries attended Michigan State University where she majored in Agriculture and Natural Resources Communications. Emily had the opportunity to intern with Michigan Farm Bureau for multiple years which later turned into a full time position. Today, Emily is the Agricultural Ecology Specialist at Michigan Farm Bureau based in Lansing. Ries works to promote good environmental stewardship practices to farmers across the state of Michigan. Saginaw Valley Regional Representative, Karen Stoneman, said that "Emily makes sure the

members come first and she always gets them the information they need in a very timely manner. She works closely with the county farm bureau members to help their counties succeed. She also had a tremendous impact on the NRCS grant program. Emily is a great asset to our organization." Lori Chamberlain, the Manager of the Young Farmer and Rancher division at Michigan Farm Bureau, states working with Emily as being a pleasure. Chamberlain describes her as "a very polished and accomplished professional."

Along with working at Michigan Farm Bureau, Emily is a strong leader on the Michigan FFA Alumni Council. Michigan FFA Alumni supports and promotes the Michigan FFA Association, FFA activities and agri-science education on the local, state, and national levels. The alumni also strives to promote greater knowledge of the agriculture industry and support education in agriculture. Emily firmly believes in the mission statement of the Michigan FFA Alumni Association. Chamberlain stated that "she is a strong leader on the council and is always looking for ways to improve FFA Alumni programs." Emily is committed to serving the Michigan FFA Alumni to help support Michigan FFA members throughout the state. According to Mr. Wyrick, "as a young professional Emily still exhibits her positive, "can-do" attitude in her work performance" at Michigan Farm Bureau and serving on the Michigan FFA Alumni Council.

Michigan FFA's State Advisor Dr. Randy Showerman was impressed with Emily's ability to communicate with others about the FFA, when he first met her as a student at Sand Creek. Showerman referred to Emily as being "an excellent role model for others." When asked what advice Emily had for young agriculturalists and FFA members she replied that "agriculture is a great industry and community to be a part of. No matter what you are interested in, there is something for you in agriculture. Michigan needs good leaders like each of you. Get out there and make a difference for Michigan."

Emily is the true definition of an "agvocate." She has a deep love and passion for agriculture and strives to better inform people of the industry. Dustin DuFort Petty stated that "there is nobody in this world like Emily Ries. She approaches life with a sort of grace and gentleness that is rarely seen. Everyone she encounters can feel her passion for life, agriculture, and others. If there is someone who truly represents the agriculture in the 21st century, it is Emily Ries."

Living to Serve

By: Jennifer DeClerg & Connor Hubbard

Raising quality hogs can be a difficult process, but it is something that Daniel Flynn takes pride in.



Daniel, a 15 year old freshman from and member of the Branch Area Career Center (BACC) FFA Chapter, has been breeding, raising and selling swine for four years. His Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) started when he showed a gilt as a 4-H project at his county fair. The experience was fulfilling enough that Daniel decided he was going to expand his project. He looked into what it would take to breed pigs successfully and made connections in the industry. By fall, Daniel had purchased his first bred gilt and farrowed his first litter of pigs in March. His initial experience encouraged him to expand his operation. Daniel currently owns two sows and one gilt that he has bred with selected boars. Once the piglets are old enough, he plans to sell them to various outlets, such as show pigs, breeding gilts and feeder pigs.

Daniel's SAE has given him numerous hands-on experiences. By owning and breeding animals he has learned how to properly feed and medicate his sows. He has benefited by assisting his sows farrow and helped while a cesarean section was performed. Daniel also breeds his sows to make sure the litters will have the genetic traits he prefers.

Daniel has had success not only in owning and managing his project but also with showing and marketing his hogs. He has received top honors at the Calhoun County fair and has done several research projects based on his SAE that have been award winning. "I like the challenge of breeding better pigs," Daniel said.

