

Welcome to the information site for the

VIRGINIA FFA HORTICULTURE CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT



This site has been prepared to give an overview of the FFA Floriculture and Nursery/Landscape Career Development Events conducted during the Virginia FFA Convention. The several sections summarize the rules, components, and organization of the events as well as provide examples of what you can expect.

More detailed information and samples of the various forms used are in the printed rules and procedures distributed to teachers. To obtain a copy, or to ask any questions about materials presented here, please contact Dr. Alan McDaniel, Superintendent of the Horticulture C.D.E. at alanmcd@vt.edu or 540-231-5781.

RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL FFA C.D.E.s

The Virginia FFA Horticulture C.D.E. is a combined event of both the FFA Floriculture C.D.E. and the FFA Nursery/Landscape C.D.E. The Virginia events certify one state winning team for each of the two national events, as well as recognizing the top individuals in each area.

Because many chapters enter teams in both the Floriculture C.D.E. and the Nursery/Landscape C.D.E., these chapters are designated as entering a Horticulture Team. The Virginia FFA Association recognizes the top Horticulture Team with a sponsored award. Note that it is possible for one chapter to have the state winning Floriculture team, another chapter the winning Nursery/Landscape team, while a third chapter with second-place finishes in both component C.D.E.s could earn state recognition as the top Horticulture team.

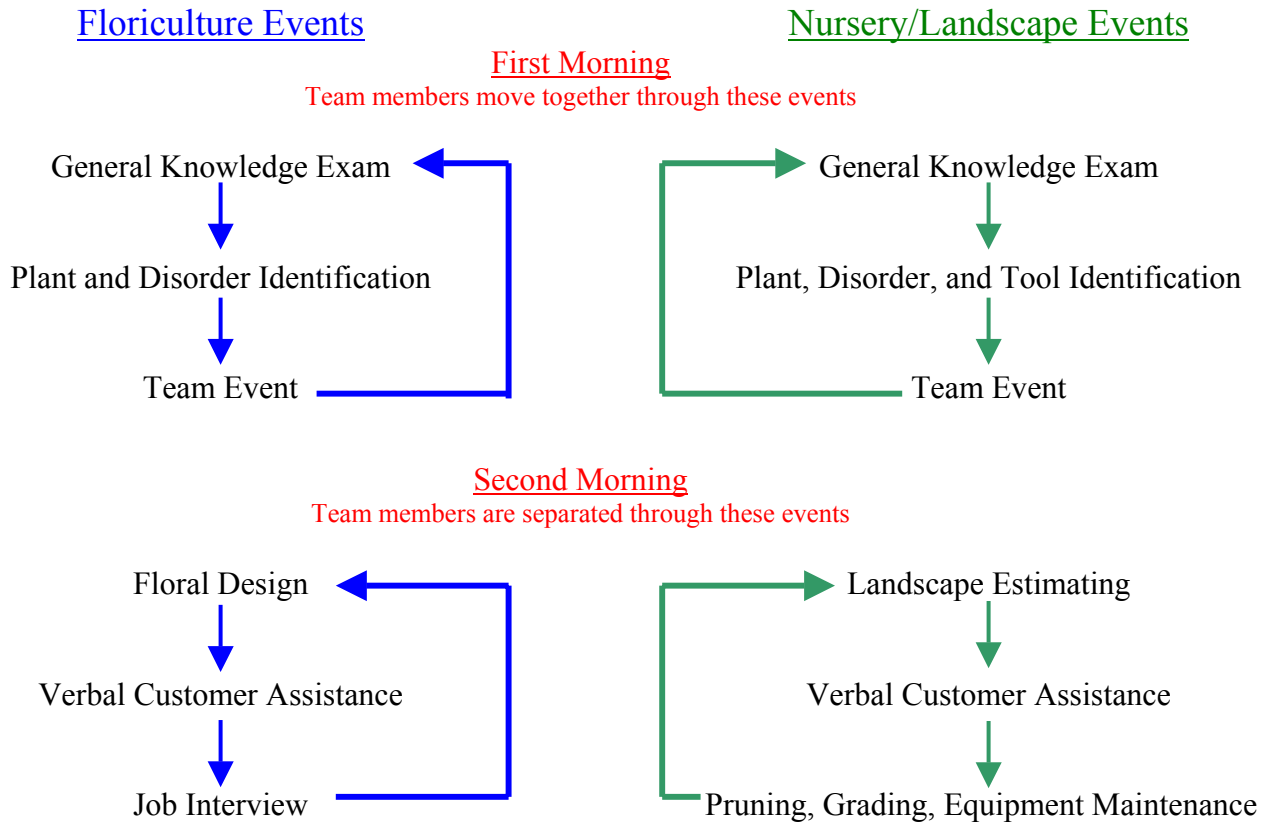
TEAM COMPOSITION

	Virginia C.D.E.	National C.D.E.
Floriculture Team	3 or 4	3
Nursery/Landscape Team	3 or 4	3 or 4
Horticulture Team	(6 - 8)	(not applicable)

