# 2026

# Instructions & Information

# for

# AgVenture Tours

GREATER JACKSONVILLE AGRICULTURAL FAIR

DUVAL COUNTY FARM BUREAU

DUVAL COUNTY

DUVAL COUNTY-UF/IFAS EXTENSION

DUVAL 4-H

**What are AgVenture Tours?**

The Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair in cooperation with the Duval County Farm Bureau, Duval County-UF/IFAS Extension, and Duval 4-H have created a free third-grade program, AgVenture Tours. *AgVenture* Tours provide a guided tour of the agricultural and educational resources available at the Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair on specific dates and at a time when the fair is not open to the public. During the tour, agricultural educators and volunteers share information with students, their teachers, and parents as they explore the many agricultural exhibits at the fair. This tour may be some youngsters' first glimpse of unprocessed agricultural products as well as an opportunity to discover other educational information about agriculture and our agricultural heritage.

## Tour Details:

The 2026 Greater Jacksonville Agriculture Fair will be held from November 5th to November 15th. *AgVenture* Tours will be held on four days during the fair but before the fair opens on those days. The dates for 2026 are: 5th of November, 6th of November, 12th of November, and 13thof November. The tours do not include any part of the midway or rides. This is an educational trip not for fair fun. A tour is limited to groups of 250 individuals per day. Schools must arrange and pay for their own bus transportation, but there is no charge for entrance to the tours. Parking is free. The tours begin promptly at 10:20 a.m. and will end at approximately 1:00 p.m. There is **no lunch break** provided during the tours. Please make students aware of the fact that they will not eat at their normal time, but that for this **one day** they will have to wait until they return to school. You will not have enough time to eat at the fairgrounds unless your bus driver allows you to stay until at least 1:30pm. Everyone will receive a snack as they watch the pig races. This year's snack will be a small bag of Henry's Kettle Korn and a piece of fruit.

## Parents/Chaperones:

We provide a limited number of tours for students who attend public, private, charter, or home school to participate in *AgVenture Tours*. Because our tours are limited to 250 participants per day and this program is designed to educate students about farm animals, agricultural products, and how agriculture impacts our lives, we limit the number of adults attending. **Please bring only 2 adults (parents or chaperones) for your class**. The Jacksonville Fair will provide tour leaders and assistants to guide the groups and keep children safe, engaged, and learning while they are on the fairgrounds. We will also provide fair volunteers moving throughout the tour area to assist, support, and monitor all groups.

## Arrival at the Fair:

You should enter the fairgrounds from Normandy Blvd. Your bus will pull in and proceed to the Equestrian Center entrance. The bus driver should stop at the circular driveway on the east side of the building. A policewoman and volunteers will greet the bus and help students exit the bus. Write down your bus number because there will be multiple buses. Tour guides will be holding signs that will indicate tour groups. Each teacher will get an email about a week before your tour date letting you know the name of your tour guide and the farm animal named group to which you are assigned. This information will help us quickly get students into groups and moving to their first learning station. Every minute is precious during your visit to the fair. Parent/chaperones who drive to the fairgrounds will park in the same area as the school buses. They will enter and be greeted by fair volunteers who will give them their name tags. Parents will need an ID to confirm their names are on the chaperone registration list.

**Learning Stations:**

This year, students will visit the following learning stations:

- Comparing beef and dairy cattle
- 4-H Animal Encounters
- Chickens
- Old McDonald's Farm
- Pigs/Racing Pigs
- Horticulture-Planting Strawberries
- Bees
- Rolling beeswax candles
- Forestry

We want your students to enjoy and learn during their trip to the Jacksonville Fair. Please explain to students that because they are outside, in barns, and other facilities that don't look and feel like a classroom, their behavior shouldn't be like they are on a playground. There are students around them trying to listen to a speaker and learn. Also, the animals they are observing are usually on a quiet farm or ranch where other animals are the only noise they hear. Animals don't want to have hundreds of people shouting, yelling, and making them uncomfortable in this new environment. Ask students to keep their voices down and be considerate of other students and the animals.

