

2026 Convention Workshops Descriptions and Locations

****NOTE: Please make sure that your students show up for the workshops/tours they are registered for! There will be sign-in sheets at each workshop/tour to let you know that they have attended. They will also receive a LEADERSHIP Pin when they arrive as part of this year's PIN CHALLENGE.**

***Please do not have one chapter take all of the slots in a workshop. If you have a lot of students, spread them out as much as you can please!**

MONDAY:

State Day of Service Project: Monday - 9 AM to 10:20 AM (Every 20 minutes is a new group!) (North End Event Center Annex)

Come and participate in the State Day of Service Projects and earn a special **CITIZENSHIP Pin!** There will be Adult Kind Kits, Child Craft Kits, and Child Snack Kits to Pack as well as write kind notes to go inside. We need your help so please make sure you sign up!

Courtesy Corps: Monday - Times & Locations Vary

Please consider helping out at the Career Connections or Ag Sales Event! We need your help! You will receive a **VOLUNTEER Pin** for participating in these activities!

Continuing Your Ag Leadership Journey beyond FFA: Monday- 8 AM, 9 AM, and 10 AM (Coffee Hall 120) Presenters – Pam Debele, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation!

You've built leadership skills, public speaking confidence, and a passion for agriculture through FFA. Now what? This interactive workshop is designed for high school FFA members who want to keep growing as agricultural leaders beyond their FFA experience. Students will discover how Farm Bureau empowers young people to advocate for agriculture, engage in grassroots policy development, promote accurate agricultural information, and build professional networks that last a lifetime.

Cultivating Your Future: Monday- 10 AM (Ruttan Hall B36) Presenters – Visiting State Officers!

Members will explore strategies for goal setting, decision making, and prioritizing their time to intentionally build the future they want in this workshop with our State Officers that are visiting from other states!

Excellent Communication is More Than Talking: Monday- 8 AM, 9 AM, and 10 AM (Coffee Hall 125) Presenter – Dr. Bob Milligan!

Excellent communication increases success in school, in LDEs, with family and friends, and in a job search. We think of communication as talking, but listening is actually as or more important. Asking questions is also a key. This workshop will use a combination of activities and presentations to improve your success in listening and asking questions TO HELP YOU TO BECOME A BETTER COMMUNICATOR.

Fastenal's Living to Serve Workshop: Monday- 10 AM, 11 AM, and 12 PM (Coffee Hall 130) Presenter – Grace Johnson!

Teams will be divided into 5 groups and each be assigned a pillar within Fastenal's Community and Employee Engagement Department (Community Engagement, Youth Development, First Responders and Veterans, Wellness, or Disaster Response and Recovery. Using a template that will be provided, students will have to come up with a need within a fictional community and determine a project that would address that particular need. They will have to address what supplies are needed and potential partners (food bank, shelter, library, etc.). They will be given a timeline as well. They will have to come up with goals and develop a thought-out "purpose" to their project. They will have thirty minutes to plan and then come back to the bigger group to share what they came up with. The takeaway of this workshop is that they are now all able to walk away with a blueprint they can bring back to their chapter and potentially put into action!

Grants Game Show with the MDA: Monday - 11 AM and 12 PM (Coffee Hall 125) Presenters - Emily Toner and Kami Schoenfeld/MDA

Join us in the hot seat? Learn from Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) staff about grants through a Who Wants to be a Millionaire Game Show. Enjoy a fast paced, interactive workshop that will cover topics from being a beginner farmer, basics of grant applications and other grants to support many different types of agriculture.

Huntington Bank Tour: Monday at 3 PM (Tour will meet at the Jackson County entrance on the East side of the stadium next to the loading dock) Presenter – Brady Buresh

Get an inside look at one of the best venues in the country – Huntington Bank Stadium! Tour Destinations include the T. Denny Sanford Athletics Hall of Fame and premium, behind-the-scenes spaces - Gopher Locker & Gopher Game Day Tunnel & Field (Access is subject to change due to availability and weather).

Link in Your Network Using Social Media – Monday at 9 AM (Ruttan Hall B36) Presenter – Mary Buschette, University of Minnesota!

Not sure what LinkedIn is or how it can help you? This workshop will introduce FFA members to LinkedIn and show you how social media can be used to build a professional network, explore careers in agriculture and natural resources, and connect with alumni, mentors, and future employers. Students will leave with simple steps to start a profile and begin growing their network!

MN Aquatic Inv. Species Research Center Tour: Monday at 10:30 AM (Meet at MAISRC Containment Lab Located on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus)

Join us for a guided tour of the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center Containment Lab, where you'll get an inside look at our state-of-the-art facility and discover the innovative research underway. It's a perfect opportunity for individuals curious about the world of science. In 2016, the building underwent substantial upgrades and currently has 10,400 square feet of laboratory space available for researchers to use for aquatic invasive species research and teaching.

National Officer Workshop - Simple is Significant: Monday at 11 AM (Student Center Cherrywood Room) Presenter –

Lilly Nyland, National FFA *Secretary* from Michigan!

Some of the most significant moments are often the simplest ones. In this workshop, we will explore the power of small moments and learn how intentional actions can turn them into meaningful, lasting impact.

No Disease! Biosecure Habits Can Keep Animals Healthy- Monday at 10 and 11 AM (Ruttan Hall B342)

Presenter – Diane DeWitte, University of MN Extension and Angie Varnum, DVM Extension Livestock Veterinarian.

This workshop will focus on prevention of both endemic and foreign diseases; Participants will learn how to keep their home animals healthy, how to prevent entrance of new disease into the herd, and, if there's an outbreak, how to avoid spread within the herd. Workshop will demonstrate biosecurity basics!