Daniel admits that he would not have been such a success if it weren't for several people in his life. He credits his agriscience teacher and 4-H leaders who have constantly encouraged him. Many farmers in the industry always have advice and he appreciates the fact that his father is a veterinarian and can learn techniques and proper procedures from a reliable source.

A good work ethic is essential when it comes to owning a pig operation, which is something that Daniel definitely possesses. Through his experience he has learned proper bio-security and health practices to maintain his herd. He also finds that his observation skills have improved and that his financial decisions are properly thought out. Daniel recalls, "I can't think of anything that has happened during my SAE that has been wasted – even the mistakes and set backs are something to learn from." Daniel hopes to sharpen his record keeping skills and continue to learn new concepts to prepare for his future.

In addition to those who assist Daniel with his SAE, he also acknowledges that his involvement in the FFA would not have been adamant it if weren't for a friend offering to drive him to a chapter meeting. He liked what he saw and decided he wanted to get involved. Now, Daniel enjoys teaching others what he has learned, not only from his project but from FFA as well. He is always ready to share with someone who is willing to listen.

In the future Daniel plans to attend college and has a strong interest in swine genetics.



The Future Farmers of... Egypt!

By: Sara Fosburg

The growth of agriculture is something that has continued to hold America together and has influenced our economic growth throughout the years. It is no surprise that the idea of agriculture and the National FFA Organization ties our hearts and minds to America. In recent years, the country of Egypt has taken notice of the ambitious spirit of agricultural education students and FFA members. America's love of leadership and agriculture has infectiously spread to other nations.

The country of Egypt has fifty three agricultural technology schools that focus on teaching agricultural skills to students, yet leadership is a value which until recently has not been taught. For years the FFA has worked to improve leadership skills among the youth of our nation. By observing various central Michigan FFA chapters, Egypt has realized the benefits of instilling leadership and what it can accomplish. Egypt chose to observe Michigan chapters because they were open to the idea of working with another country and for Michigan's strong reputation of solid Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education programs within the United States.



On October 7th through the 15th of this year, Dr. Randy Showerman, the Michigan State FFA Advisor, and Dr. Kirk Heinze, a retired Agriculture and Natural Resources Education and Communication Systems department chairperson from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University, traveled to Egypt to assist in the development of their agricultural education programs. The two trained teachers from fifteen different schools and assimilated various aspects of the FFA into the FFE. While in Egypt, Dr. Showerman said "we were



welcomed with open arms and that the teachers were excited about the development of the FFE and how it would help their students and country." The plan for the FFE is to start small and ensure strong growth. They will have FFE clubs rather than chapters like the FFA. Each club will be able to have fifty members who will be broken into smaller groups to accomplish group tasks and projects. The tasks these groups focus on will be very similar to the FFA's supervised agricultural experience projects. Different projects the FFE will work on include perfume development, rabbit farming, water management, smoking awareness campaigns and bee keeping. The projects will have a committee structure and will be student driven, helping promote leadership among Egyptian students. Students will be able to pick their own project, develop a marketing plan and carry out the projects on their own. Not only will this improve their agricultural skills, but it will also help to hone their business and leadership skills. Drs. Showerman and Heinze recommended that the FFE starts out small with local competitions this year and hope for regional and national competitions to come in the future. Student awards will be given out during banquets similar to our programs.

In Michigan our communities are very involved with FFA. In Egypt, community involvement is very hard to come by and they are working on ways to get different agricultural-based businesses and local





groups to support the newly founded FFE. There is tremendous growth potential for the FFE and there are several value added products that students work with to improve on a daily basis.



What is agriculture like in Egypt? Egypt is a "true desert" said Dr. Showerman. Many Egyptian families partake in sustenance farming. You may have one family raising sugarcane, sorghum and chickens. Goats, sheep, potatoes, olive, grapes and beef cattle are also all very popular types of agricultural commodities found in Egypt. The Nile is the "life blood" of Egypt and the entire Country's agriculture system is supported by the water from the Nile.