**Restroom:**

During the tours, we will not allot time for a whole class restroom break. There are restrooms in the Barn Arena and restrooms in the concourse area of the Equestrian Center. We ask that you have a parent or a fair volunteer take an individual student or a small group of students as needed. Our groups are rather large this year and we are pleased that so many children will have the opportunity to learn about agriculture and our food dependence on farmers. However, we must carefully manage our time and keep the tours moving from station to station.

**Goodie Bags:**

Every student will receive a "goodie bag" upon arrival. Students are responsible for keeping up with the bags as they move from station to station. You might want to have students write their names on index cards/paper while still at school and drop them into their bags when they receive the bags or at the first station. Ask chaperones to make sure bags are not left behind as classes leave a station. Every teacher will also receive a bag. In each teacher and student bag, a copy of the book, These Florida Farms! will be found. We hope that students will do multiple reads of this book and share it with their families so everyone knows the sources of our food.

**Wheelchairs:**

The fairgrounds are wheelchair accessible in all areas. Individuals who need to use a wheelchair will have no problem moving to any area that they will be asked to visit.

**Pictures:**

We will be taking pictures of student groups and classes throughout the tours. These pictures are going to be sent with thank you notes to those who donated "goodies" to our tours. If you have a student in your class who should not have his/her picture taken, please remove the child from the group when the cameraman steps in front of the group.

## Teacher Survey/Questionnaire:

We will ask teachers to complete a survey during this trip. Our purpose is simply to learn what you enjoyed and what you would suggest we change to make the tours better than they are now. When we receive your completed survey, we will add your name to our list of teachers who are eligible to win a $100 gift certificate to Publix to be used in any way you wish. One name will be drawn at random from all eligible names.

## Departing the Fairgrounds:

When you are ready to depart from the fairgrounds, your tour guide will take you and your class to the area where buses will be waiting for you. You will need your bus number. Buses will be parked there, and the police will be monitoring traffic. Children will be escorted to the buses by a policeman or policewoman. When all students are on the bus, bus drivers will be able to exit to Normandy Blvd and get you back to your school.

## Online Resources:

The link beneath this paragraph is the link to our online resources for *AgVenture* Tours. It has materials that will develop or deepen the agricultural learnings of your students and provide you with instructional materials you can use in your classrooms as you choose and on your own timeline.

Link: https://jacksonvillefair.com/agventures-ag-education/

There are **videos** about: Horticulture, Bees, Embryology, Backyard Chickens, Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle and Aquaponics. Sharing these with your students will give them the opportunity to develop/deepen their background knowledge about topics with which they have probably had limited exposure. **Vocabulary** from these resources is also provided so that you can introduce the vocabulary before watching the videos. The **online books** are probably my favorite resource. They are great for shared reading with you being the primary reader so that all readers are successful and stretch the struggling reader to read above his/her level. Books can also be used for partner reading and independent reading on computers. The more resources that a student reads about the same topic the deeper their understanding. Some books could be used for enrichment for your stronger readers. There are also **worksheets and activities** you can use to reinforce or extend learning. Check out everything on the website and decide what you can use. These resources will not be locked or taken away after your field trip. You can use them at any time! Enjoy!

We hope this information will be a great resource for all third-grade teachers. Please discuss this information in a grade level meeting to ensure that everyone knows what to expect and is prepared for the trip. If you have any additional questions, feel free to email me. Watch for the email about your tour guide's name and group name shortly before your tour date.

**Barn Tours:**

We also provide Barn Tours for Pre-K through second grade students on one or two days of the fair. This year's day will be November 9th. Barn Tours provide students with a guided walking tour of the farm animals housed in our barns. Student will learn a little about cattle, visit Old McDonald's Farm to see hatching chicks, a water pump, and a sow and piglets. At 4-H Animal Encounter, students will see small farm animals and be able to touch and feed some of them. Barn Tours are an introduction to farming and take approximately an hour. Please pass this information on to Pre-K to second grade teachers. If they are interested, ask them to email me as soon as possible. Spaces will fill quickly.

Thanks for your time and the opportunity to share agricultural information with you and your students!

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