

SUPERVISED AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs are teacher-supervised, individualized, hands-on, student-developed activities that give students real-world work-based experiential learning experience directly applicable to careers in the broad field of agriculture. An SAE may involve student ownership of an agriculture-related enterprise, a placement or internship in an agriculture-related job, research, a school-based enterprise, or service learning. SAEs will be unique and vital components of your agricultural education program, and your role in guiding and supporting students is an important one.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Use written materials, training sessions and insights from experienced agricultural educators to gain an overview of supervised agricultural experience programs.
2. Examine what is already in place in the school. Become familiar with students' ongoing SAEs by interviewing students and examining record books and other documentation.
3. Work with students, parents/guardians and employers to establish successful SAE partnerships.
4. Set goals for strengthening local SAE programs. Follow step-by-step SAE program development tips. Focus on quality indicators for SAE success.
5. Keep careful records of student–parent(s)/guardian(s)–instructor conferences and your individualized instruction and supervision related to SAE programs.

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WHAT IS AN SAE?

TIPS

America's agriculture industry and education system has changed dramatically since Rufus Stimson launched the first official SAE, called a "Home Project" around 1910. It is unlikely that he could have imagined agricultural education programs with 25-30 students per class, where most students do not live on a farm or ranch. The diversity of students served by today's programs requires a new definition and approach to SAE, one that aligns SAE with 21st Century learners. Changes include new types of SAEs, a new approach to supervision, and a focus on measurable learning outcomes rather than only dollars earned or hours documented. However, the fundamentals remain the same, an SAE must be supervised, related to agriculture and provide a rich and meaningful work-based or experiential learning experience.

A NEW DEFINITION

Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) is a **student-led, instructor supervised, work-based learning experience** that results in measurable outcomes within a predefined, agreed upon set of **Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) Technical Standards** and **Career Ready Practices** aligned to a career plan of study.

The Council. (2017). SAE for All Student Guide. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from <https://aese.psu.edu/teachag/instructional-classroom-resources/school-based-support/supervised-agricultural-experience>

Teachers provide SUPERVISION of and guidance for the student's program while engaging other necessary partners such as parents and/or employers. The teacher should also provide on-site instruction when and where appropriate but be able to use other methods — social media, computer technology, written documentation and group meetings — to provide supervision and guidance.

While it is not necessary that an SAE take place on a farm, ranch or other private AGRICULTURAL enterprise, the experience should correlate with classroom instruction and a student's career exploration, interest and planning within one of the recognized AFNR career pathways.

Agricultural educators already provide EXPERIENTIAL learning on a daily basis. What makes the SAE

Visit saeforall.org for the most current resources for students and teachers related to Supervised Agricultural Education programs.

component different is that the activity relates to some level of career planning, is student- rather than teacher-managed, and takes place in a real-world environment or simulated workplace environment (i.e., virtual program or school lab/greenhouse/farm). SAEs may even occur on the school campus or during the school day.

Now more than ever, SAEs position agricultural education programs to be leaders in their school district in the STEM and College and Career Ready movement. While an administrator will not immediately recognize the name, "Supervised Agricultural Experience," they will recognize the terms "work-based" and "experiential learning." They will also value measurable outcomes and career plans. These are the components of the SAE program that will ring in the ears of school administrators at the middle and high school levels. When you share the [SAE Roadmap](#) with your administrators make sure to highlight the language on the following page:

WHAT IS AN SAE?

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SAE IS A...

- career exploration and planning system for all students.
- student-led, teacher-supervised path to college and career readiness.
- tool for measuring student progress toward college and career readiness.
- method for authentically enhancing the high school experience.
- small business incubator for young entrepreneurs.
- path to connect students to STEM careers and mentors.
- critical component of a comprehensive Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

FFA MEMBER RECORDS

Supervised Agricultural Experiences is the work based learning component of agriculture education. Keeping accurate records of these experiences will help students gain professional skills that will transfer to their future professions. The AET is an online record keeping platform that allows students to record what they have done in their experiential learning experience via computer or from their mobile device. Information about AET. In addition to AET many states have other methods for students to keep their records. Please contact your state agricultural education specialist.

What are the SAE options?

FOUNDATIONAL SAE

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The Foundational SAE is conducted by all students in the agricultural education program including students that are on a four-year sequence and those who enroll for a semester. It consists of the following five components:

1) CAREER EXPLORATION AND PLANNING

In this component, students will research and explore career opportunities within the AFNR industry. They will complete interest inventories and identify a career goal. Ultimately, students will be able to describe AFNR career opportunities and the path to achieving those opportunities.

2) EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Through the Employability Skills component, students will develop the skills needed to succeed in both college and career. These skills include responsibility, communication, innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration.

3) PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Crafting a personal financial management plan is the focus of the Personal Financial Management and Planning component. Students need to understand how personal financial practices like budgeting, saving, and appropriate use of credit lead to financial independence.

4) WORKPLACE SAFETY

Where many of the AFNR career pathways contain hazardous occupations, it is critical that all students have a strong base of instruction and experience with workplace safety. In this component, students will examine and summarize the importance of health, safety and environmental management systems in the AFNR workplace.

5) AGRICULTURAL LITERACY

All students also need a basic understanding of the width and breadth of the agricultural industry. This component will require students to research and analyze how issues, trends, technologies and public policies impact AFNR systems. They will also evaluate the nature and role of agriculture in society and the economy.

These components lead to the selection and implementation of one or more of the Immersion SAE categories discussed later in the document. The Foundational SAE is ongoing throughout the student's enrollment in agricultural education and will continue alongside Immersion SAEs implemented by a student.

It is envisioned that the Foundational SAE be project-based with the student selecting or proposing their own activities that lead to a learning outcomes for each component. A list of selected learning outcomes from the AFNR Technical Standards and suggested student activities is available in the [SAE for All Teacher Edition](#) under Foundational SAE Learning Outcomes and Activities. In addition, the Sample Instructional Plan includes an example of how to grade Foundational SAE activity completion as a part of the broader instructional program.

IMPORTANT NOTE: While the Foundational SAE is essential for every student's SAE program, hours spent on this element outside the context of an immersion SAE may not contribute to the attainment of FFA awards or degrees.

What are the SAE options?

IMMERSION SAE

Even though Immersion SAEs are an extension of the Agricultural Literacy component of the Foundational SAE, they will contribute to a student's growth in all of the Foundational components in an authentic, contextualized manner.

1) CAREER EXPLORATION AND PLANNING

The selection of Immersion SAEs is aligned to and supports a student's career interest as defined in their individual career plan from the Foundational SAE. Immersion SAEs are designed to help students transition from career exploration to career preparation

2) EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Immersion SAEs take students into authentic work environments and settings, which is the best place to learn and receive coaching and feedback on critical employability skills. All Immersion SAE plans should include an identified list of employability skills to be developed and a method of evaluation by employer, peer, mentor or instructor.

3) PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Due to the potential for earnings, Immersion SAEs may offer the opportunity for students to apply personal financial management and planning skills acquired through the Foundational SAE. Additional specific financial management and planning skills should be applied based on the Immersion SAE selected by the student.

4) WORKPLACE SAFETY

It is imperative for all participants of Immersion SAEs to foster and implement a culture of safety. This can be accomplished by:

- Performing an environmental safety review on themselves and their work site.

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- Pursuing and completing the necessary safety training needed for employment.
- Taking measures to address any safety concerns identified.

5) AGRICULTURAL LITERACY

Students move beyond agricultural literacy to developing knowledge, skills and expertise within a specific AFNR pathway based on the specific Immersion SAE selected.

Supervision of Immersion SAEs is a critical component that is overseen by the local agriculture instructor. The local teacher may delegate supervision responsibilities to other trusted adults. Supervision may be conducted in a variety of methods in addition to on-site visitations.

Immersion SAEs can happen in the school facilities and occasionally during the school day if the program is student-managed, outside formal instructional time, simulates a real-world work environment, is tied to a career plan and is otherwise not connected to directed laboratory instruction by the teacher.

THERE ARE FIVE TYPES OF IMMERSION SAES:

- Placement/Internship SAE
- Ownership/Entrepreneurship SAE
- Research: Experimental, Analysis or Invention SAE
- School-Based Enterprise SAE
- Service Learning SAE

What are the SAE options?

PLACEMENT/INTERNSHIP SAE

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PLACEMENT SAE

In a Placement SAE, the student is in an employment setting (either paid or volunteer). The student performs the tasks determined by the employer which are necessary for the operation of the business. Students are evaluated by the employer under the guidance of the agriculture instructor. The placement experience must provide opportunity for the development and advancement of skills and abilities aligned to the AFNR Technical Standards and Career Ready Practices.

