

# SANTA MARIA HIGH SCHOOL FFA

*A year of COVID and how our FFA Chapter and Agriculture Department thrived*



## *First Semester Activities*

## **DRIVE THRU FFA MEETINGS ARE A SUCCESS**

When school started, and students weren't on campus we needed to find a way to stay connected with our members, thus began the Drive Thru FFA Meeting.



Our first meeting was in August and we welcomed our members, at a distance of course, and handed out over 150 ice cream cups.

In September, we decided to give another one of our traditions a try with the drive thru and hosted our first every drive thru Student of the Month recognition. Each of the 10 teachers in the Agriculture Department chose 5 students to recognize for their participation in class and positive attitude. We went all out and gave all 50 students a Little Cesar's Pizza, a personalized cup, a pen and a certificate.

Come November, we decided to make Thanksgiving a little more memorable for our students and gave away almost 80 turkeys to deserving FFA members. We worked with the Altrusa of Golden Valley service club and was able to get a generous donation of \$1000 to allow us to purchase the turkeys for our students. We also celebrated our Greenhand FFA members, which are first year FFA members by giving them their Greenhand pin as well as a lettuce plug donated by Plantel to take home. For December, we were lucky to receive another generous donation of 50 Christmas trees from a former SMHS Alumni, owner of True Value Hardware in Arroyo Grande. It is amazing to be able to work with our community members to provide something special for our students. During this meeting, we had over 250 members drive thru and pick up their holiday treats, classroom supplies, and for a special group of students, their State FFA Degree pins.

One of the most exciting things about our drive thru meetings is not only seeing our students but their parents and siblings as well. During our Student of the Month Recognition, the parents were so excited to see all of the teachers cheering for their child.



# BRINGING JOY TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH FLOWERS



We have been able to allow our students to put the skills they have learned in their Floral Design classes to great use by participating at their flower sale. A group of students went and made bouquets with the flowers customers purchased during the sale. We were also able to get flowers donated and participate in the national "Petal it Forward" initiative sponsored by the Society of American Florists and bring some cheer to our teachers on campus.

Although everything is different, we have tried our best to bring some normalcy to the lives of our students.

The obviously negative part of COVID is that every thing changed. However, a positive part of COVID is the relationship we have been able to make with a local cut flower grower in Arroyo Grande, Ocean Breeze Farms.



## Student Recognition

This time of year is also when our hardworking students are rewarded for their hardwork and dedication to their projects.

The State FFA Degree is awarded to students who have been in

FFA for a minimum of 3 years and who have earned and invested at least \$1,000 in their SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) Project and spent a minimum of 500 hours working in their project. Other factors like community service, above chapter level FFA activities and participating in school activities are all part of this recognition.

This year we are proud to have 37 students receive this honor!

### *Congratulations Santa Maria FFA 2020-2021 State Degree Recipients*

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Dasmen Barajas          | 21. Amy Rodriguez           |
| 2. Daniela Cayetano        | 22. Juan Santos Garcia      |
| 3. Eric Ceja               | 23. Yasmilde Solano         |
| 4. Jaquelina De Jesus      | 24. Kassy Truhitte          |
| 5. Alexis Flores           | 25. Erica Vasquez           |
| 6. Veronica Garcia De Leon | 26. Carmelita Aguilar       |
| 7. Idalis Gil              | 27. Dennise Bernal          |
| 8. Paola Gomez             | 28. Mariana Charro Vargas   |
| 9. Diego De Leon           | 29. Jessica Segundo         |
| 10. Stacy Gomez            | 30. Jasmine Sierra          |
| 11. Sara Gutierrez         | 31. Kimena Mendoza          |
| 12. Zaira Hernandez        | 32. Maria Pacheco           |
| 13. Karla Hernandez        | 33. Fredi Gonzalez          |
| 14. David Leon             | 34. Madelyn Amador- Naranjo |
| 15. Daniela Martinez       | 35. Daniel Angeles          |
| 16. Maria Nolasco          | 36. Lisbeth Ramos           |
| 17. Rosaura Perea          | 37. Sebastian Contreras     |
| 18. Marisol Perez          |                             |
| 19. Araceli Ramirez-Mata   |                             |
| 20. Adamari Rodrigues      |                             |

# COME AND GET YOUR SUPPLIES!

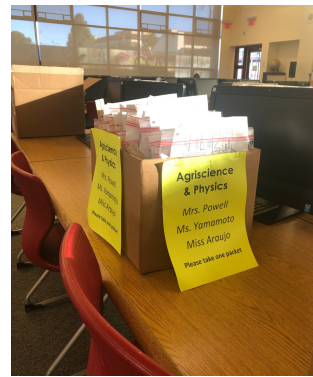
Our teachers have been putting in extra time and effort to bring the learning home for our students.

