

YF&R LEADERSHIP

DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE

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PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

10 STEPS TO STARTING A COUNTY YF&R PROGRAM

HOW TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN MEMBERS IN YOUR COUNTY'S YF&R COMMITTEE

OVERVIEW

The Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Program is a leadership program offered through Florida Farm Bureau Federation. The purpose of the program is to develop and refine participants' leadership, grassroots knowledge, and better prepare them to become involved in Farm Bureau at the county, state, and national levels. Any county Farm Bureau member ages 18-35, whether they are directly involved in production agriculture or not, is welcome to participate in this leadership program. This section of the YF&R Leadership Development Guide is intended to assist you with creating or revitalizing your county Farm Bureau's YF&R committee.

STEP 1: FINDING "THE ONE"

Identify one person (who just might be you) between the ages of 18-35 who is motivated and excited about agriculture. Keep in mind, this individual will set the tone and pace of success for your YF&R program.

STEP 2: SEEKING SUPPORT

Once you have identified "The One", it is time to reach out to your local county board for support and guidance on starting your YF&R committee. The best place to start is by contacting your county president. The county president has the ultimate authority to appoint the YF&R committee chair. (*It is important to remember your county's YF&R program is a committee of the county Farm Bureau board of directors.)

Following this, the county board will get you in touch with your respective district field representative. Before moving forward with any future planning for your committee, it would be best to schedule a meeting with your county president and district field representative for their guidance and support.

The district field representative is a valuable resource in keeping you informed on the county Farm Bureau and the statewide YF&R events and programs. They are also helpful in gathering members from your county to plan your first meeting.

“Do what you love to do, and be around things that make you smile. The cows make me smile every day.”

– David Jackson, Brentwood Dairy, Texas

STEP 3: FINDING YOUR PEOPLE

This is your opportunity to seek out like-minded people who will make a positive impact in agriculture. These leaders will ensure a strong foundation is planted for your YF&R program. The reputation of your future YF&R program rests on the decisions and vision of your founding committee members.

Here are a few ideas of where to find potential committee members:

- County board members
- Farm/Ranch employees
- Past FFA & 4-H classmates
- Commodity organization representatives (i.e. FSGA, FCA, FFVA, etc.)
- Allied agricultural industry workers (i.e. salespeople, ag finance firms, etc.)
- IFAS Extension Agents
- Anyone with a passion for agriculture

TIPS

Utilize your District Field Representative to reach out to other YF&R chairs in your district and learn how they recruited their committee members. They will also be aware of any District YF&R events going on to invite your new committee members to join.

Once you have a handful of people who are willing to recruit others to join, you can plan a YF&R kick-off event.

STEP 4: TIME TO MEET

Now it is time to pick a date and location for your first YF&R meeting. Keep in mind, if you are meeting in the evening, it is good to include some type of food or meet at a restaurant. Ask the county Farm Bureau board or a community member to help sponsor or donate food. You can also ask everyone to chip in if you need too.

Do not worry about an extravagant meal. Here are a few ideas for low budget food options to make sure your committee members do not get hangry:

- Barbecue
- Pizza
- Fried chicken
- Hamburgers & hotdogs
- Sandwiches rings
- Chili bar
- Taco or nacho bar
- Spaghetti

TIPS

If food will not be provided, be sure to let your attendees know prior to the meeting, so they can plan accordingly.

"The nation will find it very hard to look up to the leaders who are keeping their ears to the ground."

—Sir Winston Churchill

STEP 5: WHAT TO TALK ABOUT

Setting your agenda prior to a meeting is very important. Creating and providing a well thought out agenda to your committee members will keep your committee on topic during the meeting and be efficient with time.

Feel free to reach out to your district field representative for assistance with creating an agenda for the meeting. They might be able to offer creative suggestions for potential guest speakers who can provide issue updates or professional development workshops for the committee.

For more information on setting up an agenda and how to conduct an effective meeting see the "My Role as the Chair" section of this guide.

TIPS

Faith, family, farming and freedom are core values of Farm Bureau. Each Farm Bureau meeting starts with a prayer and pledge. Don't forget to plan ahead and determine who you would like to lead the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Having a small American flag on hand is not a bad idea in case the meeting space does not have one available.

STEP 6: GETTING THE WORD OUT

Once you have all the details together, it is time to get the word out to prospective members. There are several different methods for inviting individuals to join in on your kickoff meeting. Keep in mind that the greater the variety of communication techniques you use to invite people, the more likely you are to attract a wider diversity of people. Below is a list of ways you can reach out to prospective members:

- Create a flier you can hang/ pass around town. Canva is a great tool to use.
- Create a social media event or post about the local YF&R kick-off, tag and share with friends
- If your county Farm Bureau has social media, tag them or ask them to share the post
- Ask if the county administrative assistant can send out an email to all county Farm Bureau members
- Rule of thumb: For every four people you invite, one person will attend

Continue to talk, post and remind people of the event so they do not forget about the meeting.

"Farming is a profession of hope."

– Brett Brian, Canadian Poet

STEP 7: THINKING AHEAD TO MAKE THEM COME BACK

The kick-off meeting should be fun and informational. It is important to make sure you dedicate time in the beginning of the meeting to allow everyone to introduce themselves. Ice-breakers are a great tool for giving groups of any size the opportunity to get to know each other. If each member can make one connection with another member in the group, they will be more likely to feel invested to the committee and return to future meetings.

Since this will be the first time some of your committee members have ever heard of YF&R, it would be helpful to have someone there (i.e., district field representative or a county board member) to discuss what the YF&R committee is and its function under a county Farm Bureau board.

Depending on when you schedule the first meeting, plan some social time at the beginning or end of the meeting. Here are a few suggested social activities:

- Corn hole
- Meeting at a local restaurant
- Meet before watching a sports event
- Bowling
- Potluck
- Bonfire

TIPS

Individuals respond better to a personal text or call than a Facebook invite or email. For the first few meetings, consider using this form of communication to encourage the new group to meet.

For a more comprehensive list of ideas, see the *"My Role as the Chair"* section of this manual.

STEP 8: GAME TIME!

Everything has been laid out and now it is time to reap the benefits of your planning. It is important to arrive early at your location to ensure everything is ready to go. Below is a list of suggested items to check and make sure you have ready for the kick-off meeting:

- Copies of agenda
- Guest speaker(s)
- Pens and pencils
- Sign in sheet
- American flag
- Ice-breaker materials (If needed)
- Table for food items
- Food
- Plates, napkins, cutlery
- Social activities (See list above)

TIPS

Just like that greeter at Walmart or even at your local church, it is important to have a welcome crew. Plan ahead and assign this role to one or more of your committee members. This could be the deciding factor on whether or not an individual returns.

