

**West Texas High School**  
**AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE &**  
**FFA**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2015-2016**

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# Welcome

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year and the West Texas FFA and the West Texas Agricultural Science Department. We are extremely excited about the coming year and what it has to offer.

The Agricultural Science Program consists of three elements, Classroom Instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience and the FFA. This is a one of a kind program and we believe it has the potential to be a life changing experience for you. There will be different opportunities for you to develop leadership skills as well as experience personal growth throughout your participation as well as learning life-long lessons taught both in and out of the classroom.

For those parents and/or students new to the FFA you need to be aware of a few things that may be different from other organizations. The FFA and Jr. FFA, are student organizations run by the students with the help of an Advisor and are not intended solely for showing animals. It is not necessary to show in order to be a part of FFA. We would like to keep growing in numbers and in order to do this we need everyone's help!

We look forward to you attending the meetings and activities throughout the year. We try to meet at least once a month and in some cases twice, but as everyone knows when it's show time it is hard to get everyone on the same page. This is a great way to make new friends and memories that will last a lifetime. Please take into consideration when signing up that you will only get out of this organization what you put into it. As an advisor, I am here to offer guidance and support for each of you, not for you to become dependent upon! **TAKE RISK, STEP OUTSIDE THE BOX, and CLIMB THE LADDER OF SUCCESS!**

I'm excited about what the future has to hold for West Texas FFA. It is your choice to be part of a successful program, but as the advisor I am here to help with any questions or concerns along with giving any advice when needed. Please don't hesitate to call or email me at anytime. Thank you, Brandon Snider (806) 595- 0626 email: [Brandon.snider@region16.net](mailto:Brandon.snider@region16.net)

# THE FFA CREED

I believe in the future of agriculture with a faith born not of words but of deeds - achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm, or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny.

I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agriculturists to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the product of our toil.

I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining; in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so - for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me.

I believe that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task.

# **FFA MOTTO**

Learning to Do

Doing to Learn

Earning to Live

Living to Serve

## **Competitive Team Activities**

### **Leadership Development Teams – Fall Semester**

- Jr. Chapter Conducting
- Sr. Chapter Conducting
- Jr. FFA Skills Demonstration
- Sr. FFA Skills Demonstration
- Jr. FFA Quiz Team
- Sr. FFA Quiz Team
- Sr. Creed Speaking
- Jr. Creed Speaking
- Agricultural Issues Forum
- Radio Broadcasting Team
- FFA Public Relations
- Job Interview

### **Career Development Teams – Spring Semester**

- Soil and Water Stewardship Speaking
- Extemporaneous Speaking
- Jr. Prepared Public Speaking
- Sr. Prepared Public Speaking
- Meat Judging
- Livestock Judging

- Horse Judging
- Dairy Cattle Judging
- Ag. Communications
- Floriculture
- Poultry
- Dairy Foods
- Farm Business Management
- Ag. Mechanics
- Cotton & Wool

## **Officer Team**

Our officer Team is decided by the students on a majority vote. In case of a tie, we will re-vote and the vote will be only between the two that tied for the spot. In order to be eligible for our officer team you must be in High School, enrolled in at least one Agriculture Science class/per semester and be in good academic standings. Also, if you gain an officer's position you **MUST** be at **EVERY** meeting and be willing to attend any leadership conferences available. I understand that conflicts arise, but feeding the dog etc... is **NOT** going to cut it!

## **Awards Program**

The West Texas FFA Chapter has several award opportunities for members to participate in. The following awards will be awarded on the chapter level:

1. Star Awards
  - a. StarGreenhand (first year member)
  - b. StarChapter Farmer
  - c. StarLone Star
2. Proficiency Awards

a. Members may be awarded certificates based upon their Supervised Agricultural Experience Program

Students may apply for Proficiency Awards, Lone Star Degree, and Star Awards beyond the chapter level based upon their completed record book for their FFA experience. Requirements for these awards are located in the National FFA Manual and the Texas FFA Degree selection Procedures.

**We pride ourselves in being well-mannered, well dressed and competitive!**

## **FFA Code of Ethics**

We will conduct ourselves in a manner that credits our organization, chapter, school and community by:

- Dressing neatly and appropriately for the occasion
- Showing respect for others and being courteous at all times
- Being honest and not taking unfair advantage of others
- Respecting the property of others
- Refraining from boisterous talk, swearing and other unbecoming conduct
- Demonstrating good sportsmanship
- Attending meetings promptly
- Taking pride in our organization and its functions
- Sharing with others experiences and knowledge by attending district, area and state.

