

## **Youth Agricultural Education Chapter**

### **Chapter Description/Goals:**

Formed in early 2020, this chapter provides a central structure for all members of OEFFA who work with or are interested in working with youth to educate them about sustainable agricultural practices. For the purposes of this chapter, sustainable agriculture is defined as that which utilizes organic, regenerative production methods to produce food, fiber, and other useful goods. Our vision is to further OEFFA's mission of promoting healthful, ecological, accountable, and sustainable agricultural systems by cultivating the next generation of agricultural and food system leaders.

This chapter has the following goals:

1. Foster the next generation of sustainable farmers in Ohio by providing them with the highest quality education and opportunities for success and by encouraging their philosophical and professional development to be molded by OEFFA's mission.
2. Provide agricultural educators a venue in which to share strategies and ideas that promote sustainable agriculture instruction both inside and outside of traditional classroom environments.
3. Promote an alternative to traditional agricultural education student organizations so that sustainable agriculture students can receive support and recognition for their work.
4. Promote youth service projects that are aimed at furthering OEFFA's goals.

### **Target Audience:**

This chapter aims to serve two primary audiences. The primary audience served should be sustainable agricultural educators. Chapter members may work in traditional agricultural educational settings, such as career-technical education programs, or they may work in non-traditional settings such as non-agriculture classrooms, nature centers, school gardens, arboretums, museums, non-profit agencies, government or tribal organizations, or any other venue that provides education related to the food system, agriculture, or related topics.

The second audience to be served are sustainable agriculture students who will be formed into youth chapters at the local or school level and supported by an adult member who is a chapter member. These youth chapters will then meet annually at the OEFFA conference to participate in networking and professional development opportunities.

### **Chapter President:**

Josh Stephens, [jstephens@euclidschools.org](mailto:jstephens@euclidschools.org), (216) 970-1843

Josh has served for 15 years in Euclid City Schools and is currently the Urban Agriculture Career-Technical Education teacher for the Lakeshore Compact. He also runs a small, urban farm called Urban Renaissance Farms. He has experience working with youth in a variety of formal and informal educational contexts and holds advanced degrees in education and environmental policy. His particular area of interest is in helping young people develop a relationship with the land so that they will commit themselves to living sustainably.

### **Steering Committee:**

Jodi Kushins, [jodiekushins@gmail.com](mailto:jodiekushins@gmail.com)

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