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Council Recommends New Standards in Agricultural Education

Des Moines, Iowa – February 15, 2018– The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education is seeking to ensure quality agriculture content is being taught in agricultural education classes across Iowa.

The Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource (AFNR) Career Cluster Content standards were developed by the National Council for Agricultural Education, also known as Team Ag Ed, in 2015.

The AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards were originally developed as part of the 2003 United States Department of Education (USDE) Career Clusters Project. In 2009, The Council first reviewed and revised the content standards. The 2015 revision focused on ensuring that the content standards reflect essential and up-to-date knowledge and skills that students need to be ready for early-career success in a variety of AFNR disciplines. Reviewers ensured that the standards provide a sound basis upon which to design AFNR related Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and develop end of course/program assessments to measure students' attainment of essential disciplinary knowledge and skills. The multi-stage review and revision process began in 2014 and was informed by input and guidance from more than 270 secondary and post-secondary educators, business, industry and state leaders in career and technical education.

The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education is a bipartisan effort that is charged to review, develop, and recommend standards for secondary and postsecondary agriculture education in Iowa. Taking advantage of the work from the national organization, the Iowa Council on Agricultural Education reviewed the standards and voted to adopt them as the baseline for agricultural programs in Iowa high schools.

“Some Iowa teachers are already using these standards and piloting them,” said chair, Will Fett. “They are cross walked with other career and technical education content standards which makes them very versatile. They are detailed to provide teachers good direction, but still allow for teacher flexibility with their local program and curriculum offerings.”

Recent legislation H.F. 2392 that was passed in 2016 requires that career and technical education programs have approved standards in place for their program. This recommendation from the council will help solidify those standards of a quality agricultural education program. The new standards can be viewed online here:

https://www.ffa.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/council_afnr_career_cluster_content_standards.pdf.

Agriculture education is offered in 232 high schools across Iowa. Agriculture education employs a three-component model to deliver teaching through classroom instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs, and leadership development through FFA. Students who take an agriculture education class are eligible to join FFA. There are more than 14,000 FFA members in Iowa.

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About the Iowa Council on Agricultural Education

The Iowa Council on Agricultural Education will review, develop, and recommend standards for secondary and postsecondary agricultural education. Established in 1988 by legislative act of the 72nd Iowa General Assembly, the Council is appointed by the Governor annually and made up of nine voting members. The Council members represent all areas of agriculture and diverse geographical areas. The Council includes representation from secondary schools, postsecondary schools, and a teacher educator. Ex officio members include representatives from Iowa FFA, Iowa FFA Alumni, the Postsecondary Agriculture Student Organization of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and members of the Iowa general assembly.