## **Official Dress**

The uniform worn by FFA members at district, area, state, and national functions is called official dress. It provides identity and a distinctive, recognizable image to the organization.

### **Female members should wear:**

Black Skirt – hem should be between knee and calf

White collared blouse

Official FFA Scarf

Black closed toed shoes

Official FFA Jacket – zipped to top

### **Male members**

Black pants or slacks

White collared shirt

Official FFA tie Black socks

Black shoes (low top dress shoes)

Official FFA Jacket – zipped to top

### **CDE Dress for contests**

- Buttoned down or Polo type collared shirt
- Nice jeans that fit at the waist and are free of fading or holes
- Closed toe shoes are required
- Nothing with school name or logo allowed!

### **Official Dress for Livestock Shows**

- Buttoned down collared shirt
- Nice jeans that fit at the waist and are free of fading or holes
- Closed toe shoes are required – NO Tennis Shoes
- Belt should be worn
- No caps or hats
- Hair should be pulled away from face and look orderly.

### **Eligibility at the Hutchinson County Livestock Show**

1. Participation in the Hutchinson County Livestock show is limited to projects owned, fed, and cared for by West Texas FFA members in good standing and under the supervision of the Ag. Science Teachers.
2. FFA members must be enrolled, attending and in good standing with PSP CISD.
3. Junior Livestock Exhibitors who show in the Hutchinson County, must live in Hutchinson County or attend school in a Hutchinson County School system the entire duration of the feeding period of their Junior Livestock project(s)
4. Junior Livestock Exhibitors suspended under the Texas Education Code 33.081 “No Pass, No Play” are ineligible to participate in any Hutchinson County FFA activity, event or competition. Any animal entered in the Junior Livestock Division by an ineligible exhibitor is ineligible for competition.



5. Any youth that is interested in showing in Hutchinson County must be nine (9) years of age or entering the third grade in accordance with Jr. FFA Rules. All third graders wanting to show in the County will need to note that some projects will need to be purchased while in the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) grade. Upon purchase and start of the project, these members are required to attend the mandatory weigh-in/tag-in programs and educational programs related to their projects.

6. Exhibitors must have joined a West Texas FFA or Jr FFA by the ownership deadline of the project and **MUST ATTEND 50% OF THE CHAPTER MEETINGS** from Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>.

7. Exhibitors are required to meet attendance requirements of the club or chapter entered under.

## **Facilities**

Here at West Texas FFA we pride ourselves in having some of the nicest facilities in the State! In order to keep them that way, it takes all of us doing our part to take care and preserve what other schools only dream of having! We are very fortunate to have the backing from our administrators as well as trust in our program from the school board to continue growing and providing top notch facilities for you all.

It is a privilege to use our facilities, **NOT AN ENTITLEMENT!** Everyone is on a three strike's your out basis rather it be following the barn rules or not taking care of business.

PSP CISD is not responsible for lost or stolen equipment! If you choose to leave your belongings at the barns you are taking a risk and we will not replace any items that are taken. **IF IT IS NOT YOURS, DO NOT TOUCH IT!!!**

There are several day to day maintenance issues that arise, you are all responsible for your area, keep it clean! PSP CISD is responsible for fixed assets **ONLY** at the barns such as pens, water systems, heaters and so-on, we will no longer be furnishing feeders, heat lamps and so on.

After the sale of your animal, you will be held responsible for the clean-up and maintenance of your pens and area. If you fail to do so, it will result in a hold on your county/major show checks.

Using the West Texas High School facilities is for show purposes only. If your animal will not be shown at the Hutchinson County Livestock Show or a Texas Major, please find elsewhere to keep it. **NO BREEDING STOCK** on the grounds.

