

# National FFA Organization

## Ideas for Student SAE Activities

P - placement

E - entrepreneurship

R - research/agriculture

X - exploratory/service

### CAREER AREA: Animal Systems (1 of 7)

*(livestock, wildlife, companion animals, aquaculture, poultry, equine)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Buy and show a calf at fairs.	E
Form a cooperative with other students to raise broiler chickens.	E
Grow catfish for sale to local cafes.	E
Operate a pet sitting service.	E
Organize and/or run a petting zoo at local fairs or farmers markets.	E
Provide a kennel cleaning service.	E
Provide equine training services.	E
Provide fishing and hiking services for area youth groups and elementary students.	E
Raise and sell farm fresh eggs.	E
Raise and sell purebred dogs.	E
Raise and train hunting dogs.	E
Raise chinchillas, hamsters, gerbils and sell them on the Internet.	E
Raise fish for the state fish and game department.	E
Raise game birds to sell for the training of bird dogs.	E
Raise game fish for sale to stock ponds.	E
Raise indigenous snakes and release into the wild (at approved area) each summer.	E
Raise market pigs.	E
Raise pheasants or quail to be released into the wild.	E
Raise your own livestock or specialty animals.	E
Run a trapping business.	E
Start a dog obedience training service.	E
Start a dog walking business.	E
Assist a horse group that assists handicapped students.	P
Assist at a horse stable.	P
Create a classroom pet adoption program with elementary schools.	P
Maintain the school's aquaculture system.	P
Manage a small aquatics lab.	P
Participate in a mentorship program with a taxidermist.	P
Take care of classroom animals.	P
Work as a beef feedlot assistant.	P
Work as a veterinarian assistant.	P
Work as a wildlife outfitter or guide.	P
Work at a university research lab caring for small animals.	P
Work at livestock farms or a ranch.	P

Work at pet shop.	P
Work at the local livestock auction barn.	P
Work for a pet sitting service.	P
Work for a predator control service.	P
Work for a rodeo company caring for animals and assisting with rodeos.	P
Work for the state game and fish department.	P
Work in the grocery store meats department.	P
Work on a dairy farm or heifer raising farm.	P
Work on an exotic animal farm.	P
Conduct feed trials for growing broiler chickens.	R
Research cage layers versus floor layers for egg production.	R
Research effectiveness of various estrus synchronization hormones.	R
Research feed trial testing differing swine diets.	R
Research methods of predator control, methods of trapping.	R
Discover the number of pet owners in community and their priority concerns.	R
Research the best diet to help obese pets lose weight.	R
Study the effects of genetic selection in groups of animals over time.	R
Test the selection of young pigs based on grade and lean yield at slaughter.	R
Assist at local animal shelter.	X
Conduct a survey of all livestock operations in your area.	X
Conduct surveys of wildlife populations.	X
Coordinate and conduct a horse safety camp.	X
Maintain aquariums for local businesses.	X
Manage livestock show and supplies for FFA chapter.	X
Plan and implement a "hands on" livestock field trip.	X
Provide a lost home for homeless pets.	X
Staff FFA displays that have farm animals at county and state fairs.	X
Take small animals to nursing homes for visits.	X
Volunteer to assist with a livestock show or county fair.	X

## CAREER AREA: Business Systems (2 of 7)

*(sales, service, farm and ranch management, economics)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Operate custom combining service.	E
Operate custom heifer raising service.	E
Operate custom hog raising business.	E
Work at a seed corn dealership.	E
Operate a poultry litter clean out service.	E
Operate a lawn maintenance/mowing service.	E
Start a franchise of existing fruit/vegetable stand.	E
Start service that cleans leaves from gutters.	E
Operate a hay hauling service.	E
Operate a custom spraying service.	E
Work as a service provider in grocery store.	P
Work for local cement company that installs ag applications.	P
Work as a grain tester/handler for a local elevator.	P
Be a sales associate at a garden or farm supply store.	P
Work at the local feed store.	P