***"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way,
and shows the way."***

— John Maxwell, Author

STEP 9: DURING THE EVENT

It is important for all members to get a strong foundation of what Farm Bureau and the YF&R committee is all about. This will allow your group to buy into the YF&R committee vision and mission, and understand all the possibilities this committee could be. No one wants to volunteer their time on a committee or with an organization they do not understand. Be clear and upfront about why being a member of YF&R is important as well as what value it brings to each committee member. Here are a few things you need to cover or accomplish by the end of your meeting.

- Set the date for the next meeting (day, time, location, food?)
- Discuss membership
- Invite attendees to become a member
- Take a group picture and send a copy of it to the district field representative or county administrative assistant
- Discuss what ways the committee prefers to use for group communication
- Thank everyone for taking the time to meet
- Clean up meeting space

It is also important to value the time of all volunteers participating. Work through your agenda efficiently and end meetings on time.

STEP 10: NEXT STEPS FOR YOUR COMMITTEE

Congratulations, you have successfully held your first YF&R meeting! Now, it is time to follow up and send out an email to all members who attended and thank them for coming. Include the minutes from the meeting in your email. In addition, this is a great time to start a Facebook group or text group to stay in contact with your new committee members. Having open communication is important in making sure you keep the momentum going for your new committee.

When planning your next YF&R meeting, here are some things to consider:

- *Create your Vision, Mission & Goals as a team (Refer to "[Creating Your Program of Activities](#)" Resource)*
- Invite your county Farm Bureau president to speak to the committee
- Send out a reminder of the date, time, and location of the next meeting
- Elect an officer team to help define roles and responsibilities for the committee

“ Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”

- Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

HOW TO KEEP YOUR YF&R FOCUSED ON A UNIFIED MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

OVERVIEW

Once you have established your YF&R program, developing a program of activities is one of the most important things you can do. A program of activities is essentially a roadmap of what your group plans to do for the upcoming year. Creating a program of activities serves as a brainstorming session which allows your committee to think outside of the box on new events, programs, and ideas. Without a plan for your YF&R, you may become stagnant and ineffective. Just as President Lincoln said, effective planning can make things much easier.

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

When developing a program of activities it is important to know where to start to ensure the planning process goes smoothly. Starting with your vision, mission, and goals will put you on the right track. This might require input from the chair or from the whole group. To help you develop a program of activities, we have created a template to assist in putting the committee's ideas on paper. [Click here](#)

STEP 1: CREATING A VISION

Your vision should focus on what you want your YF&R program to ultimately become. Creating this vision is important for keeping the group on track moving towards where they want to go. This vision will also help your district field representative work with your group to ensure everyone is working towards the same goal. Your vision promotes growth and new ideas in your group. We included some examples from prominent companies below for your committee to review before beginning to brainstorm:



A computer on every desk in every home.



Be the destination for customers to save money, no matter how they want to shop.



To be the most effective, influential, and respected Farm Bureau in the nation and truly be recognized as Florida's Voice of Agriculture.

“ The trouble with not having goals is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score.”

- Bill Copeland, American Writer

STEP 2: CREATING A MISSION

A strong mission will help your YF&R program focus on what is important to them. The mission should answer the question “why am I here?”. Having everyone focused on the same mission will help build membership. Creating a mission can be done by the chair or the entire group. If your committee is not sure where to start, we included a few mission statements below:



To empower every person and organization on the planet to achieve more.



We save people money so they can live better.



To increase the net income of farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of rural life.

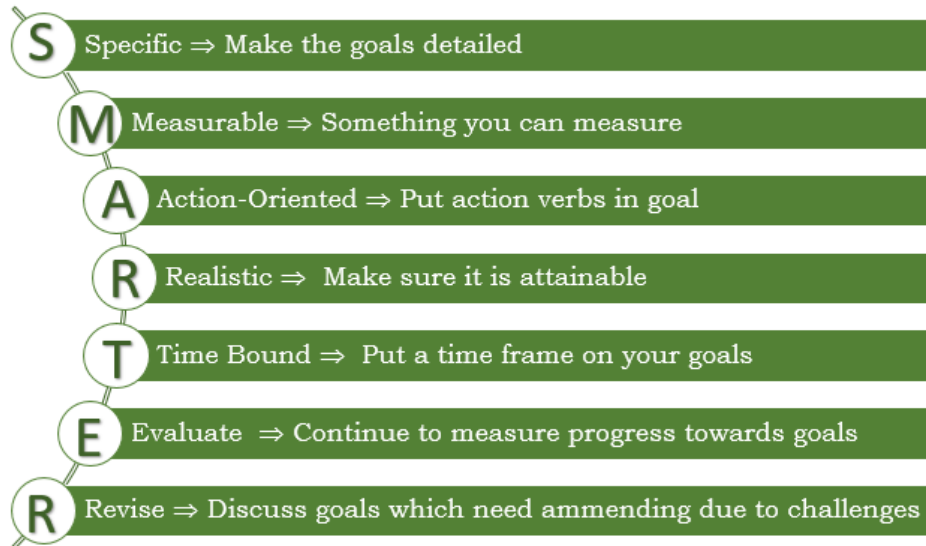
STEP 3: CREATING GOALS

Setting goals is important in maintaining your pace towards your vision and mission as well as moving forward as a thriving YF&R program. Each goal you set should point towards and align with your vision and mission. Goals help in motivating the members in your program by allowing each member to feel invested in the group. Goals allow for members to collaborate and achieve a tangible outcome while also providing reasons to celebrate accomplishments as a group. Sometimes this feeling of accomplishment will spark additional motivation among your program to continue moving forward towards the vision.