A chapter with only 1 or 2 student entries may still compete for individual recognitions.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMPETITION

The Virginia FFA Horticulture C.D.E. is conducted in two morning sessions, approximately three hours each, during the state convention. *All contestants participate in all components both mornings.* The following chart shows the sequence of events:



EVENT DESCRIPTIONS, RULES, AND ADVICE

FIRST MORNING EVENTS

General Knowledge Exam

50 multiple-choice questions
50 minutes to complete

Team members are separated during the exam.

Preparation Advice: Copies of exams and other materials given during the National Floriculture and Nursery/Landscape C.D.E.s are compiled each year and made available for purchase through the FFA Supply Service at <http://www.ffa.org/>.



Identification

50 stations with plants and disorders, plus tools (Nursery/Landscape only), presented to identify by matching with list of names, with 50 minutes to complete.

Each station is marked with a number for a line on the answer sheet. On that line write the *number* next to the name from the list. When a disorder is to be identified, a separate “Disorder” card will also be present to know to identify the disorder, not the plant. The exception is when a Nursery/Landscape weed is to be identified, which will be labeled as a “Weed Disorder.”



The plants, disorders, and tools listings may be referenced here.:

<http://www.hort.vt.edu/faculty/McDaniel/VaFFAIDListWeb.pdf>

Team members are separated during this event. The 50 stations will be arranged into four areas with 12-13 specimens each. Contestants have 12 minutes to identify specimens in an area and then rotate with their group to the next area. The contestant is free to move at his or her own pace and to go back to a station for another look, but only within that area and its 12-minute time period.

A critical rule is that no specimens may be touched at any time or in any way.

Preparation Advice: Most chapters have greater plant identification success by building a plant collection in the greenhouse or school arboretum. Visiting local florists, greenhouses and nurseries can help with materials not available at school. Numerous books, videos, and CD-ROMs are available as study supplements. On-line study visuals of plants and disorders from the National FFA Nursery/Landscape list are at <http://www.rockvillehighschool.org/ffanulan.htm>. Tools and equipment on the Nursery/Landscape list that are not part of the school inventory may be found pictured in landscaping textbooks, videos, trade magazines, catalogs of horticulture supply companies, and local farm supply stores and garden centers.

Do spend time studying the list. Note that the plants are alphabetic by scientific name. Learning at least the plant genus will speed up finding the name and number to place on the answer sheet. Remember that this event is a matching process. Studying the entire list helps the contestant find alternative names when not sure of the specific identification. This has particular value for the Nursery/Landscape tool list where better habits in equipment vocabulary will also develop.

Team Event

In this area the team members are together accomplishing a set of tasks. Those tasks are the responsibility of separate individuals on the team, and each individual is credited with points earned for a task assigned within the team. However, team members collaborate with each other, helping the individual assigned a task to earn a higher score. This interaction among 7 team members is also being scored along with performance on the individual tasks. Thus, this event starts as a set of individual practicum tasks that contribute to individual scores, but how the team members work together is very important in improving individual scores and the total team score.

When the team members enter this event area, they meet first with the overall team event judge. The judge gives the team identification tags so he or she can follow them as they work separately and together. The judge then gives them a set of four scores sheets matching the four practicum tasks to be accomplished, plus instructions on the 20-minute time limit, where the individual task stations are located, and who will provide further instructions on the tasks.



Preparation Advice: Look closely in the printed rules at the criteria the team judge will use to determine the overall team score. Many of the decisions involved can be pre-planned during team practice sessions, including who will give team leadership, who will take responsibility for particular types of tasks, and how team members will check on each other's progress and ask for or offer assistance.

Note that with four individual tasks assigned to the team, a four-member team must complete all four, one individual responsible for each task. A three-member team can choose which three tasks will be completed (the fourth task paper is returned to the judge). Non-teams of one or two individuals will also make the same decision.

The four tasks to be accomplished will be selected from the following categories:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Floriculture</u> | <u>Nursery/Landscape</u> |
| Cutting Propagation | Cutting Propagation |
| Plant Potting | Plant Potting |
| Problem Solving | Problem Solving |
| Corsage Construction | Landscape Drawing |

Note that these may be assigned in any combination, such as two cutting propagation tasks and two plant potting tasks with each involving different plants, containers, etc. Whatever combination is assigned, the team will determine how best to utilize the individual member skills to complete the tasks.