Work for a local tax accountant that handles ag customers.	P
Work for the local ag insurance agency.	P
Work for an ag marketing services company.	P
Work as an intern for the local agriculture department.	P
Work for an irrigation service provider.	P
Work for an ag auctioneer service.	P
Work as an assistant sales manager at a turf equipment company.	P
Interview salespeople at the local greenhouse about customer buying habits.	R
Inventory and categorize all ag-related businesses in the community.	R
Research cost of production in your area to others areas of state/country.	R
Study the change in input costs over time for a given ag business.	R
Research the changes in buying habits among farmers over time.	R
Compare the role of women in operating ag businesses over time.	R
Conduct insect scouting for a seed corn company.	R
Assist other students in applying for youth loans.	X
Start a weekly price reporting service to publish in newsletter.	X
Create a 10 minute presentation for other members about careers in agribusiness.	X
Find two articles each week about the economics of the agriculture industry.	X
Volunteer to do website and brochure development for local ag businesses.	X
Volunteer to assist FFA members with records and applications.	X
Shadow an ag banker or loan officer.	X
Produce a weekly column for the local newspaper about agricultural issues.	X

## CAREER AREA: Environmental Service Systems (3 of 7)

*(pollution prevention, water and air quality, waste management, health and safety)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Start a leaf collection service in the fall and sell mulch in the spring.	E
Own and operate a water systems farm drainage (tiling) company.	E
Start a service to collect used pesticide containers.	E
Sell shop safety equipment door to door.	E
Create service to remove algae from area lakes and fishing ponds.	E
Sell radon detectors and collect samples.	E
Start a water sample collecting service.	E
Start a manure removal business for acreage owners.	E
Start a wood chipping service for people and/or sell the chips as mulch.	E
Assist local agencies with data collection for watersheds.	P
Work for a company that installs plastic drainage tile farm fields.	P
Work for a testing laboratory.	P
Develop marshlands for game.	P
Work as a trencher for waste water lagoons.	P
Work at a fishery monitoring water quality.	P
Work for the natural resource and conservation district.	P
Assist landowners with installation of soil conservation practices.	P
Conduct a local water quality study.	R
Research area pollution concerns.	R
Study pollution control practices.	R
Research rate of accidents on area farms and compare to national averages.	R
Study animal waste legislation at local, state and federal level.	R

Research methods for preventing common accidents in agriculture dept. laboratory.	R
Monitor dust levels in air at various sites and various times throughout year.	R
Research the effects of livestock feed on waste issues.	R
Monitor pollen counts in an area by working with labs and weather stations.	R
Research the effects of various cover crops on erosion.	R
Work as a water quality lab assistant.	R
Conduct a tour of area farms and ranches that practice effective pollution control.	X
Develop plan to manage school food waste.	X
Lead farm safety program for elementary students.	X
Volunteer to monitor water quality for community pond.	X
Assist community watershed action groups.	X
Collect water samples for local or state agencies.	X
Conduct workshops for homeowners on composting.	X
Develop and implement a farm safety class for elementary school students.	X
Establish green belts along streams on your farm.	X
Research the benefits of CRP.	X
Put together a town safety package---mark all signs, fire hydrants and water drains.	X
Take part in a mentorship program with the local soil and water conservation district.	X

## CAREER AREA: Food Products/Processing Systems (4 of 7)

*(product development, processing, packaging, health and safety)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Sell gourmet popcorn products.	E
Use unsalable zucchini in baked goods as a side to vegetable production.	E
Raise trout and sell to local restaurants.	E
Process and sell specialty products--bison, wild flowers, ostrich.	E
Process wild game for jerky, etc.	E
Collect wild mushrooms and sell to local vendors.	E
Sell picked vegetables.	E
Make jams and jellies for sale at a farmers market.	E
Start a service to grow gardens for the elderly.	E
Work for and/or operate a wild bird processing service.	E
Work at local bakery.	P
Work at a meat production plant.	P
Work at a produce facility that repackages and sells produce.	P
Work at a vegetable or fruit canning factory.	P
Work at a cranberry farm.	P
Work for an agricultural seed cleaning and bagging company.	P
Work in a deli or bakery at a grocery store.	P
Help at a local fruit/vegetable stand.	P
Assist at an herb farm.	P
Deliver sweet corn to customers for a local grower.	P
Assist with produce selection at a grocery store.	P
Research genetic crossings in winter squash.	R
Research the environmental effects on milk.	R
Create classroom activities.	R
Research genetic changes in various vegetable crops.	R
Test ideas for new food products.	R