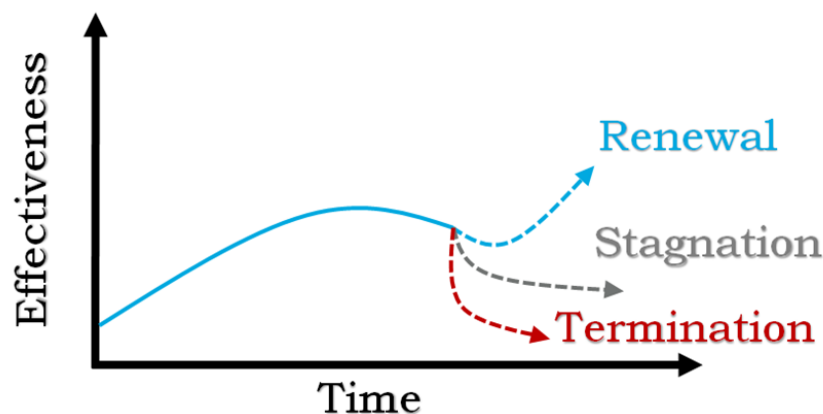
When creating goals, it is important to establish a system to encourage your group to set strong goals. Below is a short explanation of SMARTER goals which are a common method for creating achievable goals. Creating goals should make you think of things the group can do to move closer towards your committee's vision and mission. Goals should be a combination of short term and long term goals to create a solid year's pace. A healthy combination of short and long term goals will help encourage your committee members by having accomplishments they can share in celebrating as a group.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

- Proverbs 29:18



Creating goals is crucial in the effectiveness of your program from a longevity standpoint. Your group will most likely be made up of many different types of people, and keeping everyone happy with serving on the committee can be a challenge. For this reason, each YF&R is constantly faced with a choice for the future. The graph below shows the effectiveness of a YF&R program over time. The group's effectiveness can lead to termination, stagnation, or to a thriving program. One way to continue to thrive as a YF&R program is to continually evaluate programming and diversify the types of events and programs your group offers throughout the year. Encourage your YF&R committee members to voice the types of programs and target audiences which motivate them to keep pursuing the vision of your county program.



"For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today."

-Old Proverb

STEP 4: CREATING YOUR ACTIVITIES

Now that you have created your vision, mission, and goals, it is time to put each one into action and develop the events and programs that you and your group would like to do for the year. To assist your committee in organizing your program of activities into a simple-to-follow document, [click here](#) to view and edit the "Fillable YF&R Program of Activities Template". These events should align with your vision and mission while also moving to accomplish the goals you set. It is important to plan out these events in advance to allow adequate time for planning and preparing. Keep in mind when it comes to newer YF&R programs, and even more so for seasoned YF&R programs, higher quality programs are preferred over a higher quantity of programs. Just like the old Proverb says, preparation is key for the future.

A great way to begin is starting with Florida Farm Bureau's calendar of events and a blank YF&R calendar. This will help in identifying some important times of the year your group can partner with Florida Farm Bureau on planning targeted events as well as deciding and planning out your meetings throughout the year. An example of a calendar can be found below:

Farm Bureau Yearly Calendar of Events		
Month	Dates	Event
January		AFBF Annual Meeting & FFBF Day in Tallahassee (Even Year)
February		Food Check-Out Week
March		Women's Leadership Conference & FFBF Day in Tallahassee (Odd Year)
April		Field to the Hill (Washington, D.C.)
May		
June		
July		State YF&R Leadership Conference
August		
September		District Youth Speech Contest Deadline
October		State Annual Meeting
November		Farm-City Week
December		

Example YF&R Yearly Calendar of Events		
Month	Date	Event
January		Meeting, Program of Activities
February		Food Check-Out Week (Facebook)
March		Meeting
April		Field to the Hill
May		Professional Development Meeting
June		YF&R Applications Due
July		State YF&R Leadership Conference
August		
September		Social Meeting
October		Large Event to Showcase Agriculture
November		Participate in Farm-City Week. Partner with Rotary
December		Christmas Meeting (Potluck)

“A budget is telling your money where to go instead of wondering where it went.”

-Dave Ramsey, American Financial Advisor

STEP 5: BUDGETING

Having a budget and funds to make your YF&R program thrive is necessary. Whether those funds are used for food during meetings or hosting larger events, sufficient funding will be needed. Just like in our personal lives, budgeting is not the most exciting, but it is very important to know your limitations.

Each YF&R program will have different funds they can tap into. Some county boards will allocate a budget for your program which is approved during a budget meeting. Other county Farm Bureaus might have the YF&R chair present a request for funds when needed and vote during the meeting. Some YF&Rs host fundraisers. Once you know what funds you have, you can take your list of events and programs and compare what your budget will allow your program to do.

Prioritizing your events and programs is important in determining what your group can realistically accomplish for the year. In many cases, your events and programs will be more than what your committee's time and resources can handle. This circumstance is perfectly fine, and you can always use those other ideas in the future. Below is a simple process to help with prioritizing what events your group can accomplish that year:





"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

- Benjamin Franklin, Founding Father

The previous picture demonstrates the difference between the various events that your YF&R will host. Some events require a lot of money and have a low impact for agriculture while others have a low cost and high impact. Utilize this chart to categorize your events and program and determine which ones fit your YF&R best.

Since every county YF&R is classified as a committee of the board, every decision to spend money needs to be approved by the board. The most simple and professional way to do this is to create a budget for all incoming funds and program/meeting expenditures for the year to present to the board for approval once a year. As long as the committee functions within the budget, they do not need to seek approval from the board for each individual purchase outlined in the budget.

A good practice at the end of each fiscal year is to submit or present your completed budget to the board for review and guidance. Include how much money the committee actually spent for each line item. This is a great opportunity to glean some valuable information and tips from the board on how to enhance the organization and effectiveness of your budget for the next year.

[Click here](#) for an example of a budget or [here](#) for an easy template to get started. For a more in depth explanation of the budget, visit the budget section under the "Role of a YF&R Chair" section.

STEP 6: PLANNING YOUR EVENT

Once you have your vision, mission, goals, programs, and events prioritized based on your budget, you can begin the planning process for events. Each event will require a different amount of planning. Whether you are posting on social media during Farm-City Week or planning an outreach event to over 1,500 people, intentional planning is crucial to ensure a smooth and successful event. Keep Benjamin Franklin's quote in mind the next time you get together to plan your event:

"When planning, break your program or event into these simple sections to ensure smooth planning and a successful outcome."

CLEAR VISION

- Ask your group, why are we doing this event and what results would we like to see from hosting this event?
- Make sure everyone in the committee is familiar with the program of activities and working towards the same goals.

"The difference between good and great is attention to detail."

- Charles Swindoll, American Pastor and Writer

ORGANIZATION

- Depending on the size of your group, it is important to break up the event or program into various parts and provide each member their own responsibilities. This may be as simple as appointing committees to work on a specific area and report back to the whole group with updates.
- This is where "doing your homework" on the event/program will come in handy. Even if it is simple, it is important to do your research and get the details on what resources you will need and contacts to reach out to.