Each of the individual tasks is discussed in more detail below.

Cutting Propagation (F and N/L) – From a designated stock plant or cut branch, select, prepare, treat, stick, label, and water-in stem cuttings. The task judge will give instructions on how many cuttings to make, the container and media to use, and where to water the finished cuttings.



Preparation Advice: Look closely at the propagation scoring criteria in the printed rules. Each main heading includes sub-criteria that are evaluated for those points. Also check the guidelines on hormone treatment procedures. Three areas often needing improvement are selecting the appropriate cutting size, uniformity of cuttings in the finished container, and flower disbudding. Broadleaf nursery stock also should be evaluated for leaf trimming.



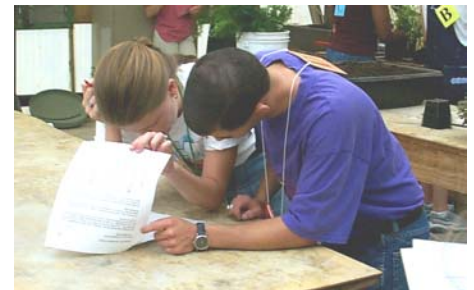
Plant Potting (F and N/L) – Prepare, transplant, label, and water-in designated rooted cuttings or divisions. The task judge will give instructions on what container, media, and plant to use, how many containers and plants per container to prepare, and where to water the finished plants.



Preparation Advice: Look closely at the potting scoring criteria in the printed rules. Each main heading includes sub-criteria that are evaluated for those points. Note the different criteria between floriculture and nursery plant types. Areas often needing improvement are the position and stability of finished plants, lifting and handling care of soft bare-root plants, and root pruning of nursery plants. Note the example *Liriope* divisions also should have trimming done to reduce excess water loss after transplanting.



Problem Solving (F and N/L) – Utilize the resource material provided to solve a multi-part problem related to the C.D.E. area. Prior examples involved calculating how many cases of containers are required to set up a new production area or selection of plants from a list meeting certain criteria.



Preparation Advice: Teams will be given the answer sheet for the problem to help decide who is the best member for the question involved. Be prepared for making calculations, but none may be required. Example problems from the National Floriculture and Nursery/Landscape C.D.E. materials may be purchased through the FFA Supply Service at <http://www.ffa.org/>. Note that this is typically a longer task to complete than propagation or potting, and team member collaboration is not only desirable but also recommended.

Corsage Construction (F only) – Wire and tape all materials to assemble a \$15 shoulder corsage from an itemized bill and package the corsage.



Preparation Advice: Look closely in the printed rules at the corsage scoring criteria. The itemized bill form, with prices, is also there. Most contestants choosing this task have pre-planned the components and the design during practice. Recognize that the labor mark-up on the itemized bill is *in addition to* the retail cost of materials.



Practice the techniques and the design multiple times. Visit with local florists to observe and gain advice. (Use more than one florist, if possible, as they will vary in design quality.) This task needs more time than the others. While one team member is responsible for the completed assignment, there is excellent opportunity for team collaboration utilizing skills of the others. Be particularly alert to effective placing and facing of flowers in the design (not too crowded or spaced apart), scale and quality of the ribbon bow, and professional finish of the design so it stays together and is comfortable to wear.



Landscape Drawing (N/L only) –Prepare a scale drawing on grid paper based on written descriptions of the property, structures, and landscape components.

Preparation Advice: See <http://www.hort.vt.edu/faculty/McDaniel/nationalFFA.htm> for an example assignment, drawing solution, and score form. (Note that this score form is based on 50 points for the



national C.D.E. rather than the 75 for the Virginia event.) Become proficient at scale conversions and compass orientations. Practice using, and bring to the event, drawing aids such as an architect's scale, triangle or ruler straightedge, circle template, and quality eraser. Note that no particular plant symbols are expected. They only need to be neat, appropriate to the type of plant depicted, and distinct from the other plant-type symbols. As the drawing is completed, use the score form as a checklist that all components are included. This is also a longer task, such that team collaboration is desirable, for benefit of both the individual score and the total team score.

Final Advice on the Team Event: The 20-minute time limit is ample to accomplish every individual task when contestants are prepared and practiced and they work efficiently. Individual task stations are organized at the ends of four workbenches with sufficient space for multiple people. This separates the activities but allows easy movement between stations for team collaboration.