PLACEMENT SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The student:

- Maintains SAE documentation which contains:
 - SAE Agreement
 - Hours worked
 - Income received
 - List of tasks performed in the placement
 - Knowledge and skills attained
- Receives regular employer/supervisor evaluation

INTERNSHIP SAE

The Internship SAE is an advanced level of the placement. It entails greater involvement of the student, instructor and the employer in determining the activities the student performs in the job setting. The internship experience is directed not as much by the business operation but by a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Training Plan created for the maximum benefit of developing the student's knowledge and skills. The plan also contains a list of AFNR Technical Standards and Career Ready Practices which the student will master as a part of their internship experience. Student evaluation is performed by the employer and measures student performance based upon the measures identified in the training plan.

INTERNSHIP SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The student:

- Completes elements from the Placement SAE
- Develops and implements a Training Plan centered on the educational development of the student
 - *NOTE: The Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Training Plan meets all expectations of U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) guidelines for student learner exemptions from HO Ag Occupations, Child Labor Bulletin 101 and 102 (Hazardous Occupations).*
- Documents regular reflection on the experience
- Presents a summary of the experience to a local committee organized by the agricultural education instructor

What are the SAE options?

OWNERSHIP/ENTREPRENEURSHIP SAE

OWNERSHIP SAE

Students conducting an Ownership SAE operate an individual business which provides goods and/or services to the marketplace. The operational and risk management decisions on how goods and/or services are provided are made by the student owner. Some facilities, input resources and equipment necessary for the SAE operation can be provided from outside individuals without expectations of compensation coming from the student or SAE. The operation must be of sufficient scope to enable development of student skills and abilities aligned to the AFNR Technical Standards and Career Ready Practices.

OWNERSHIP SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The student:

- Completes the basic Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Agreement
- Provides the labor resources for operation of the SAE
- Maintains financial records which reflect all inputs and outputs of the production functions performed by the business
- Performs an analysis on the productivity and profitability of the enterprise at the completion of each production/business cycle
- Documents knowledge and skills gained through the experience

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SAE

A student transitions to an Entrepreneurship SAE at the point the Ownership SAE is enhanced to contain or meet additional criteria. It incorporates all aspects of an Ownership SAE and requires the student to identify and account for, either financially or non-financially, all resources used in the business. The Entrepreneurship SAE includes a [Supervised Agricultural Experience \(SAE\) Business Plan](#) which provides for the continued growth and expansion of the operation.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

- The student:
 - Completes all elements from the Ownership SAE
 - Performs analysis on both production functions and profitability of business using standard acceptable business statements
 - Identifies those features of the business which are not realistic to the real world (e.g., buying an animal for show at greater than market value, feeding a ration different than a normal market animal would receive, selling in an artificial market or premium sale, etc.) and analyzes the business using real world scenarios
 - Identifies and accounts for, either financially or non-financially, all resources utilized in the business in the accounting system
 - Creates and updates a [Supervised Agricultural Experience \(SAE\) Business Plan](#) annually

What are the SAE options?

RESEARCH: EXPERIMENTAL, ANALYSIS OR INVENTION SAE

A student conducting a Research SAE is involved in an investigation of materials, processes and information to establish new knowledge or the validation of previous research. Research conducted must have applications within AFNR Technical Standards.

There are three variations of research SAE available that students may conduct:

EXPERIMENTAL:

An Experimental Research SAE involves the application to the scientific method to control certain variables while manipulating others to observe the outcome. The student defines the hypothesis the experiment will test, determines the experimental design, conducts the research, collects the data, draws conclusions from the data and recommends further research that can be done.

ANALYTICAL:

An Analytical Research SAE often begins with a question that asks why or how something occurs, followed by a period of data collection using qualitative and/or quantitative methodologies. The student then conducts analysis of data, facts and other information to determine the answer to the posed question.

INVENTION:

An Invention Research SAE applies the engineering design process to create a new product or service. This type of research often begins with the identification of a need and the development of a product followed by an iterative process of prototyping and testing that results in a product that meets the identified need.

RESEARCH SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The student:

- Engages in identifying an ongoing program of research following an approved Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Research Plan
- Follows scientific process and/or accepted best practices for conducting research to ensure reliability, validity and replicability of research
- Conducts peer reviews with supervising agriculture instructor and other professionals during multiple stages of the research cycle (e.g., proposal, report of findings, publications, etc.)
- Delivers a summary presentation to a local committee organized by the agricultural education instructor

What are the SAE options?

SCHOOL-BASED ENTERPRISE SAE

A School-Based Enterprise SAE is an Entrepreneurship SAE with a twist. The difference is that the operation is based at the school and involves a group of students working cooperatively.

