

Enterprising FFA Officer Helps 'Create A Future' For Youth

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Lancaster Farming Staff
WESTFIELD, N.Y. — Bill Catania wants to convert his love of landscaping into a project that will show youth in the country that there is a future for them — in agriculture.

The newly installed national FFA eastern region vice president said that while a third of the nation's students are from a farm background, two-thirds don't realize how vital agriculture is to the livelihood of many.

During FFA Week, his team of national FFA officers have devoted themselves to their theme, "Create A Future." In the coming National FFA Week, they intend to reach out to today's youth, many of whom believe there is no future.

And while Catania intends to use his experiences to shape a future for himself in agricultural education, the New York state FFA president has big plans after college.

Catania, 19, grew up on his family's 30-acre grape orchard. While working for his father and grandfather, Catania took care of the Concord and Niagara grapes, help-

ing to tie and prune them, in addition to other chores, including pulling brush. He also worked on his Westfield High School farm, a one-acre grape farm that involved work such as pounding in posts, applying herbicides and pesticides, and harvesting.

The work was hard. According to Catania, growing one acre of grapes is equivalent in labor to growing 10 acres of corn. "It keeps us really busy," he said.

"Harvesting is something I really enjoy," he said, noting that the harvest season is a "really special time of year." Harvest season lasts from Sept. 1-Oct. 15.

In the past three years, Catania has worked for a landscape company and wants to continue working there after his duties with the national FFA are complete.

In a telephone interview this week with *Lancaster Farming*, Catania spoke about his plans as a national FFA officer and about his future after college.

Catania noted that while many high school teachers have a three-month break during the summer, high school ag science teachers and FFA instructors must be



Bill Catania, eastern region national FFA vice president, wants to convert his love of landscaping into a project that will show youth in the country that there is a future for them — in agriculture.

involved in projects. One project that is alluring to the eastern region vice president involves setting up contracts between FFA members and regional firms to install landscaping.

This provides a "real world" approach so FFA members can develop sales and public relations skills that can prepare them in a vital way for what they face after

school. This is accomplished through supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs through the chapter FFAs.

"We try to educate the whole person," said Catania. "We look at how the students, once they leave the educational setting and get through college, function in society." FFA prepares a code of ethics that puts a lot of emphasis on service and integrity.

Catania's adviser is Phil Baideme.

Next week, when Catania visits Washington, he will be part of "shadowing day" when he will meet employees of USDA and work at their side to see if FFA members would enjoy a career in that aspect of agriculture. He also plans to meet with other FFA officers. Several of them will also visit many states in the Northeast in the coming weeks.

Catania is one of six national FFA officers who begin a two-week series of business and industry visits from Feb. 26 through March 8.

Catania and the officers of FFA, accompanied by representatives of the National FFA Foundation, will

travel to Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and Washington, D.C.

"The best way for our national officers to learn about current issues in agribusiness and the food industry is to talk to leaders in those areas," said Larry D. Case, national FFA adviser and coordinator of agricultural and rural education, U.S. Dept. of Education, in an FFA release. "By the same token, the best way for industry leaders to learn about agricultural education and the FFA is to meet our national officers who represent our members across the nation."

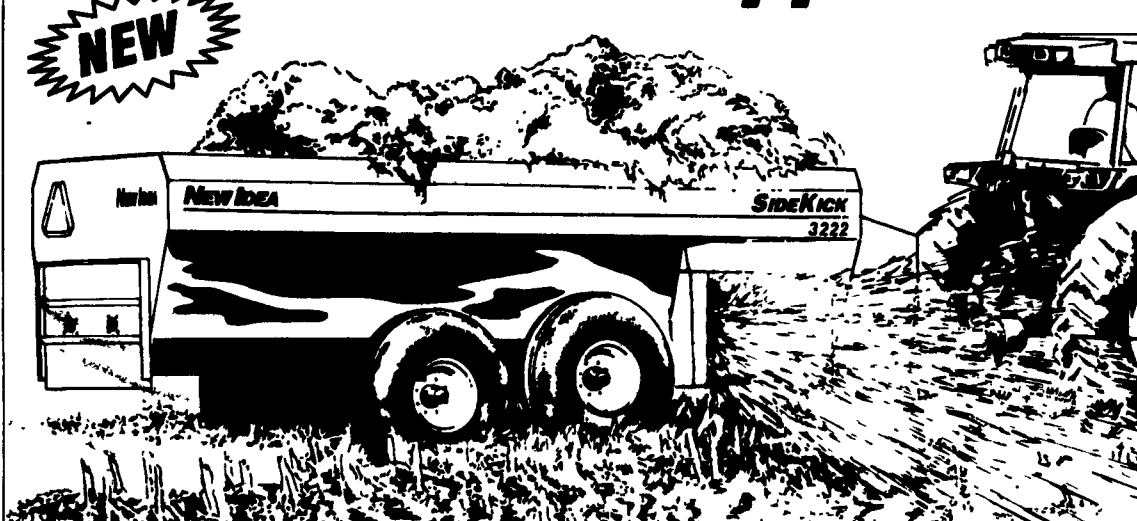
The tour begins in Chicago for a meeting with Allan R. Johnson, president of Farm Progress Companies, Inc. The officers then will divide into three teams to visit a variety of FFA sponsors' businesses across the country to learn more about the agriculture industry.

Other officers participating in the business and industry tour are Seth Derner, national president from Bartlett, Neb.; Clara-Leigh Horn, southern region vice president from Ashville, Ala.; Joe Caffee, central region vice president from Geneva, Ind.; Andy McCall, western region vice president from Houston, Texas; and Cody Wagner, national secretary from Banner, Wyo.

The U.S. tour follows the national officer team's return from a recent two-week visit to Japan to provide the officers with a better understanding of international trade relations and the importance of a global marketplace to American agriculture.

The national FFA officers will take a year off from college to represent FFA members to officials in government, education, business, and agriculture. They will meet with members at the chapter, state, and national levels.

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Manure Application Rates							
Minutes to Unload*	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
(15' spread width)							
Tons per acre at 6 m p h							
3229 (14.0 ton load) (7.0 ton load)	25.3	19.0	12.6	9.5	7.6	6.3	5.4
3222 (11.0 ton load) (5.5 ton load)	12.6	9.5	6.3	4.7	3.8	3.1	2.7
3222 (11.0 ton load) (5.5 ton load)	19.9	14.9	9.9	7.5	6.0	4.9	4.3
3214 (7.5 ton load)	9.9	7.4	4.9	3.7	3.0	2.4	2.1
3214 (7.5 ton load) * (3.25 ton load)	13.6	10.2	6.8	5.1	4.1	3.4	2.9
3214 (7.5 ton load) * (3.25 ton load)	6.8	5.1	3.4	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.4

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*To obtain desired unload time raise/lower expeller gate
Optimum gate height will vary according to manure consistency

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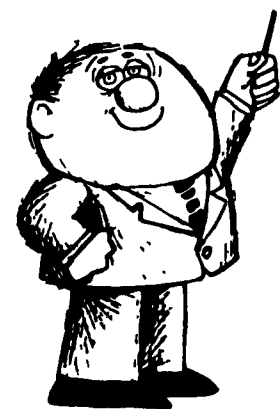
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