The team member assigned a particular task must start and finish that task. Other members of the team may assist (by offering or being asked) by discussing the task progress or even participating directly, e.g., tying the corsage bow for the teammate. Assistance usually comes from team members who have completed their tasks, but not always. If time allows, an individual may leave the task in progress to check with another team member. This may be to ask for assistance or simply to check if that team member needs assistance. However, no individual may leave the assigned task in the hands of a teammate to complete. He or she must return for at least the last actions and to turn in the final product.

First impressions may suggest that certain individual tasks are “easier” than others. Analysis of scores from the 2001 events reveals this is not the case when contestants are prepared and use their skills effectively. Teams of four members are not at a disadvantage because they cannot decline a particular task.

SECOND MORNING EVENTS

All team members separated

Floral Design Practicum (F only) - Prepare a \$25 floral arrangement with itemized bill in one of the following assigned styles:
 1-sided triangle, symmetric or asymmetric, for a hall table
 1-sided low, symmetric triangle for reception table
 1-sided mixed bouquet with finished back for a desk



Time limit = 30 minutes, including bill preparation.



Preparation Advice: Practice is critical even though difficult because of fresh flower costs. Seek assistance from area florists (and wholesalers) for both materials and design techniques. Use the design evaluation criteria in the printed rules to review progress. Areas often needing attention include design scale, overfilling the design with flowers and especially fillers, and loss of unity between background and foreground.

The itemized bill is 30% of the practicum score. It is checked closely for both over- and under-statement of quantities used. Retail prices provided for the bill change each year according to the wholesale cost of the materials, but the 2001 price list is given below for practice purposes.



RETAIL PRICES FOR 2001 ITEMIZED BILL

Item	Price	Unit	Note
Gladiolus	\$1.20	stem	*
Snapdragons	\$1.75	stem	*
Liatris	\$1.25	stem	
Spray mums/daisies	\$1.00	whole stem	*
Pixie carnations	\$0.30	bloom	
Standard carnations	\$0.85	bloom	
Gypsophila	\$1.25	whole stem	*
Statice	\$0.80	whole stem	*
Leatherleaf	\$0.30	whole stem	*
Container	\$3.00	each	
Foam	\$0.75	pre-cut block	



* If you only use part of a "stem" and throw out the rest, the business still paid for that whole stem. Charge for the whole stem you use, but be sure the customer gets full value for the price paid. Use all your materials wisely.



Landscape Estimating (N/L only) – Interpret and measure from a landscape plan to prepare estimates for installing selected components presented in 20 multiple-choice questions.

50 minutes to complete



Preparation Advice: Example drawings, questions, and solutions are available from the National Nursery/Landscape C.D.E. materials available for purchase through the FFA Supply Service at <http://www.ffa.org/>. Extensive arithmetic is involved in this practicum, but it is not complicated. Learn the necessary formulas for scale conversions; calculation of areas of rectangles, triangles, and circles; calculation of volumes from the base areas; and conversions of linear, area (square), and volume (cubic) units between inches, feet, and yards. Practice using the units in all parts of the calculations. Leaving them out is the cause of most incorrect answers.

Verbal Customer Assistance Practicum (F and N/L) – assist a customer in a retail sales environment in either of the following situations:

Over-the-Counter Sale – receive a customer order, including advising on item selection and use, promoting the sale, recording the sale, and handling payment.

Plant Clinic – diagnose and recommend treatment for a plant disorder as presented, using pesticide labels provided for chemical controls or other resources for alternative treatment methods.



Conversation time limit = 7 minutes.



Preparation Advice: Retail employment experience is very evident among the most successful contestants, but this can be duplicated with customer sales in the school program and by role-playing in team practice. Note in the scoring criteria that conversational and sales skills are primary. Also practice filling out the sales invoices that are provided with the printed rules as knowing what information to collect, where it is entered, and how the bill is calculated will save a lot of time.

Inventory lists are provided at the station to assist the sales conversation. They also include added information on store policies regarding payment form, delivery, etc. These should be reviewed prior to the customer's (judge) arrival. For practice purposes, partial inventory listings from the 2001 events are provided here. Supplement these examples with any additional items desired for the practice.