PRE-PLANNING

- Within your organized groups, begin planning in advance depending on your event/program.
- Begin looking at what it will cost, how many people are needed and any little detail which will add to the effectiveness.
- Reaching out to your local media to advertise and Florida Farm Bureau's public relations department could increase the outreach of your event/program.

DURING THE EVENT

- Before the event, make sure to have some sort of volunteer orientation where members can ask questions relating to the schedule, list of responsibilities and methods of communication during the event.
- During the event, utilize a volunteer to ensure event committee leaders have everything they need during the event and promote communication of possible issues that arise.
- Ensure the committee reiterates any engagement pieces during the time they are interacting face-to-face with the target audience (i.e., grab a flyer or take home item; social media shares, comments, posting; and tagging pictures of their own; or engagements). The individual(s) responsible for leading that part of the program/event should help in communicating the call to action directly to the target audience.

POST-PLANNING

- It is crucial to meet up with your committee immediately following your event/program to talk about how effective it was, what could have been done to make it stronger, and what worked well during the event/program. Ultimately it is the opportunity to answer the question: did we accomplish everything we wanted to?
- Thank you letters are a simple way of letting anyone that was a part of the process know that they were appreciated.
- Ensure press releases are sent out to local news media with pictures and a story that reflects what you want told.

[Click here](#) to access the "[program of activities](#)" fillable template.



LEADERSHIP

MOTIVATING YOUR COMMITTEE

HOW TO KEEP YOUR YF&R MOVING TOWARD THE VISION

OVERVIEW

This section of the YF&R Leadership Development Guide is intended to assist you with creating or revitalizing your county Farm Bureau's YF&R committee.

Education + Tools + Support = Successful YF&R Committee Development

As Kevin Robison states, "Giving our time is not just an ordinary transaction, it's an investment."

This section of the toolkit is designed to assist your committee with treating each member like they are an asset to your committee and how to emphasize each meeting and event is worth investing time into.

STEP 1: EDUCATION

What is your committee doing to continually develop and motivate your members?

Establish or Revisit Vision, Mission & Goals

It is important for committee members to not only have a clear understanding of what each of these words mean, but it is also vital for each committee member to recognize the group's stance on these three things. See the previous section for more details about creating a vision, mission and goals.

"Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality."

-Warren Bennis, American Scholar

As a good practice, the committee should set aside time each year (or each time there is a change in leadership) to review the group's mission, vision, and goals to ensure they line up with what motivates the committee to remain active. This will assist in creating a unified impact in the community. During this time, it is important to recognize the overall purpose of the group as a committee functioning under the county Farm Bureau board of directors. In other words, any mission or vision set by the committee should align with the policies adopted by the county Farm Bureau and the Florida Farm Bureau Federation.

Some questions to ask the committee to start this conversation might include:

- What motivated you to join YF&R?
- What impact do you want to have on your community?
- What are the biggest issues facing agriculture in our county? How are we best equipped to help bring solutions to these issues?
- Is there a certain sector of the community you feel drawn to help? How can we best serve this part of the community as a group?
- What are our members telling other members, what YF&R is? Does this align with our mission and vision for [Insert County Here] YF&R?

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

One of the greatest benefits to joining a county YF&R program is the opportunity for committee members to develop their personal and professional skills. A survey is a great way to identify which areas of personal and professional development the committee members would like to receive more training on. This survey can be conducted verbally, written and turned into the chair, or as an electronic version sent virtually to members.

[Google Forms](#) and [Survey Monkey](#) are both free services you can utilize.

In an effort to get this conversation started, here are a few areas related to professional and leadership development below:

- Public speaking
- How to effectively tell your story
- Personal finance/ estate planning
- Developing a personal platform through social media
- Conflict management
- Conference etiquette
- Basic event/program planning (i.e. planning, implementation, and evaluation)

"My responsibility is getting all my players playing for the name on the front of the jersey, not the one on the back."

–Unknown

There are several opportunities at the state level for county YF&R members to find additional opportunities. A few of them are listed below.

State YF&R Leadership Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occurs every July from Friday afternoon to Sunday morning• Hosts yearly competitive events (i.e. Discussion Meet, Excellence in Ag, and Achievement in Ag)• Includes breakout sessions focused on leadership development, personal development, and updates in agriculture
State YF&R Leadership Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two-year term with approximately 45 days of hands on leadership and professional development experience divided into 13 separate seminars• Must be within the ages of 18-35 for entirety of two-year commitment and be classified as an "Active" member in good standing with your county Farm Bureau and on the county YF&R Committee for at least one year• Includes trips to Washington D.C., Tallahassee, and AFBF Fusion or the National YF&R Conference.
State YF&R Competitive Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion Meet: Designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each participant. This competition is evaluated on an exchange of ideas and information on a pre-determined topic.• Excellence in Agriculture: Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service, and community). An Excellence in Ag participant is someone who does not derive majority of their income from production ag. This could include a wide variety of YF&R members.• Achievement in Agriculture: The contestants will be evaluated on a combination of their farming operation growth and financial progress of the operation, Farm Bureau Leadership, as well as leadership outside of Farm Bureau. An Achievement in Ag participant is someone who derives majority of their income from production ag. This usually means they own their operation.

For more information on the YF&R programs at the state level, [click here.](#)

IDENTIFY ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE

As a YF&R committee, your members are uniquely positioned to have a significant voice in what is affecting agriculture in your communities. Not only does the opinion of our future leaders matter, but it is critical in fully understanding how issues will affect future generations as they start or take over agricultural businesses.

"The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer."

– Will Rogers, American Actor

Before addressing the public on agricultural issues, it is important for your committee members to be aware of all sides of each issue. These issues could include, but are not limited to:

- Local government regulation
- State legislation
- Trade
- Labor
- Water quantity/quality
- Resources available to young farmers and ranchers
- Regulation of invasive species

In order to be prepared for speaking on any particular issue, the committee would be best served by creating space for both sides of the issue to be fully addressed prior to forming an opinion. This could take the form of inviting a guest speaker in or even utilizing the skills and experience of current members of the committee to present on the issue.