What does the future of The FFE look like? In the future Dr. Showerman is planning to travel back to Egypt with a group of teachers to train even more teachers and establish more FFE chapters. Michigan FFA state officers may even get the chance to travel to Egypt to work on leadership training with students that are interested in the FFE. Dr. Showerman would also like to bring another group of FFE teachers back to the United States to visit different FFA chapters.



He would also like to expand different programs and opportunities for the students. "It is my goal to eventually link up a Michigan FFA member with an Egyptian FFE member." This goal will be a great challenge because few schools in Egypt have the internet so students may have to write letters instead of e-mails. FFE is currently funded by the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities, Inc. (MUCIA), as a special project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



When we think of the FFA we think of the emblem, the cross section of the ear of corn representing unity, the eagle symbolizing freedom, the rising sun signifying progress, the plow representing labor and tillage of the soil and the owl representing knowledge. The emblem defines our beliefs and ethics within the National FFA Organization. Our emblem is displayed on a corduroy jacket that we now proudly wear. The emblem for the FFE will be displayed on a blue cotton jacket. The emblem will consist of the rising sun representing the future of agriculture, the Nile River stands for the lifeblood of Egypt, King Tut on behalf of the rich history of Egypt and the plant represents the future of Egypt's success in agriculture.

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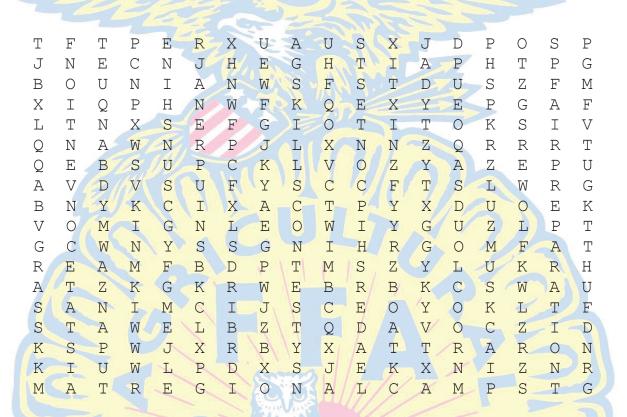
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Spring Has Sprung Some Fun!



Leadership Contests
Regional Camps
Sunshine
Birds
Banquet
Grass

Ag Skills Contest
State Convention
Flowers
Clouds
Fair Preparation

The Rest of the Story



Chapter: Byron FFA

SAE: Diversified Horticulture

Production

College: Michigan State

University

Major: Agricultural Education

Favorite Sport: Football

Favorite Homemade Meal:

Hamburgers and sweet potato fries

High School Activities: National Honors Society, 4-H and Student

Council

Favorite FFA Activity: Washington

Leadership Conference

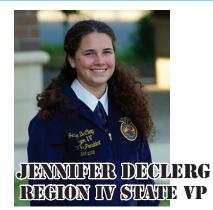
Favorite thing to do with friends:

Go to the movies

Personal Hobby: Reading

Favorite Movie: Saving Private

Ryan



Chapter: Durand FFA

SAE: Diversified Livestock Production and Turfgrass

College: Michigan State

University

Major: Animal Science

Favorite Book: "To Kill A Mocking Bird" - Harper Lee

Word used to describe self:

Passionate

Favorite Athletic Team: Michigan

State Spartans

Personal Hobby: Working with

animals

Favorite FFA Activity: Leadership

contests

Favorite Movie: Forest Gump

Favorite thing to do with friends:

Telling Laffy Taffy jokes



Chapter: Hopkins FFA

SAE: Swine Production

College: Lansing Community

College

Major: Agricultural Education

Favorite Candy: Swedish Fish

Favorite Musician: The Beatles

Favorite book: The Lucky One

Theme Song: "I Was Here" Lady

Antebellum

Word used to describe self:

Spontaneous

People looked to for strength and

guidance: God

Favorite Sport: Football

Personal Hobby: Listening to

music

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- Teaching others about agriculture and natural resources is exciting
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