VIRGINIA GARDEN CENTER -- 2001 PRICE LIST

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
TREES		
FLOWERING CRABAPPLE - WHITE, PINK	5 GAL	\$30.00
HERITAGE RIVER BIRCH	2" CAL	\$50.00
SHRUBS AND GROUND COVERS		
AZALEA - RED, WHITE, PINK	1 GAL	\$ 8.00
PACHYSANDRA	48/FLAT	\$20.00/FLAT
BARK MULCH - (COVERS 9 SQ. FT.)	3 CU. FT. BAG	\$ 9.00

NON-CASH SALES POLICIES

- CREDIT CARDS -- MC, VISA, DISCOVER ACCEPTED
- STORE CHARGE -- BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION ONLY
- PERSONAL CHECKS -- ON LOCAL BANK WITH NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE
- SEE INVOICE FOR DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION POLICIES

FLOWERS BY VIRGINIA -- 2001 AVAILABLE MATERIALS

<u>FLOWERS</u>	<u>TYPES</u>	<u>COLORS</u>
MUMS	STANDARD	BRONZE, YELLOW, WHITE
	DAISIES	WHITE, YELLOW, LAVENDER
	TEA	RED, WHITE, PINK, YELLOW
SNAPS		YELLOW, WHITE, PINK, SALMON
BALLOONS	MYLAR, HELIUM -- ALL OCCASIONS	

NON-CASH SALES POLICIES

- CREDIT CARDS -- MC, VISA, DISCOVER ACCEPTED
- STORE CHARGE -- BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION ONLY
- PERSONAL CHECKS -- ON LOCAL BANK WITH NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE

FTD SERVICE CHARGE = \$4.00 PROCESSING + \$.75 HANDLING FEE

RECORD ON ORDER FORM AS DELIVERY CHARGE

DELIVERY POLICY = SAME DAY ON ORDERS IN BEFORE 3:00 P.M.

SUNDAY AND HOLIDAY DELIVERIES FOR WEDDINGS/FUNERALS ONLY.

Example order forms, satisfactory and unsatisfactory, for sample floral and garden center sale situations are provided for study. Look at the sale information first, and then study the unsatisfactory written order to evaluate what could have been better done. (Remember that the sales information is not volunteered by the customer; the clerk must ask for it.)

<http://www.hort.vt.edu/faculty/McDaniel/saleexamples.htm>

Disorders to diagnose for the plant clinic are those on the identification list. Study labels of general-use pesticides in the school lab to become familiar with what information is included and where it is located for faster reference during the clinic conversation. No order form is prepared for this event format.

Job Interview Practicum (F only) – interview for one of the four positions described in the printed rules. Prepare a typed resume and hand-written job application form to submit the first morning of the C.D.E.



Conversation time limit = 10 minutes.

Preparation Advice: References for resume and interview preparation may be available through school business programs. Some are also listed with the new National Job Interview C.D.E. at http://www.ffa.org/programs/cde/downloads/pdf/Job_Interview.pdf. Mock interviews, particularly with local business people, will help prepare for questions that may be asked and that the applicant might ask.

Pruning, Measuring, and Equipment Maintenance Practicum

(N/L only) – evaluate 15 stations of plants or equipment for decisions on the following actions:

Plant Pruning – evaluate four positions marked on a plant by numbered clothespins on where pruning cuts should be made.

Plant Measuring – use the American Standard for Nursery Stock procedures to measure plants for grade determination.

Equipment Maintenance – evaluate a tool, equipment item, or operating manual information to determine proper maintenance action or use.

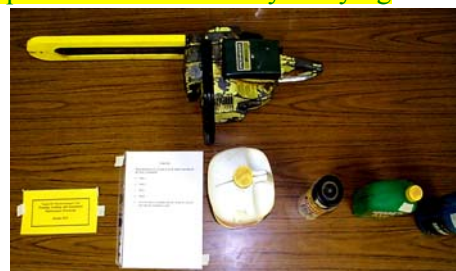


25 minutes to complete 15 stations with multiple-choice questions.



Preparation Advice: For the pruning questions remember to “prune with a purpose” and if there is no benefit to plant health or form, the cut should not be made. Look at the answer choices to guide the decision on cut/don’t cut. Procedures on nursery stock measuring are not complicated. Just look at the plant and follow the simple guidelines in the summary at <http://www.hort.vt.edu/faculty/McDaniel/nationalFFA.htm>. Knowing these can quickly eliminate some of the answer choices. Preparing for equipment maintenance/operation questions is not done by studying

references, nor is knowledge of machinery repair required. More important is experience working with the equipment and knowing basic procedures in their operation and preventative maintenance. (For example, what oils are needed for a chain saw with a 2-cycle engine?) Also, questions with reference material provided immediately indicate information to answer the question is in the reference.



That completes the overview of the Virginia FFA Horticulture Career Development Event, incorporating both the state Floriculture C.D.E. and Nursery/Landscape C.D.E. Please provide any comments, suggestions for additional preparation aids, or requests for other information to Alan R. McDaniel at alanmcd@vt.edu.