Research incidents of food borne illnesses in a community.	R
Study the impact of various styles of labels on people's perception of the food product.	R
Research why new food products fail to sell.	R
Research the development and use of edible soybeans.	R
Prepare a food safety information kit covering safe handling of meat, eggs and other fresh food products.	X
Present a food safety demonstration to elementary students.	X
Work to establish a community vegetable garden.	X
Create posters that show foods from raw to finished product.	X
Interview three companies that process or package food products.	X
Create an ad promotion for local food products on chapter website.	X
Grow vegetables to give to local food pantry.	X
Ask farmers for permission to glean fields for food to give to homeless shelters.	X
Shadow a USDA meat inspector.	X

## CAREER AREA: Natural Resources Systems (5 of 7)

*(habitat conservation, forest products, parks and recreation, mining, fisheries, soil conservation)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Raise wild game fowl for sale to local hunters.	E
Stock and maintain fish populations in ponds.	E
Raise Christmas trees and sell at Christmas time.	E
Cut fire wood and sell at local stores.	E
Raise fish for the state fish and game department.	E
Operate a trapping business.	E
Contract with landowners to plant food plots for wildlife.	E
Construct and sell game feeders.	E
Create and sell soil survey maps for area farmers and land owners.	E
Build bat, bird, duck, squirrel houses for use or sale.	E
Develop hunting ranges; set up indoor/outdoor ranges for bow competitions.	E
Develop a forest/wildlife management plan for a local landowner.	E
Clean and prune orchards.	P
Work in the logging business.	P
Work for a landowner to plant habitat for wild game.	P
Serve as hunting guide.	P
Maintain and supervise the school prairie or grounds.	P
Provide outdoor education material at camps.	P
Work at a saw mill.	P
Work for a park service during the summer.	P
Work for a nature center.	P
Assist Christmas tree farmers with planting and trimming.	P
Assist local city management with summer programs as a guide.	P
Work for the fish and game department.	P
Work for parks and recreation in maintenance.	P
Work at a bait shop.	P
Assist a timber stand improvement specialist.	P
Attend the meetings of local or state conservation boards.	X

Interview a naturalist.	X
Shadow officials at a government natural resources agency.	X
Start a fish pond and teach small children and adults to fish.	X
Habitat construction-----make brush piles, plant wildlife habitat.	X
Develop habitat trails for walking or hiking.	X
Woodlot management and improvement including firewood, habitat, etc.	X
Process and deliver seedlings to elementary school students.	X
Create activities or laboratories for a natural resources class.	X
Organize and participate in a wildlife field day.	X
Plan a wildlife field trip.	X
Clean shelterbelts and stack refuge in piles.	X
Volunteer to assist at campgrounds with cleanup and maintenance.	X
Research best practices for improving fish habitat in local ponds.	R
Research the benefits of using GIS mapping for natural resources.	R
Create posters on soil conservation practices for homeowners.	X
Create a brochure on creating wildlife habitat in backyards to share with community.	X
Study soil profiles from multiple locations in your community and develop a soil map.	R
Study the effects of excessive lawn chemicals on wildlife.	R
Research the effectiveness of habitat restoration projects in your community.	R
Study the changes in mining industry techniques over time.	R
Research your local parks to find out what activities people like and use the most.	R
Research the impact of various insects on woodlot management.	R
Discover the native plants for your ecological area and determine how prevalent they are currently.	R
Research impact of using ATVs on public lands.	R

## CAREER AREA: Plant Systems (6 of 7)

*(agronomy, horticulture, forestry, turf, viticulture, soils)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Grow flowers for sale at a local farmers market.	E
Rent land from a neighbor and grow soybeans.	E
Start your own pruning business.	E
Start your own spraying business.	E
Start your own forage testing service.	E
Start your own soil sampling business.	E
Start your own lawn mowing business.	E
Grow and sell plants through the high school greenhouse.	E
Raise Christmas trees.	E
Raise and sell pumpkins.	E
Raise and sell strawberries.	E
Provide services to fertilize lawns, till garden spots, prune trees, etc.	E
Grow organic vegetables for a local café.	E
Grow and sell the red worms used to produce compost.	E
Sell and install water gardens.	E
Work as a range consultant.	P
Work for a sprinkler installation business.	P
Work for a grain farmer.	P
Conduct timber cruise and mark timber to be thinned.	P

