The 80th National FFA Convention was an exciting experience for thousands of FFA members from across the nation. There were 53,618 members, advisors, parents, and supporters that converged on Indianapolis, Indiana, for the event at the end of October. Alabama had over 250 attendees participating in competitions, workshops, convention sessions, and other activities.

We are extremely proud of Jennifer Himburg, from Ariton, Alabama. She has served the National FFA this past year as the Southern Region Vice President. Throughout the year, she has traveled in excess of 100,000 miles and visited with local chapters, business and industry representatives, and state and national leaders as an advocate for agriculture and education. Thank you, Jennifer, for making Alabama proud.

We had several state-winning Career Development Event (CDE) Teams representing Alabama in National Competition. The following chart identifies those teams and the results of their efforts. A special recognition goes to Roger Brothers and the Bibb County CTC “Forestry” team for placing 5th in the Nation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDE Events</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Mechanics</td>
<td>Douglas HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Cattle Evaluation</td>
<td>Lamar County HS FFA</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floriculture</td>
<td>Speake HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>Bibb County CTC FFA “Forestry”</td>
<td>Gold (5th in Nation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Evaluation</td>
<td>Sand Rock HS FFA</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Evaluation</td>
<td>Curry HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery Landscape</td>
<td>Mary G Montgomery HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Procedure</td>
<td>Marbury HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>Pell City HS FFA</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nine FFA chapters in Alabama submitted applications for recognition in the National Chapter Awards Program. Those chapters are: Brantley HS FFA, Enterprise HS FFA, Eufaula HS FFA, Fort Payne HS FFA, Geraldine HS FFA, Montevallo HS FFA, New Brockton HS FFA, Pell City HS FFA, and Speake HS FFA.

This program allows chapters to receive recognition for their chapter’s Program of Activities conducted throughout the year. Each of these chapters is very deserving of the recognition they have received. We also have other chapters with great programs that deserve recognition. Therefore, we ask that their officers complete and submit an application.

The highest honor that the National FFA Organization offers to its members is the American FFA Degree. This degree is bestowed upon members that meet certain criteria which substantiate their growth as a productive member of society. Honorary American Degrees are also awarded to teachers, superintendents, partners, and others to recognize their support of the agriscience education program and FFA. The following are Alabama recipients:

**Honorary American Degree**
- Barry Bailey, Sand Rock HS

**American FFA Degree**
- Zachary Frederick, Red Bay HS
- Heath Randon Garrett, Fort Payne HS
- Kimberly Henderson, Enterprise HS
- Cody Johnson, Red Bay HS
- Jessica Jones, Fort Payne HS
- Ben Maples, Elkmont HS
- Adam Mills, Red Bay HS
- Sam Suttle, Fort Payne HS
- Tyler Thacker, Fort Payne HS
- Clayton Ross Usery, Elkmont HS
- Joseph Young Waters, Enterprise HS
- Jill Williams, Red Bay HS

The Alabama FFA’s membership of 13,991 afforded the association 12 voting delegates to the National FFA Convention. The delegate process is an important part of the convention and concludes the debate on issues that were brought out in July at the State President’s Conference in Washington, D.C. One of the important delegate issues to Alabama concerned middle school members.

In the past, middle school (7th and 8th grades) members were not allowed to advance past the state level in CDE competition. This limited the rights of those members, who may have won the state competition, to represent their state in national competition. Not all states have middle school members, so this issue has been difficult to pass because of the lack of interest from other states. This year, however, there was a lot of support for the middle school members to be included. The delegates passed a motion to “allow middle school members to compete with and against high school members in CDE competition.” This is exactly the type of motion that the Alabama members have been wanting. This motion will go to the National FFA Board of Directors for their consideration. Hopefully, we will get their decision on the issue in a few months.

Four chapters from Alabama participated in the National FFA Talent program at this year’s convention. The Enterprise and Red Bay chapters had quartets that performed at various functions during the national convention. The Montevallo and Sand Rock chapters had string bands that performed at various functions as well as on stage at the National Talent Review.

The Goshen FFA chapter was responsible for Alabama’s Hall of States Exhibit for the second consecutive year. They were selected as one of the top five exhibits for the second consecutive year as well. The advisors of the Goshen Chapter are Rusty Yeomans and Kelly Pritchett.
Matt Barton, 2004-2005 State President from the Gaston chapter, was Alabama’s choice as a national officer candidate to go through the nominating committee process. Even though Matt was not selected as a national officer this year, we are still proud of him and wish him the best with his pursuit of a degree in animal science from Oklahoma State University.

Pictured above are the delegates representing the Alabama FFA Association with the 2006-2007 National FFA Southern Region Vice President from Ariton, Alabama, Jennifer Himburg. Back (l-r): Salora Wright, Clements; Melody Murrell, Red Bay; James Paul Bailey, Sand Rock; Justin Posey, Montevallo; McKenzie Crabtree, East Limestone; Karen Baggett, Moulton; and Leah Blalock, Daphne. Front (l-r): Scottie Hunter, Billingsley; Kimberly Henderson, Enterprise; Brendon Boyd, Marbury; Jennifer Himburg, Ariton; Christina Turner, Alexandria; and Bethany Lott, New Brockton.
The Alabama FFA Association and the National FFA Organization will celebrate National FFA Week, February 16-23, 2008. The theme this year, “Blue Jackets/Bright Futures,” embodies all the best about FFA members, from the most recognizable symbol of the organization, the blue corduroy jacket, a symbol of pride and tradition, to the bright future of agriculture and the traditions of leadership and hard work.

Through classroom instruction and hands-on learning, agriscience education and FFA are making a positive difference in the lives of students everyday. FFA members are the leaders of tomorrow. They are our future engineers, scientists, teachers, and producers. Students may earn awards and recognition and educational scholarships to pursue their career goals.

One of every five Americans is employed in the critical food, fiber, and natural resources industries of agriculture, and former FFA members and supporters serve in these essential careers. Today, more than 300 career opportunities are available to students through agriscience education. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. For more information about the Alabama FFA Association, visit their Web site at http://www.alabamaffa.org or the National FFA Organization’s Web site at http://www.ffa.org.

More than half a million members around the nation, including nearly 14,000 in Alabama, will participate in FFA Week activities at the local and state level. The focus of National FFA Week is to tell America about the great opportunities available in agriscience education for all youth. With its beginning in 1928 as the Future Farmers of America, the National FFA Organization today reaches out to all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The Alabama FFA Association was chartered in 1929. FFA is committed to developing character and leadership skills and preparing members for a lifetime of civic leadership and career success. FFA members have opportunities to attend national leadership conferences, develop a supervised learning project, learn life skills, and serve their communities with service projects.

The State FFA Officers were in Montgomery on December 11, 2007, for some preliminary planning for the 79th Annual Alabama FFA Convention to be held June 3-6, 2008, at the Auburn University Student Activities Center. For more information on the state convention, visit the Alabama FFA’s Web site: http://www.alabamaffa.org.

No person shall be denied employment, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of disability, sex, race, religion, national origin, color, or age. Ref: Sec. 1983, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C.; Title VI and VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 504; Age Discrimination in Employment Act; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972: Title IX Coordinator, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101 or call (334) 242-8444.