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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida Cabinet Approves \$7.45M Purchase of Florida FFA Leadership Training Center

The Florida Cabinet today approved the \$7,450,000 purchase of the Florida FFA Leadership Training Center (LTC) in Haines City, a facility owned and operated by the Florida FFA Foundation for more than four decades. Treasured for its role in shaping student experiences, the LTC has served as an extended classroom for leadership and career development, holding a unique place in FFA's history across the state.

The decision to sell the facility comes after years of financial challenges associated with maintaining and operating the year-round hospitality property. Earlier this year, the Florida FFA Foundation Board of Trustees determined that exploring opportunities to better leverage the LTC as an asset would be in the organization's best interest.

In February, the Foundation partnered with SVN Saunders Ralston Dantzler to market the property through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Following a thorough review of offers, the board unanimously voted to move forward with the State of Florida, one of FFA's greatest supporters. The sale will relieve the Foundation of operational burdens and provide a significant financial boost to its mission of securing and managing resources that support agricultural education, the Florida FFA Association, and its more than 60,000 student members. While the transaction marks a major milestone, the board hopes FFA will have future opportunities to utilize the facility, with ongoing conversations continuing.

The Florida FFA Foundation expressed gratitude to the industry partners and countless individuals who contributed to the LTC's success, recognizing their hard work, generosity, and financial support. Quoting the second paragraph of the FFA Creed, the Foundation acknowledged the bittersweet nature of the transition: *"I believe that to live and work on a good farm, or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny."*

Looking ahead, the Board of Trustees will begin significant strategic planning in early 2025 to chart a vibrant path forward for the organization. Additional details on the process and the Foundation's plans will be shared in the coming months.

For more information and to support the Florida FFA Foundation's work, visit www.flaffa.org/foundation.

ABOUT THE FLORIDA FFA FOUNDATION

The Florida FFA Foundation seeks to build partnerships with industry, education, government, and individuals to secure resources for the future of education, agriculture, student leader development and success. The Florida FFA Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit, tax-exempt organization. It was established in 1976 and is managed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is made up of individuals, dedicated to ensuring the growth and stability of Florida FFA.

ABOUT THE FLORIDA FFA ASSOCIATION

The Florida FFA Association is a premier youth, leadership organization with more than 60,000 middle and high school student members - as part of over 350 local FFA chapters across the state. FFA members participate in nearly 50 leadership and career development events each year. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. The Florida FFA Association is a resource and support organization that does not select, control, supervise or approve local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the Florida FFA Association Constitution and Bylaws. The Florida FFA Association affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership, and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MISSION

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resource systems.

THE FFA MISSION

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

For more information about Florida FFA and agricultural education, visit floridaffa.org.

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