Work for an agronomy service and collect soil samples.	P
Work for a lawn and landscape care business.	P
Work in and monitor the school forest.	P
Work at a nursery.	P
Work at a golf course.	P
Work for a local flower shop doing design, plant care, deliveries, etc.	P
Work at the grain elevator during the summer.	P
Work on turf farm.	P
Work in an orchard.	P
Work with county soil scientist to map soils.	P
Work at an area garden center.	P
Research the best turf grass varieties for your area.	R
Develop a test plot for various types of crops.	R
Use the school lab to manage small vegetable crop variety plots.	R
Test forage samples under various conditions to determine feed values.	R
Test organic versus inorganic fertilizers on plant development.	R
Research the effect of various planting times on yields of green beans.	R
Research the effectiveness of GM crops.	R
Discover the best types of artificial lights for plant growth.	R
Research plant propagation techniques.	R
Test drought tolerance of different types of watermelons.	R
Take care of flower beds/gardens on school property.	X
Build and maintain the compost units at the school.	X
Volunteer to work with landowners to improve their forest lots.	X
Provide forestry walk-thru tours for elementary students.	X
Plan plant-related activities and laboratories for your class.	X
Do a garden projection for school land and have it mapped out four years in advance.	X
Collect and laminate plants from a nursery landscape CDE at various stages of growth.	X
Create a brochure about common houseplant diseases and how to take care of them.	X
Complete a report on 10 food plants that includes origin, uses and cultivation practices.	X
Take pictures and make a CD for plant or insect identification.	X

## CAREER AREA: Power, Structural & Technical Systems (7 of 7)

*(power, structures, controls, GPS/GIS, computers, electronics, hydraulics)*

SAE Activity Idea	Type of SAE
Restore a tractor and sell it or restore a tractor for someone else.	E
Design, build and sell lawn ornaments.	E
Operate a lawn mower service and repair business.	E
Build garden sheds for homeowners.	E
Start a basic computer help service for area ag producers.	E
Start a custom spraying service that utilizes GPS.	E
Design custom computer programs using Excel or other software to solve problems for producers.	E
Provide basic internet and email training to producers to increase their level of confidence in using technology.	E
Map fields, weeds, etc. for producers using GPS and GIS.	E
Operate a business that computerizes farmers' records.	E
Make business cards, stationary, etc., for businesses or chapter members.	E



Run a custom fence building and repair business.	E
Work as a diesel mechanic assistant.	P
Work for an irrigation service company.	P
Assist with GPS mapping for an agronomic services company.	P
Work in a welding shop.	P
Work as an assistant for an auto, truck or tractor mechanic.	P
Work for a local electrician.	P
Pour concrete forms for machine sheds or other buildings.	P
Work on plumbing waste systems, air and water systems.	P
Wire buildings for lights and receptacles.	P
Provide maintenance for school shop equipment.	P
Manage the steel inventory in the ag shop.	P
Machine and rebuild engine parts.	P
Work with county soil and water engineers - assist in measuring and engineer design.	P
Work for a small engine repair shop - overhaul and repair.	P
Work as a surveyor assistant.	P
Work for a plumbing business.	P
Work for local university in the area of robotics in agriculture.	P
Conduct a field demonstration on GPS systems for elementary students.	X
Develop "hands on" activities for the class.	X
Complete home or farmstead improvement construction activities.	X
Hold a classroom demonstration on automated systems.	X
Construct prototypes of hydraulic systems.	X
Create digital video programs about FFA.	X
Create and produce a weekly television or radio show about FFA and agriculture.	X
Maintain the chapter webpage.	X
Interview area ag producers about the changes in technology over the past 50 years.	X
Report on all of the control systems used in a typical greenhouse.	X
Share a 10-minute presentation on GIS mapping for forestry, wildlife, soil and water management.	X
Create a teaching model to show how a small gas engine works.	X
Create a demonstration model that shows proper and improper welding techniques.	X
Shadow a computer professional in any ag-related industry.	X
Volunteer to design a website for a local agriculture group.	X
Research the adoption of technology by ag producers in your area.	R
Research the differences among farm management software systems.	R
Test the strength of different types of welds.	R
Research the cost versus return of automating systems in an ag processing facility.	R
Study the latest advancements in robotics in agriculture.	R
Research the energy use of different types of lighting systems in farm buildings.	R
Research the water savings accomplished by new irrigation technologies.	R
Research the biggest challenges producers face when adopting new technology.	R
Research the differences in various styles of tillage equipment.	R
Study the modifications in ag equipment possible for persons with disabilities.	R