Another important resource to utilize is the Florida Farm Bureau Federation Policy Book ([Click here](#) to access the digital policy book). It is important for committee members to understand the process policies are created, adopted, and implemented as tools for agricultural advocacy within Florida Farm Bureau Federation. One way to improve your committee's understanding for the policies is to divide the book up and assign different committee members to read and present to the committee throughout the year. At each meeting, the groups can briefly summarize the different policies within the sections and give examples of why these policies are important to Florida agriculture. The benefits to an exercise like this are two-fold. Not only are committee members gaining a better understanding on what barriers commodities face, but they are also gaining valuable insight on Florida Farm Bureau's stance on key agricultural issues.

There are several other places and individuals within Florida Farm Bureau which could help your committee to become more educated on local issues or issues affecting agriculture. Some of these include, but are not limited to:

COUNTY LEVEL	FLORIDA FARM BUREAU
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>County President</i>• <i>County Board Members</i>• <i>Executive Director</i>• <i>State Advisory Committee members from your county</i>• <i>State YF&R Leadership Team Representative</i>• <i>State Director</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Courtney Larkin</u> (Director of State Legislative Affairs)• <u>Charles Shinn</u> (Director of Government & Community Affairs)• <u>Geoffrey Patterson</u> (Director of Ag Policy)• <u>Michele Curts</u> (Leadership Programs Coordinator)• <i>District Field Representative</i>

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

—Jack Welch, Former CEO of General Electric

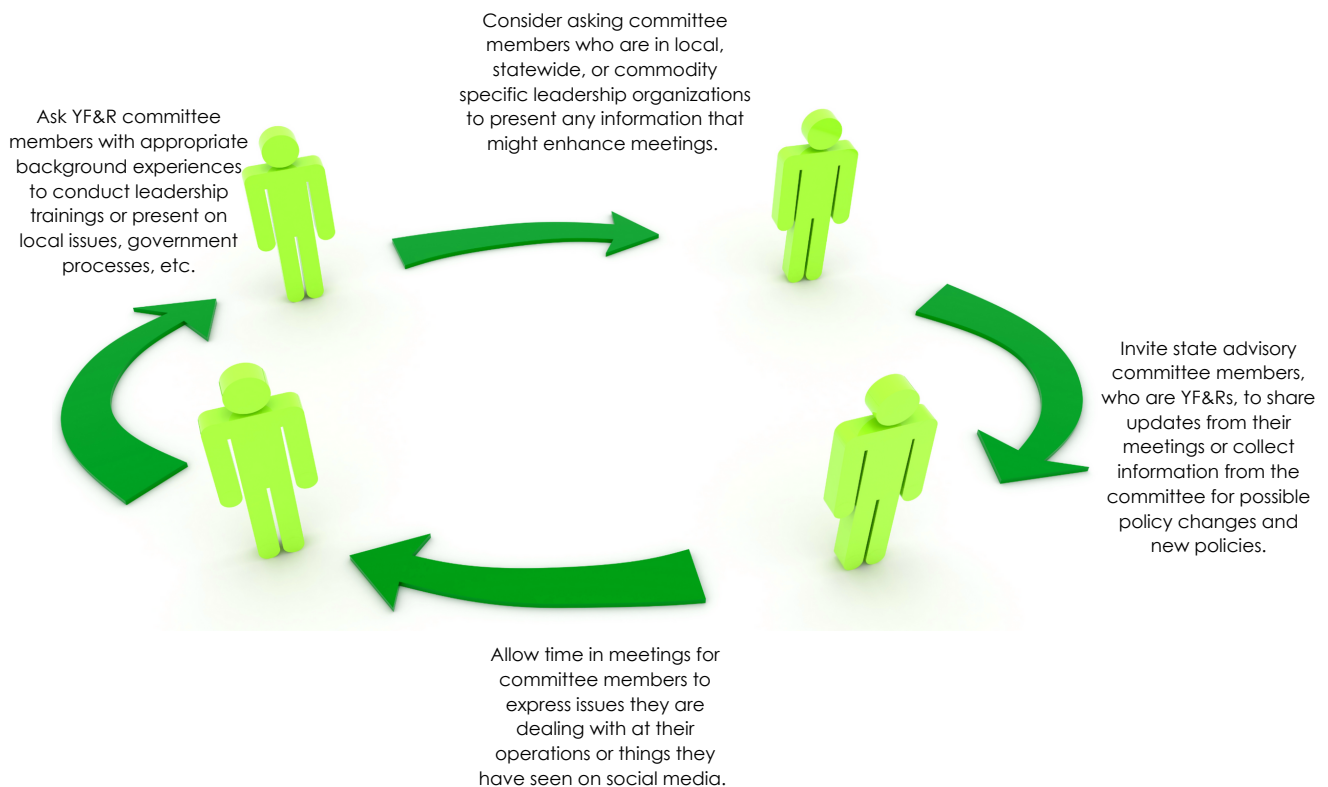
STEP 2: TOOLS

What does your committee have in place to help support the education covered in the previous section?

The previous section showcased various ideas on how YF&R committees could provide learning opportunities to their committee members within meetings and other opportunities available at the state level. This section is intended to provide ways your committee can continue to supplement those leadership and professional development opportunities with hands-on resources and networking. The suggestions within this section are intended to help your committee stay organized with resources to supplement information covered in meetings or at conferences.

YOUR GREATEST TOOL: YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As county YF&R committees, you are the future of leadership in agriculture. There are several ways committee members can bring their previous experience and skills to meetings. Below are a few suggestions for encouraging committee members to engage more during meetings:



"Earn your leadership every day."

—Michael Jordan, Former NBA Player

SUGESTED RESOURCES

In order to best capitalize on trainings and conferences your committee attends, it would be a good practice to keep the following materials on hand. For electronic copies of materials from the state office, please forward your requests to your district field representative.

- [Lasting Legacy](#): Connecting the Mission to the Vision of Your County Farm Bureau (Educational Manual- Password: Legacy 1941)
- [Florida Farm Bureau Federation Policy Development and Current Policy Book](#)
- County YF&R committee by-laws (if applicable)
- [Printed copy of the program of activities booklet](#)
- List of Committees
 - Include chairs' names and roster of individuals on the committee
- Fliers and promotional items for upcoming events
- [Growing Our Leaders: Statewide YF&R Toolkit](#)
- Contact information from previous guest speakers



"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It's got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet."

- Reverend Theodore Hesburgh

STEP 3: SUPPORT

What is your committee doing to continuously support each other internally?