Raptor Center Tour- Monday at 10 and 11 AM, 12 PM (Arrive at the Raptor Center on St. Paul Campus)

The Raptor Center at the U of M offers educational tours featuring up-close views of owls, hawks, falcons, and eagles. Located on the St. Paul campus, these guided sessions showcase live "ambassador" birds and explore their rehabilitation.

The Scoop on Poop: Growing Crops & Saving Streams- Monday at 9 AM, 10 AM, 11 AM (Student Center 202)

Presenter – Brian Mc Neill, University of Minnesota Extension/MN 4-H Youth Development! Get the inside scoop on manure! Youth will explore how manure helps plants thrive and what can happen when nutrients run off into water. Using a creative visual simulation, participants will learn practical strategies farmers use to protect both crops and the environment. Through hands-on modeling and problem-solving, youth will see how timing, placement, and soil health practices make a big difference in keeping nutrients where they belong—feeding plants instead of flowing into lakes and rivers. Participants will think like environmental scientists and farmers as they test ideas, observe results, and discover how responsible manure management supports strong crops, clean water, and healthy communities.

Taste of CFANS- Monday (It will be a come and go type of experience. Workshop slots for students to sign up will start at 8:00 a.m. and every half hour after through 11:00 a.m. - Student Center Ballroom)

This is your chance to sample what the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) at the University of Minnesota has to offer.

Meet current students, staff, and faculty, explore interactive displays, and get a firsthand look at the innovative research and real-world learning experiences that prepare students to solve global challenges. Whether you're passionate about protecting natural resources, improving food systems, or advancing agricultural technology, there's a place for you in CFANS.

Veterinary Diagnostics Lab Tour- Monday at 11 AM (Arrive at the VDL on St. Paul Campus)

The University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL) is a national leader in protecting and promoting animal and human health through early disease detection and monitoring. Mission: to safeguard animal and public health by providing rapid and accurate diagnosis of animal diseases, identification of emerging diseases, development of innovative diagnostic methods, and training for future diagnosticians and veterinarians. As Minnesota's only full-service animal health diagnostic laboratory, the VDL: supports the livestock and poultry industries, assists animal research scientists and educators, serves companion animal

owners, acts as the official laboratory of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, and plays a vital role in the national animal and human health system! The VDL is proud to be part of the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE Veterinary Diagnostics Lab TOUR:

- During the tour, hazards may be encountered including human and animal pathogens, slippery floors, and trip hazards. All participants must remain with the Tour Leader and follow all instructions.
- Participants will be required to sign a **Tour Waiver and Release prior to the tour** (this can be signed upon arrival if you are 18; under 18 requires a parent signature and must be brought with you). Individuals without a signed waiver will not be permitted to participate.
- No food or beverages are allowed, and filming or photography is not permitted.
- Participants must wear closed toed shoes with heel covering and full length pants/skirts.

TUESDAY:

Auctioneering 101- Tuesday at 10 AM (Ridder Arena Club Room) Presenters – Auctioneers/Auctioneer Association!

Practicing Auctioneers will show you how to be involved in this great career! Sit in and learn the ins and outs of the auction industry. More info coming soon!

Beef Quality Assurance: Tuesday at 9:00 -10:30 a.m. (Williams Arena Club Room) Presenters – UMN Extension/MN Beef Council!

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a voluntary, nationally coordinated program that provides U.S. cattle producers with science-based best practices for raising cattle. It focuses on animal well-being, food safety and environmental stewardship, aimed at producing healthy, high-quality beef while reducing defects like injection-site lesions or bruises. BQA certificates are good for three years.

Build Your Network on Social Media: Tuesday at 8 AM (Williams Arena Club Room) Presenters – VantagePoint Marketing!

Social media can be a powerful tool for building relationships and creating opportunities. In this workshop, students learn how to use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and LinkedIn to share experiences, connect with businesses and mentors, and build a positive online presence. The session focuses on simple strategies such as tagging, sharing photos, and engaging with others to grow a strong and supportive network.

Find Your Event, Find Your Strength: Preparing for FFA LDEs- 9 AM and 11 AM (Ridder Arena Club Room) Presenter – Joe Ramstad, Iowa State University!

Not sure which Leadership Development Event (LDE) is right for you? This session will break down individual and team LDE opportunities within the Minnesota FFA Association and the National FFA Organization—from speaking events to parliamentary procedure and beyond. Learn what each event involves, what skills you'll

build, and how to start preparing now. Whether you love working solo or thrive on a team, you'll leave with a clearer path and practical steps to get competition-ready.

Workshop/Date/Time	Location
MON: State Service Project Packing Kits 9:00 AM	North End Event Center- Back Annex
MON: State Service Project Packing Kits 9:20 AM	North End Event Center- Back Annex
MON: State Service Project Packing Kits 9:40 AM	North End Event Center- Back Annex
MON: State Service Project Packing Kits 10:00 AM	North End Event Center- Back Annex
MON: State Service Project Packing Kits 10:20 AM	North End Event Center- Back Annex
MON: Courtesy Corps Ag Sales: 7:30 AM -10:00 AM	Ruttan Hall
MON: Courtesy Corps Ag Sales: 10:00 AM -12:30 PM	Ruttan Hall
MON: Courtesy Corps Ag Sales: 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Ruttan Hall
MON: Courtesy Corps Career Connections: 7 AM - 9:30 AM	Progress Center - MN State Fairgrounds
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MON: Taste of CFANS- 8:30 AM	Student Center Ballroom
MON: Taste of CFANS- 9 AM	Student Center Ballroom
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MON: Taste of CFANS- 11 AM	Student Center Ballroom
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TUES: Beef Quality Assurance- 9-10:30 AM	Williams Arena Clubroom
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TUES: Find Your Event, Find Your Strength: Preparing for FFA LDEs- 9:00 AM	Ridder Arena Clubroom
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