School-Based Enterprise SAEs are student-led business enterprises that provide goods or services. They are operated from the school campus utilizing facilities, equipment, and other resources provided by the agricultural education program or the school in general. For a School-Based Enterprise, the student will be working with one or more of their peers on the operation of the enterprise. The business itself may be “owned” by the school or FFA chapter, meaning that the organization holds the risk of the business that is managed by students. Alternatively, the business may be structured as a partnership or cooperative between students. Partnership or cooperative agreements will be used to define how the responsibilities and profits are distributed.

NOTE: If an enterprise operated from the school setting is managed by an individual student, then it is considered an individual SAE and is treated as either an Ownership/Entrepreneurship SAE or a Placement/Internship SAE that happens to occur on the school grounds.

SCHOOL-BASED ENTERPRISE SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The student:

- Creates and updates a [Supervised Agricultural Experience \(SAE\) Business Plan](#) annually
- Operates the business under the overview of a board of directors to which the student management team provides reports throughout the business operation cycle
- Structures the business to provide for varying levels of student responsibility to allow for skill development and student advancement
- Operates the business in a realistic workplace environment providing real world workplace expectations for the students involved.

What are the SAE options?

SERVICE LEARNING SAE

A Service Learning SAE is conducted by one or more students in which they plan, conduct and evaluate a project designed to provide a service to the school, public entities or the community. It must provide benefit to an organization, group or individuals other than the FFA chapter.

The project must be pre-approved by a review committee that includes local stakeholders in addition to the agriculture teacher. It will be of sufficient scope to enable development of student skills and abilities aligned to the AFNR Technical Standards and Career Ready Practices.

SERVICE LEARNING SAE QUALITY INDICATORS:

The Student/Service Learning team:

- Develops a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Service Learning Plan
- Operates under the overview of a local committee to which the student management team provides reports throughout the service learning experience
- Provides for varying levels of student responsibility to allow for skill development and student advancement
- Operates in the local school, community or beyond and provides real world service learning experiences for the students involved
- Provides a summary report of the impact of the project to the local school and community
- Writes a reflection paper which describes their growth from the experience

NOTE: A Service Learning SAE should not appear within the FFA chapter's Program of Activities in a prior year unless it has been significantly expanded or changed.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SERVICE LEARNING?

The main difference is the level of commitment and difference of intention. Community service projects are usually short, one hour to a day, investments of time to an organization or cause that will benefit the community.

Service learning involves being a part of the planning, preparation and implementation that results in benefit to the community. Service learning requires a higher level of commitment and a sustained investment of time. It also starts with an intention of learning and an expectation of reflection and evaluation

Managing and executing a community service project is service learning, volunteering the day of the event is community service.

SAE IMPLEMENTATION

TEACHERS SHOULD:

- Embed foundational SAEs into instruction.
- Use the [SAE For All](#) resource to introduce students to the concepts of SAEs.
- Grade foundational SAE projects.
- Require students to maintain accurate records of their immersion SAEs.

SAE SUPERVISION AND RECORD KEEPING

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN AN SAE PROGRAM IS TO:

- Supervise project development
- Provide feedback.
- Assist the student in keeping accurate records.
- Grade the student based on their involvement.
- Visit any SAE program that takes place outside of the agriculture facility.
- Use extended contract days as needed to supervise SAE programs.

ORGANIZE AN SAE VISIT SCHEDULE:

- Select dates for SAE visits to take place.
 - Visits should include SAEs taking place in the ag facilities and gardens.
- Give students the opportunity to sign up for visits on the dates and times they are available.
- Provide enough dates to visit all students.
- Allow students to conduct their SAE visit electronically if necessary.
- Require students to take pictures and give presentations.
- If a student is unable to participate in an SAE visit, have them give a presentation about their SAE. Include demonstrations with various pieces of equipment or methods used to accomplish a task.

WHILE ON THE VISIT:

- Confirm dates and times with each student before driving to the site.
- Take notes and pictures.
- Ask questions and give feedback.
- Grade students based upon a presentation rubric or according to an SAE grading scale.
- Take other students on the visits to learn about what they could do for their own SAE.

RECORD KEEPING

Students must keep accurate records of their SAEs. Each state has specific SAE record keeping expectations for students. Many states now use online record keeping systems. Students should document their foundational SAE experiences in some form of journal. As the SAE advances from foundational to immersion, student income, expenses, assets and time invested need to be recorded. Incorporate the teaching of financial record keeping in your classroom and give students time in class to update their records. Encourage students to take time on their own to maintain accurate records. Contact your state staff to learn more about the acceptable record keeping systems in your state.