Organizing your Committee Effectively

In order to ensure your county YF&R is the most effective it can be, it is important to understand some of the different components relating to committees. Definitions to several terms pertaining to boards and committees are found below:

BOARD

Ultimate authority & delegation for final decision-making

COMMITTEE

A group of people appointed for a specific function, typically consisting of members of a larger group

TASK FORCE

For periodic needs requiring more in-depth support such as more volunteer intensive projects or programs

ADVISORY

Non-authoritative outside resources with expertise to provide guidance on an as needed basis

"The price of greatness is responsibility."

-Sir Winston Churchill

MOTIVATING YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

One of the greatest benefits to joining a county YF&R program is the networking opportunity for new committee members. County programs that have set up internal support systems to help welcome new members have a higher likelihood of retaining new members as well as encouraging them to engage in county programming. Below you will find a few ideas for setting up a system to provide support and might find value in being a part of your county YF&R program.

MENTORSHIP SYSTEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New committee member with more experienced committee members.• Pairing individuals with different commodity backgrounds.• Setting up a more formal mentorship system between new chair and outgoing chair.
TOPIC SCHEDULE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair could set up a topic schedule for the year where he/she would reach out to committee members and ask them to pick a leadership or professional development topic for the committee to cover at the next meeting.• Each committee member could be assigned to a particular monthly meeting to research and present on a pertinent issue affecting agriculture in the community that month to help educate the group.
SEND OUT PRE-MEETING AGENDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secretary can be in charge of sending out the pre-meeting agenda to all the committee members and ask for comments prior to the meeting.• This will help the committee be prepared for each meeting with input to promote good discussion.

**"Do what you feel in your heart to be right,
for you'll be criticized anyway."**

-Eleanor Roosevelt, Former First Lady of the United States

THE ROLE OF A YF&R CHAIR

OVERVIEW

Congratulations on being the YF&R chair of your county Farm Bureau! Whether you were elected or appointed, you hold a crucial position in leading your YF&R committee on a path to develop a strong group of agricultural leaders. This section contains resources and tips on how you can be the best chair possible for your county Farm Bureau.

THE BASICS

As the YF&R chair you serve as the liaison between your YF&R committee and your county board. The chair is responsible for making a roadmap of where they would like to go utilizing the [YF&R Program of Activities Template](#) provided.

CREATING A LEADERSHIP TEAM

Being the chair can be overwhelming at times and having a team or a co-chair can reduce the responsibility upon yourself while also shaping the committee's next leaders.

CO-CHAIR

When selecting a co-chair, find someone who is eager and a leader within the committee that you can work with to build agendas and run the meetings. This co-chair will take your place when you are not able to make county board and YF&R meetings. It is important for both of you to be on the same page prior to the meeting to ensure everything runs smoothly.

SECRETARY

When selecting your secretary, choose someone who is punctual and organized to ensure they take accurate minutes and will send them out to the committee in a timely manner.

OUTREACH COORDINATOR

When selecting your outreach coordinator, find someone who loves social media and is good at creating and posting content. This person along with the rest of your team, can be administrators on the YF&R Facebook or Instagram page. These pages will keep old and new members in the loop on upcoming meetings while also promoting and educating the general public about agriculture.



*"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more,
do more and become more, you are a leader."*

–John Quincy Adams, 6th President of the United States

MEETINGS

Meetings are where your YF&R committee's ideas form. It is important to ensure meetings are held during the year not only to conduct business, but to also build relationships within your group and create a stronger YF&R committee. Your meetings will determine if your members stay or move on. This is why it is important to plan ahead to ensure each meeting goes well.

HOW TO CONDUCT

As the chair, you are in charge of starting and ending your meetings on time. As the leader, everyone will look to you for answers. It is important to challenge the committee, allowing them to come up with ideas to ensure the chair is not the only one contributing. Depending on the size of your committee, "Roberts Rules of Order" is always a good system to follow when conducting a meeting. The "[Dunbar's Meeting Procedure Guide](#)" is available for purchase online through Dunbar's website.

FREQUENCY

A question many YF&Rs have are, "how often should we meet?" The committee should meet as often as they need to be successful and effective. There are committees who meet monthly, every other month and some quarterly. The minimum amount recommended would be 4 meetings a year (quarterly).

TYPES OF MEETINGS

Do not feel like every meeting you have has to be a business meeting. Remember the YF&R committee is more than just a group, it can be a family. Here are a few of the many things you can do to change up your basic meetings:

- Social meeting at a restaurant
- Bowling
- Bonfire
- Potlucks
- White Elephant gift exchange around Christmas time
- Host a Mock Discussion Meet
- Invite speakers from your local and state Farm Bureau
- Invite leadership development speakers to discuss finances, taxes, public speaking, issues in agriculture, etc....

"Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily, even if you had no title or position."

-Brian Tracy, Canadian-American Author

- Go on farm tours and learn more about specific commodities and the challenges farmers and ranchers are facing
- Practice volleyball or corn hole skills for the YF&R conference
- Have a lake or beach day

AGENDAS

Setting your agenda prior to a meeting is one of the most important things you can do. Making and providing a well thought out agenda to your committee members will not only keep your committee on topic during the meeting but will also allow you to cover the most important topics to the group and prepare them to join the discussion.

CREATING AN AGENDA

Creating an agenda can be as simple as keeping a running set of notes on your phone or a physical list on a sheet of paper of the things which need to be covered during your meeting. When making the agenda, a good question to ask is, "is this topic related to our vision, mission, and goals?" An agenda also serves as a time management tool and allows you and your committee to stay on task. Time is valuable and the best way you can show them you respect their time is to come up with an agenda and stick to it. [Click here](#) for a template of a simple agenda which can be used to print and send out to your committee members.

CREATING A "CHAIR'S AGENDA"

A "chair's agenda" is a more in-depth agenda where you have done your homework on each topic you would like to cover. This way if there are no responses for each topic, you can work with the committee to spark conversation. This is a simple process to be prepared during your meetings. You can even add the time you think it will take to go through each topic so you can work to keep the agenda on its start and finish time. [Click here](#) for a template of a chair's agenda that can be printed for you and the co-chair to have.

MINUTES/NOTES

Without minutes/notes from your meetings, you do not have any documentation the meeting happened. More importantly, without minutes/notes there will be no record of what was accomplished in the meeting for those who were not in attendance. These minutes/notes also serve as a reminder to committee members what their roles and responsibilities are.

"Doing what is right isn't the problem. It is knowing what is right."

—Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States

Storing your minutes/notes is an important practice to learn to ensure your committee has a log of the information and ideas your committee covered or discussed throughout the years. There are many ways of storing your minutes/notes. Many YF&Rs use online collaborative methods of storing their records while others store records on their personal devices.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF MINUTE/NOTE TAKING

DO:

- Include date and time
- Include attendees present
- Finalize minutes within two days after meeting
- Document actions and reports
- Store and retain past minutes
- Take clear and concise notes

DON'T:

- Include personal opinions
- Include depicting emotions of attendees
- Not clarifying information misheard

SECRETARY/NOTE TAKER

It is important to delegate someone who can take minutes/notes during the meeting. This individual can take them by typing or writing them down during the meeting. When taking notes, it is important to let them know they do not have to get all the details but to focus on the main ideas, as well as anyone who has volunteered or was delegated for a task. It is also important to send the minutes/notes back out to the committee in a timely manner.

ATTENDANCE

When taking minutes/notes, it is important to note who was present during the meeting and document their name at the top of the minutes/notes.

FINANCIALS

Being a committee of the county Farm Bureau board means all monies and finances collected or raised are under the authority of the county Farm Bureau. This includes money collected during a fundraiser hosted by the YF&R committee. Any collection, fundraiser, and/or spending of funds must be approved by the appropriate means set by the county Farm Bureau. Approval of conducting a fundraiser and/or any event will also require approval of the county Farm Bureau board of directors.

Each county Farm Bureau will establish guidance on how their YF&R committee will receive operating funds, whether it be a yearly budgeted item, and/or be required to do fundraisers to create funding.

"You take people as far as they will go, not as far as you would like them to go."

– Jeanette Rankin, First Female United States Representative

BUDGET PROCESS

It is important for YF&R committees to come together and create an organized budget each year to present to the board. As the chair, it is your job to lead this discussion and organize the thoughts of the committee. Every decision to spend money needs to be approved by the board.

The most simple and professional way to do this is to create a budget for all the incoming funds and program/meeting expenditures for the year, and present this to the board for approval all at once. As long as the committee functions within the budget, they do not need to seek approval from the board for each individual purchase that is outlined in the budget.

To help your committee create and keep track of your budget, we have created a [YF&R Budget Example](#) and [YF&R Budget Template](#) resource for you to utilize. You will notice there are three major sections to the budget: summary, revenue, and expenses. The purpose of each section is outlined in the chart below:

SUMMARY	This is where you can see the how much total money the committee receives and spends in one area.
REVENUE	<p>This is designed to track exactly where all the money comes from in order to avoid the problem of accounting for incoming money one year that might not occur the next year (i.e. a grant or one-time donation).</p> <p>*It is important to be specific on the different categories the committee receives money from in order to stay organized from year to year and avoid overspending.</p>
EXPENSES	<p>This is where you get to put your program of activities to work. A good way to fill out this section is to look over your program of activities calendar and account for all the events or meetings you might need to prepare for financially.</p> <p>*Do not forget to account for state events your committee members might want to attend like the State YF&R Leadership Conference and FFBF Annual Meeting.</p>



"The role of leadership is to transform the complex situation into small pieces and prioritize them."

—Carlos Ghosn, French-Brazilian Businessman

The next three columns provide a space to put what was budgeted (budget), what you spent (actual), and the last column is automatically figured for you after typing in the budget and actual to see how much the committee was under or over the budget (under/over). Once you fill in the budget column for all three sections, then you can fill out the actual column throughout the year for the template to automatically fill in the over/under column.

A good practice at the end of each fiscal year is to submit or present your completed budget (which includes the actual column completed as well) to the board for review and guidance. This is a great opportunity to glean some valuable information and tips from the board on how to enhance the organization and effectiveness of your budget for the next year.

[Click here](#) for an example of a budget or [click here](#) for an easy template to get started.

CONTACTS

Florida Farm Bureau Federation is made up of many different divisions and people. If you are ever in need of a speaker or someone to answer questions on an issue, feel free to contact your district field representative, and they will help get you in contact with the staff member who specializes in your preferred topic area. [Click here](#) to find contact information for staff members.



RESOURCES

HELPFUL TOOLS FOR YOUR COMMITTEE

RESOURCES TO HELP FIELD POTENTIAL QUESTIONS

FARM BUREAU FACTS

This section was created to clear up any misconceptions out there which may confuse members of what Florida Farm Bureau Federation is and what we represent. This will also serve as a fact sheet to know a little bit more about Florida's Voice of Agriculture.

GRASSROOTS

Since Florida Farm Bureau Federation's establishment in 1941, we have always been a grassroots organization. Grassroots is a bottom up approach which empowers members across the state to voice and stand behind their ideas. This approach is important in influencing laws and regulations at the local, state, and national level that impacts agriculture and allows anyone to voice their concerns.

At county Farm Bureau meetings across Florida, discussions are held to find solutions to the concerns and challenges farmers face. Those concerns and challenges then become resolutions which can form into Farm Bureau policy. Farm Bureau policy is our way to advocate at the local, state, and national level as a unified voice. This process is one of the key components that allows Farm Bureau to be powerful in voicing the concern of our farmers and ranchers at the grassroots level.

HISTORY

Although Florida Farm Bureau was established in the 1940s, it was not until 1969 when Walter Kautz was elected as FFBF president, the idea of young farmers leadership became a topic. In the 1970s the need for a program to help young farmers develop leadership skills became more apparent. A Young Farmer and Homemaker group was formed and Jimmy Ragans of Madison County was elected as its first chairman. The group later became the Young Farmer and Rancher Committee. In the early 1970s, young farmer committees were organized at the county level across the state. The Outstanding Young Farmer and Rancher competition was started and an annual Young Farmer and Rancher Conference established.

"The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways."

– John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the United States

The chairman and outgoing chairman of the FFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Committee now serves on the FFBF board of directors. Many members of the committee have served on the board, as county presidents and in key roles in the industry.

In 1976, Edward Smoak, a 26-year old citrus grower and member of the Florida YF&R Committee, was elected chairman of the AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Advisory Committee. This qualified him to serve on the AFBF board of directors – a special honor for Florida Farm Bureau.

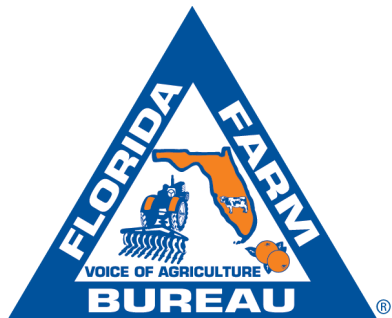
In the early 2000s, the YF&R program was changed from a committee to a two-year leadership development and training program that still exists. Two couples or individuals from each of the eight districts are selected to serve a two-year term on the State YF&R Leadership Group.

