

NYFEA WINTER INSTITUTE

Thirteen Pennsylvania Young Farmers and 12 youth attended the NYFEA Winter Institute December 7-10 in Tampa, Florida.



The institute began with the delegates' meeting Wednesday evening. PYFA delegates were Dan Wilkinson, Larry Wilkinson, Ken Sanner, and Betsy Huber.



The next afternoon we toured Tampa, visiting the Florida Aquarium; University of Tampa's historic Plant Hotel, a beautiful brick building with 500 rooms built in the late 1800s; Ybor City, home of the early cigar industry; and the Coppertail Brewery. That evening was the "Gasparilla" pool party at the hotel. PYFA was in charge of the decorations and fun and Laurel Wilkinson did a fantastic job with the pirate theme.



Friday we toured farms in Manatee County including Strickland cattle ranch, Jones Potato and Green Bean farm, Wish Farms strawberries, and Reeder's West Coast Tomato Farm.



These last three crops were in season so we were able to see them growing and being harvested. All the owners were happy to show and talk about their operations and gave us an education on Florida agriculture.

After a stop at Keel & Curly Winery, we finished the day with dinner at “Feeding Tampa Bay,” one of America’s leading food banks, serving over 40 million meals last year.

Saturday morning brunch featured the Ag Decision Makers College with speakers Allen Jones of Jones Potato Farm and J.J. Grow, manufacturer of agronomic products. Winners of the Ag Communication Award were announced and Pennsylvania again had a winner – Heather Wasson of Centre County won the press release division.

Saturday afternoon and evening were spent at Busch Gardens. Several members had the opportunity to tour the Animal Care Center there.



A celebration of 50 years of NYFEA Institutes was held in the Gwazi Pavilion where past institute chairs were recognized, including Larry Wilkinson.

Next year’s NYFEA Winter Institute will be in Savannah, Georgia, December 6-9, 2017.