**These rules are to be followed by students and parents.**

- 1.) All projects to be kept at the facility must be approved by the student's Agri-science teacher. The number of animals a student may raise at the PSP CISD facility is limited to the available space. **NO ANIMAL MAY BE BROUGHT IN WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE AG TEACHER.** The teacher will assign a stall or pen where the project animal will be kept. All students must pay pen rent prior to moving an animal in.
- 2.) Each student is responsible for the feeding and caring of his/her project on his/her own time and not during school time. Raising a project animal is to be a learning experience for the student. The student showing the project is to be the primary care provider for the animal.
- 3.) Each project must be cared for in a proper manner (i.e., daily and sufficient feeding and watering). A student's animal may be removed from the facility after the third documented incident of neglect.
- 4.) Students will be responsible for keeping their individual project stall or pen clean at all times. Pens must be fully cleaned **ATLEAST ONCE A WEEK.** In addition, it is the individual student's responsibility to keep his/her animal in the assigned pen.
- 5.) Persons responsible for intentional damage/vandalism (to the property or equipment) may be held financially responsible for repair of the damage and may have their project removed from the barn.
- 6.) Trespassing- Anyone other than the exhibitors, family members, legal guardians or PSP CISD employees caught at the barns will be considered trespassing. Because of BIO-Security, we strive to keep a sanitary

environment to raise livestock and having several thousands of dollars invested, we need to do our part to keep disease from being spread.

7.) Feed rooms, store rooms, wash rack, walk ways, common areas and facility grounds will be kept clean by the students using the facility. A dumpster is located at the entrance to the facility for trash and old feed disposal. DO NOT dispose of old feed in the trash barrels by the respective barns or in the drains at the wash racks. This feed belongs in the DUMPSTER.

**8.) The abuse of any animal will not be tolerated.**

9.) State law prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages, use of narcotic drugs or controlled substances, use of tobacco products, and the use of profane or abusive language at any school facility. In addition, all school policies will be in effect and enforced at the Agriscience facility.

10.) All project animals and prospect steers are required to be removed from the barn within two weeks after the Hutchinson County Junior Livestock Show. ALL ANIMALS MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE FARM BY MARCH 1 UNLESS YOU ARE SIGNED UP TO SHOW AT HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW. If you are showing in Houston, your animal must be removed prior to SPRING BREAK. Please make plans/ slaughter appointments accordingly, as these need to be made a month or two in advance.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE RULES WILL BE DEALT WITH IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:**

1. On the first offense, a warning will be issued to the student. A copy will be forwarded to the principal and the parents notified.

2. On the second offense, a warning citation will be issued to the student and one sent to the parent and principal.

3. On the third offense, the student will be sent to the principal and the parents

notified.

4. After the third offense, the student may be required to remove his/her animal from the Center. \_

**NOTE:** If the animal is not removed within two (2) DAYS, it will be removed by the school and sold at the auction. Any expenses incurred during the time of neglect will be deducted from the proceeds and the remainder (if any) will be forwarded to the student and/or parent.

## Livestock Show Guidelines

### Stock Show Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in any livestock show, students must meet the following requirements:

1. Be enrolled in an agricultural science class
2. Be a member in good standing of the West Texas FFA Chapter (Dues paid for current year)
3. Meet TEA guidelines for academic eligibility
4. Have paid entry fees on time and meet show requirements
5. Have approval of agricultural science teacher

### Show Entries

- The agricultural science teacher will assist in making arrangements for participation in the Hutchinson County Junior Livestock Show and approved major shows. Entries in all other shows will be the responsibility of the student.

### Major Show Travel

- 1) The school will allow each student 3 major shows due to attendance policies.
- 2) If you are planning on attending a major, please make arrangements to be there to **HELP** and to **SUPPORT** all West Texas FFA member as time would allow. We are growing in numbers to the point that two or three of us are not able to provide the care needed to compete at a successful level!
- 3) The school is not responsible for booking parent travel, we are not a travel agency and have enough problems getting room arrangements as is. All information on where we will be staying will be provided in a timely manner if you choose to stay at the same place.
- 4) The school is not responsible for getting your animals to and from a show, it is a privilege that does not need to be taken advantage of. Volunteers are always welcome and greatly appreciated and please see me if you are willing to do so.
- 5) The school is not obligated to go to certain shows, we will go to the shows where the majority of our exhibitors are competing. If you so

choose a different show it will be your responsibility to make arrangements for hauling, hotels and entries.

### **Animal Care at Shows**

- While at livestock shows, each student will be responsible for all feeding, care and grooming of his/her respective animal(s) as well as the **TEAM** atmosphere that has been a key to our success. I expect the same cautiousness and compassion for **EVERY** animal rather it is yours or another exhibitors. **WE WORK AS A TEAM AND WE WIN AS A TEAM!!!**

### **Responsibilities to Buyers**

- The student will write, gain instructor approval, and deliver a Thank You note to the individuals who provide premium money or buy their project. An official show photograph should be taken at the show or during grooming prior to loading for the show and accompany the note. Proof of delivery of the Thank You note must be given before the premium/auction check will be released to the student.