The Floral Design & Advanced Floral Design students have had numerous supply pick up days throughout the semester and have been able to make hands on projects and floral arrangements at home.

The teachers of our Agriscience & Physics class, which is our new freshman level science course, put together some supplies so the students could do labs at home.

Mr. DeBernardi and Mr. Guerra both worked with the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau to continue the traditional Oak Tree Resotation Project where the student grow the acorns at home and are later taken to the city to plant Oak Trees throughout the community.

We are trying any way we can to keep our students motivated about learning and to not lose the hands on aspect that makes the Agriculture Department at Santa Maria High School so very special!



## What's next for Santa Maria FFA?

Judging Teams, Public Speaking and livestock projects of course! Currently, we have some of our Career Development Event teams (aka Judging Teams) practicing for virtual contests that are beginning to be put on by different schools throughout the state. We are also preparing for our Chapter Public Speaking Contest, where students can compete in the Creed contest, Impromptu, Job Interview and Prepared Public Speaking. Advisors are also beginning to work with students to see who will have a livestock project this year for the Virtual fair with the hopes of a live show happening as well.

# HAPPY NATIONAL FFA WEEK!

Every year during the month of February, the FFA Organization celebrates National FFA Week. During a normal year, students would have participated in competitive events at lunch, our annual tractor pull and our infamous "Got a buck, you're in luck" hamburger BBQ. This year, things were a little different, but our students were still able to get involved and celebrate National FFA Week.

This week our students celebrated National FFA Week through virtual contests posted on Social Media, a virtual Zoom meeting, Spirit Dress Up days and a Drive Thru Meeting.

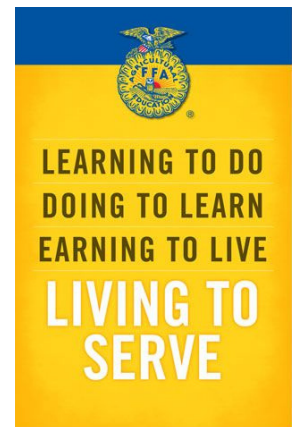
During our Drive Thru Meeting, which some of you may have participated in while leaving work Wednesday, students were given a variety of Agricultural goodies and had a lot to see. Students in the Agriculture Leadership class reached out to different agricultural commodity councils and received goodies from Sunmaid Raisins, the Beef Council, the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau and California Real Milk. Each student who attended the Drive Thru received a customized drawstring Santa Maria FFA bag filled with these goodies and a special snack!

We also had a "looking zoo" instead of a petting zoo with a miniature horse, goats, rabbits and chickens. Each student was given a small bag of potting soil, a container and either pumpkin, radish or spinach seeds to plant at home. Our Ag mechanics class made some special metal cutouts for our students as well.

Finally, the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau was there to pass out FFA jackets to those students who applied for a free FFA jacket through the Blue Jacket Bonanza program which is celebrating their 10th year awarding FFA jackets to deserving students.



Mr. Campbell even made his way through the Drive Thru meeting!



The FFA motto is something our students live by and during our Drive Thru meeting, students brought blankets and socks to donate to the Salvation Army. We are so proud of our students and their desire to Live to Serve!

# National FFA Week continued...



Our students celebrated Ag Teacher Appreciation Day with special messages for each of the Ag Teachers. One student wanted to thank all teachers for their hard work this year and we completely agree with them.

Thank you to all of the teachers and staff at SMHS for your continued support of our students and our Agriculture Program, we couldn't do it without you!  
Go Saints!



**Thank  
you!**



## Golden Owl Award goes to Mr. Luis Guerra!

This week, Mr. Luis Guerra was also chosen as the South Coast Region Golden Owl. This is an award for agriculture teachers sponsored by Nationwide Insurance.

Mr. Guerra will now go on to compete against the other winners in the state. If you see him, wish him luck and if you know Mr. Guerra, you know he is very deserving of this special recognition!

Follow us on Social Media and check out our website!



Instagram - @santamaria\_ffa

<http://www.saintsffa.org>