In 1928, the Future Farmers of America organization was formed with a commitment to make a difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. At the time, the Colorado State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (now Colorado State University) became a natural partner with the FFA. This was a result of the outstanding agricultural education offered to its students and, as a land-grant university, its leadership in agriculture research and outreach.

Today, in an increasingly complex world, agriculture education remains the key to many of the planet’s most pressing issues: food security, disease prevention, energy sources, environmental sustainability, resource management, and human health.

The partnership between these two great organizations remains stronger than ever, and a new collaborative effort – a $3 million Agricultural Education Campaign – will ensure that future generations will be properly trained to be stewards of the proud agricultural tradition of Colorado.
Colorado Agriculture Impacts the Nation and World

- In 50 years, the world population will require 100 percent more food.
- Colorado’s agriculture exports have grown more than 20 percent in the last 12 months.
- Nearly one of every five careers in the nation is directly related to agriculture. The pipeline to those careers starts with high school agricultural education.
- Currently, there are more than 110,000 jobs in Colorado’s agriculture industry, and the number grows by 2 percent annually.
- Colorado’s agricultural education programs have experienced a 36 percent growth in student participation numbers and added 14 new programs in the past decade.
- In the next three years, the agriculture, food, and renewable natural resources sectors of the U.S. economy will hire an estimated 163,200 graduates to specialize in food production, renewable energy, and environmental specialties.
- About 55 percent will have degrees in agriculture and life sciences, forestry and natural resources, or veterinary medicine. About 45 percent will come from allied disciplines, including biological sciences, engineering, health sciences, business, and communication.

The Center for Agricultural Education at CSU

The state-of-the-art facility will be located at CSU’s Agricultural Research, Development, and Education Center, north of Fort Collins. It will house classrooms, laboratories, and conference rooms that will be used to further the mission of FFA and the CSU College of Agricultural Sciences – to educate those who teach agriculture and to provide students with hands-on experience and research opportunities.

The Center for Agricultural Education will complement the facilities at ARDEC, which focus on both plant and animal sciences.

The plant science facility includes research plots to study irrigation, plant nutrition, pest control, and plant improvement of wheat, dry beans, and other crops.

The animal sciences area includes a beef feedlot and nutrition unit; sheep research and teaching facilities; a calving and calf-care facility; self-contained swine units; and a top-of-the-line working livestock handling facility designed by renowned animal expert and CSU professor, Dr. Temple Grandin.

The Center for Agricultural Education will be the first of its kind in Colorado. The facility will offer a space for agriculture educators to gather, collaborate, and disseminate new teaching methods and research that will continue to impact and further the evolution of the agriculture industry and its vital impact on the world.

This center will be a model for partnership between land-grant universities and future generations of agriculture leaders.

George, ’56, and Georgetta, ’60, Tempel are CSU alumni and active supporters of Colorado FFA. Their transformational gift to the Center for Agricultural Education will have a direct impact on the strength of this partnership.

“We did all right in our small community, but we really benefited from having a strong FFA teacher on hand. They teach skills that last a lifetime, and they deserve a great training facility.”
Why an Agricultural Education Campaign

“The future of the agriculture industry lies in the hands of our innovative and ingenious younger generation. As an aspiring agricultural educator, I find it important to inspire those individuals to develop their own passion and drive within the field of agriculture. Whether students work in the industry in the future or not, they will be motivated to find where their passions lay. Light the fire from within!”

“The addition of the new Center for Agricultural Education will be a tremendous asset to the Colorado State University agricultural education program. It will provide great opportunities for the community to get connected back to agriculture, great training opportunities for future agricultural educators and a home base for agricultural education in Colorado. The building will facilitate new educational teaching skills, techniques, and knowledge for those educators who are already in the field. CSU understands that the agricultural industry is changing, shifting, and adapting, and the University’s agricultural education needs to keep up with those changes.”

–Melinda Pearl Hendricksen
Master of Agricultural Education student

The Agricultural Education Endowment

While the new Center for Agricultural Education facility is vital to the program, just as important are the people who are educating the next generation of agricultural educators. To that end, FFA is establishing an endowment to ensure that Colorado State University can attract and retain the top agricultural educators in the country.

The endowment also will provide funding for additional faculty and staff in the Center for Agricultural Education, which will allow the Center to accommodate more students in the agricultural education program. The additional resources will expand the program’s services and training opportunities for future agricultural educators, allowing them to reach their maximum potential in a field on which we all rely.
With children and grandchildren now taking leadership in the organization, Dale, ’68, ’72, and ’82, and Judy McCall say that FFA is, “part of the family.” Their long-standing support of education make them passionate about the Center for Agricultural Education.

“We want future ag students to have the best support possible as they prepare for college. We’re supporting FFA and CSU at the same time . . . what a great opportunity!”

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