### **Equipment/Trailer Use**

- Arrangements must be made for the use of any equipment belonging to the FFA. Clippers, blowers, etc. must be returned in a diligent manner so that others may be able to use them. The use of livestock trailers will be limited to the agricultural science teacher and others as deemed necessary. . Any equipment lost, stolen or destroyed while in the possession of a student/borrower will be replaced at the expense of the student/borrower.

### **Specific Show Rules**

- It is the sole responsibility of the exhibitor to be familiar with all rules pertaining to his/her livestock project (this information may include weight limits, entry requirements, age, etc.) This information may be obtained from the Agriscience teacher or by visiting the web sites of the shows you are entering (See Website Reference pages).

## Medications

- It is strictly prohibited to administer any type of vaccine, drug, spray, feed additive, or substance internally or externally without first receiving approval of the Agriscience teacher. All substances used on the animal must be approved for use on the animal or be recommended by the Agriscience teacher. All withdrawal times must be followed. All students are expected to read and agree to abide by the Quality Counts Standards.

## Recommendations for Feeding and Care of Animals

- The feeding and care of the animals is a very important aspect of the livestock project. Feeding is responsible for at least 50% of the success or failure of a project. Below is a list of several proven practices which if done consistently, will lead to success in the show ring.

### Daily Care/Feeding

- The daily routine of feeding and care is very important. All animals respond well to an organized routine. They should be fed twice daily in most cases. Normally this will require at least 30 minutes in the morning and thirty minutes in the evening. Your feeding program will be tailored to your particular animal as recommended by your Agriscience teacher. Your choice of feeds will be up to you based upon your particular situation. It is best to discuss with the Agriscience teachers the feeding program that you are going to use. I suggest Linder's feed as it is what we know best and is readily available in our area.

### Halter Breaking or Teaching the animal to lead/drive

- One of the more important considerations that arise early in the feeding period is teaching the calf, lamb or goat to lead with a halter or collar, or pig to walk with a whip. **The animal must be worked daily.** This is no easy task and sometimes can be very time consuming. Consistency is the key. Some animals learn more quickly than others do, but normally this can be accomplished in the first several weeks. The animal must also be trained to stand correctly and calmly. This is critical, as in some cases the judge may want to handle

the animal. This practice will require several additional hours each week.

### **Weighing on a Regular Basis**

- Knowing your animal's weight and weighing on a regular schedule is very important. Weight gain or loss is a good indicator of how well the animal is progressing. Animals should be weighed at least once a week and in some cases more. It is particularly important near show time, as weight limits and weight classes are sometimes critical to placing the animal. It is also important to know the minimum and maximum weight limits for the species you are showing and the show you are entering. Please post your weights on the white boards provided in the barns.

### **Grooming Livestock for the Show**

- During entire feeding period, much time must be devoted to grooming the animal. Brushing and combing your animal are important daily routines. Washing and clipping will also be done on regular intervals to get a good view of how the animal is growing and progressing. In most cases, all animals will be clipped prior to the show to meet maximum hair requirements of the show that you are entering. **Skin and Hair conditioners are HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**



## **FFA MEMBER PARTICIPATION**

Every FFA member should take advantage of the variety of activities that the FFA has to offer. We will recognize those members of the FFA who have actively participated in the many activities offered. Participation and attendance at these activities is important and also required in order to qualify for awards and possibly a jacket. Some possible activities are listed below.

### **Activities:**

- Chapter Meetings
- Fundraisers
- District Meetings
- Area Convention
- LDE's-District, Area and State
- Local FFA Activities (community service etc.)
- CDE's
- Exhibiting animals at the County Livestock Show and Major Livestock Shows

## **FFA DUES**

West Texas FFA membership dues are \$25.00. This covers the cost of district, area, state and national dues plus a t-shirt. Membership in the Jr. FFA is \$25 per year. Dues will be due by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Anyone interested in being a part of the West Texas FFA for the 2014-2015 school year will need to have their dues paid by this date!

## USEFUL LINKS

The following are links to FFA pages and stock shows throughout the state. These may prove to be useful to you through the year.

