



Winnisquam Ag Center News

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FFA members play Scrabble with veterans at a recent Game Day.

Who's in College?

Winnisquam Ag graduates are enrolled in various colleges in the region. L.J. Burleigh and Amanda Nagle are studying at NH Technical Institute, while Derek Boucher is at Keene State. Tianna VanderWoude continues her studies at UNH's Thompson School, as does Riley Welch at Maine's Unity. Shayna Rowell is in her third year at SUNY Cobleskill.



Jessica Vachon engages in a food lab in Food Science.

A Fishy Situation

Did you know that Winnisquam has a fish farm? It's located in the ag shop, and is home to 31 tilapia, a fresh water fish whose white flesh has become a popular choice among American diners. Thirty-six tilapia arrived at the Ag Center in early October, and were placed in the 400-gallon tank set up by Scott Porter's students. Unfortunately, since their arrival five of the fish met with untimely deaths after leaping from the tank. The good news is, none have died of natural causes!

The fish are cared for by students in the Environmental Science and Natural Resources classes. Daily chores include filter cleaning, feeding and water testing. Every three weeks, half of the fish are weighed and measured so students can ensure that feeding, water temperature and other factors are properly maintained for optimal growth rates. The

tilapia are currently weighing in at 100 grams and 6-7" in length, which is five times bigger than their size on arrival.

The fish will end their time at Winnisquam in June, or at 12", whichever comes first. At that time, they will make the ultimate sacrifice by giving themselves up for human consumption. It is hoped that most of the fillets will go to the food pantry at the Franklin Community Action Program, while some will be used to illustrate the farm-to-fork process for students.



Nick Lyford weighs a fish in Environmental Science.

FFA News

In January, five Winnisquam FFA members attended Leadership Camp in Alton, NH and had a great time! Also that month, Lin O'Bara, Director of Development for the Concord-Merrimack County SPCA, spoke at the monthly FFA meeting about the SPCA's history and purpose.

In March, teams will compete in the state Horse Judging and Floriculture Career Development Events (CDEs). These competitions are followed closely by the FFA State Convention, which offers numerous opportunities for members to test their skills. Winnisquam FFA'ers will compete in the following team events: Ag Sales, Forestry, Food Science and Parliamentary Procedure. Individuals will also enter various speaking contests, and many students are submitting award and degree applications. The convention will take place at the Grand Summit Hotel in Bartlett, NH April 1st - 3rd.



Winnisquam Regional
Agricultural Education Center
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It's Portfolio Time!

Each year, every ag student is required to create a portfolio. This record of achievement includes the student's resume, personal story, hours worked and money earned, investments, and skills developed. A continuing student can build on the previous year's portfolio to create a comprehensive profile of what he or she has done and what skills have been attained. The portfolios help students prepare for real-world job hunting. Many students even find themselves returning to the Ag Center after graduation to ask for a copy of their resume or other records for use in their job search.

Students who are FFA members can also use their portfolio

as a basis for applying for numerous FFA awards. In years past, Winnisquam has had quite a few students place in the top three at the state level in various award categories, thanks to the head start they got with the portfolio process.

The top three portfolios from each ag class are selected by community members for local recognition. Winning students receive a gold, silver or bronze medal, with gold medalists also getting a \$50 savings bond.



Class Acts

The Natural Resources class will soon be purchasing logs for cordwood production. Instructor Scott Porter expects to make six cords from logs sold to the program by Mark Kaar of Sanbornton. In addition to giving the ag program an excellent price, Mr. Kaar is donating softwood so students can learn to mill lumber. Most of the cordwood produced by the students will be donated to the state's wood bank.

Jennifer Gornert's Food Science class recently visited Stonyfield Farm in Londonderry to learn about food processing. The students gained insight into how a company can be successful while caring for the environment, animals and people.

At left, Food Science students are shown at the Stonyfield Visitors' Center.