### **FFA** **smartphone**

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[www.texasffa.org](http://www.texasffa.org)

[www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)

[www.judgingcard.com](http://www.judgingcard.com)

[www.theaet.com](http://www.theaet.com)

### **STOCKSHOWS**

[www.bigtex.org](http://www.bigtex.org) - Dallas

[www.fwssr.com](http://www.fwssr.com) - Ft. Worth

[www.sarodeo.com](http://www.sarodeo.com) - San Antonio

[www.hlsr.com](http://www.hlsr.com) - Houston

[www.sanangelorodeo.com](http://www.sanangelorodeo.com) – San Angelo

## **OVERNIGHTTRIPS**

The opportunity to participate in West Texas FFA is a privilege extended to PSP CISD students. Participation in West Texas FFA places a student in a position of recognition and often bestows the position of role model upon the member. Any student who elects to accept the privilege of participating in West Texas FFA must recognize that he/she is a representative of the school and district, and will be held to higher standard of conduct than that applied to the general student body. This applies to school related and non-school related activities. The member is subject to state law, school district policies, school rules and regulations, West Texas FFA Constitution and By-laws, and the University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. Any student found in violation of school rules or policies will be disciplined accordingly.

- Students will follow directions given by the Advisor, as well as adult chaperons
- Students will conduct themselves in a proper manner at all times
- Students will stay with the group at all times
- Students will not leave the hotel or site of activity for any reason
- Students will follow all curfew times. Lights will be out at the discretion of the advisors.
- Students must stay in the room assigned to them.
- Female students will not be allowed in the rooms of male students. Male students will not be allowed in the rooms of female students.
- Students will wear official dress, except when notified by Advisors. PSP CISD dress code is in effect at all times.

# FORMS

The following pages contain forms that need to be returned to the Ag. Teachers. If you are going to participate in any FFA activity, we must have the Travel Permission Form and the Emergency Medical Information. The enrollment form is necessary so that we can get the information necessary to sign you up for Chapter, District, Area, State and National membership.

The student / parent obligatory form is something that we have had to come up with due to students obligating themselves to attend an event and then backing out after the chapter had paid for them to attend. It is unfortunate that we are having to do this but the chapter lost money this past year due to students saying they would attend events and then backing out after the chapter had already paid their fees. The reasons they backed out was to do other events such as other camps, practices, retaking of tests etc. that they knew would possibly have conflicting dates. **Please be aware of conflicting dates before signing up.**

## STUDENT/PARENT OBLIGATORY NOTICE

Unfortunately due to the rising incidence of students telling their advisors that they are going to attend an FFA event, the advisors reserving their spot by paying entry fees, reserving rooms etc. etc. and then the student backing out we are going to have to come up with a policy to cover this.

We are going to ask that the students/parents to pay back the money to the FFA Chapter that has been lost due to them backing out, unless extenuating circumstances exist(ex. death or illness in family) at which time the Ag. Teacher will determine if the money needs to be paid back.

It is when students obligate themselves to go and then back out after we have had to pay for them, and the reason they are backing out is due to an event that they knew about such as retaking TAKS test, attending other camps, practices for other groups etc. Events such as these are scheduled way in advance. It is your responsibility to double and triple check the dates for any conflicts before committing.

My signature below indicates that I understand that if I tell my Ag. Teacher I am going to attend an event for which they have to pay fees etc. in advance and then I back out and do not attend, that I will reimburse the West Texas FFA Chapter the monies that they have had to pay. Failure to pay back the chapter will result in the student being placed on the fines and fees list and forfeiture of any officer, position etc. the student holds with in the chapter.

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Student Printed Name  
Date

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Student Signature

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Parent/Guardian Printed Name

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

**RETURN THIS SHEET SIGNED AND DATED TO YOUR AG. SCIENCE**

## **Fundraising Activities West Texas FFA**

The FFA provides many activities throughout the year that require money. The entry fees for contests, community service projects, the food and refreshments for meetings, scholarship's, jackets, district, area and state conventions etc... require a large sum of money. You are asked to participate in whatever fundraising activity that we have. The more money that our group makes, the more activities we can provide.

This year as in the past we will be selling meat, and we encourage each member to sell at least \$400 worth of products. We are also looking at a few raffles and other ideas to help raise money. The key is getting **EVERYONE** involved! Along with fundraising, we are going to add at least one community service project for each member to participate in. **LET'S GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY!!!**

### **West Texas FFA Member Participation**

We will be operating on a rewards points system that I will be giving instructions on at the first meeting. The Rewards will be based on participation in all aspects of FFA along with some performance incentives. West Texas FFA should be a fun organization, lets make it that way. You will only get out of this organization what you put in!