For more details of Florida Farm Bureau Federation's history, [click here](#).

FEDERATION OR INSURANCE COMPANY?

Although the names sound similar, Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF) and Florida Farm Bureau Insurance Company (FFBIC) are actually two completely different companies. Most of the confusion centers around the fact that individuals must purchase a FFBF membership in order to utilize the majority of the insurance products offered by FFBIC. This practice goes back historically to when the FFBIC was housed under the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. Since 1983, FFBF and FFBIC have existed as two independent companies. The insurance company is still Florida Farm Bureau's most used member benefit.

An easy way to spot the difference between the two companies are the logos. Florida Farm Bureau Federation has a triangle logo and Farm Bureau Insurance is a square (see below).



"The Young Farmers & Ranchers Program has proven to be an invaluable extension of my education and experience. It has introduced me to lifelong friends, prepared me to advocate, provided opportunities for service, and rewarded me handily. Farm Bureau and the YF&R Program owe me nothing: I am indebted."

-President Jeb Smith, Florida Farm Bureau Federation

STATE BOARD MEMBERS & ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT SERVED ON THE LEADERSHIP GROUP

The YF&R Leadership program has strongly contributed to the history of Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF). Our current President, Jeb Smith, started his career with FFBF in the YF&R Leadership program and has now served as President of FFBF since 2021. Jake Raburn was a member of the 2012-13 State YF&R Leadership Group and during their trips to Farm Bureau Days in Tallahassee he realized his passion to serve. Later that year, he decided to run for the State Representative office in District 57 and was successful in winning a seat. He served for six years and was a great voice for Florida agriculture. There are many past leadership group members that have served agriculture greatly and many that still serve on the FFBF State board of directors, those are listed below:

- Jeb Smith, current president of Florida Farm Bureau Federation
- John Hoblick, past president of Florida Farm Bureau Federation
- Jacob Larson, current state board member, past AFBF YF&R leadership member
- Steve Johnson, current state board vice president
- Thomas Ford, current state board member
- Adam Cook, current state board member
- Clay Archey, current state board member
- Christian Spinosa, current state board member
- Victoria Hunter, current state board member, state women's leadership vice chair
- Morgan Norris, former AFBF YF&R leadership chairwoman

501(c)(5) vs 501(c)(3)

Florida Farm Bureau Federation is an agricultural organization designated under the 501(c)(5) federal income tax exemption. The purpose of a 501(c)(5) organization is to better the conditions of those engaged in agriculture, improve their products, and improve their occupational efficiency. Although the organization's members do not have to be directly engaged in agricultural pursuits, the organization's primary purpose should be centered on the improvement of the conditions of those engaged in agricultural pursuits.

A 501(c)(3) organization is a company that has been approved by the IRS as a tax exempt, charitable organization. Charitable usually applies to:

- Religious
- Educational
- Charitable
- Scientific
- Testing for Public Safety
- Literacy
- Fostering of national or international amateur sports
- Prevention of cruelty to animals and children companies

"The story of family farming underscores a legacy of sustainability."

– Amanda Zaluckyj, Attorney

Since Florida Farm Bureau Federation is not a 501(c)(3), donations to a county Farm Bureau may not be deducted as a charitable contribution, but donations and contributions to a county Farm Bureau may be deducted as an ordinary cost of doing business. County Farm Bureaus are subject to sales taxes, however membership dues are not taxable.

ASSOCIATION VS. FEDERATION

County Farm Bureaus, Florida Farm Bureau, and American Farm Bureau are all classified as Federations. Another type of organizational structure is an association. Sometimes the terms Federation and association are used interchangeably, however they have very different meanings.

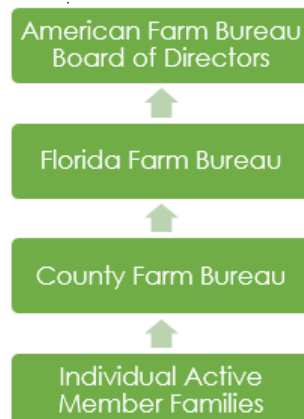
Associations are organizations where the board of directors hold the power to change or create policy for the members (top-down governance). The membership of associations is made up of individuals or companies, and their decision-making abilities are standardized.

Association



Federations are organizations where the voting members are the ones with the power to create or change policy (grassroots or bottom-up governance). The board of directors' role is to manage the fiduciary responsibility and interpret/implement the policy set by the voting membership. Organizations make up the membership of a federation. Since the membership is made up of organizations, each "member" functions as its own entity. This means each member organization is able to function independently in making their own decisions that best promote and support their membership. See example below:

Federation



"It is impossible to have a healthy and sound society without a proper respect for the soil."

– Peter Maurin, French Social Activist

Example: The membership of each county Farm Bureau is made up of the member families (with the active membership – i.e. those who derive part or the majority of their income from a bonafide agriculture operation – making up the voting membership). Each of the county Farm Bureaus in Florida are members of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. The Florida Farm Bureau Federation is a member of American Farm Bureau Federation. With this structure, each member at each level plays an important role with communicating their issues in, true grassroots form, to their parent organization.

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

Farm Bureau's membership consists of four classes: active members, associate members, honorary members, and student members which are located in the FFBF bylaws in article V. To read Florida Farm Bureau Federation's bylaws, [click here](#).

Bylaws vary from county to county and each county Farm Bureau has modifications of their membership classification. Each membership classification below is from Florida Farm Bureau Federation's bylaws.

ACTIVE

Active membership consist of someone engaged in the production of agricultural products for sale, including lessees and tenants of the land used for the production of such products; and/or lessors and landlords who receive rent, either in kind or in cash, all or part of the crop raised on the leased or rented premises.

Active members are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation and the Farm Bureaus as defined in the membership agreement, and to the privileges of the floor at regular or special meetings, subject to the rules governing such meetings.

ASSOCIATE

Associate membership consists of someone who does not qualify for active membership, but has a direct or indirect interest in agriculture. Associate members are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of active members except that they may not vote in the annual or special membership meetings of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation or the Farm Bureaus; nor may they hold offices in either organization.

HONORARY

Honorary members are selected by their local board of directors. An honorary member had to have been an active member continuously for 30 years. They are exempt from local and state dues.

STUDENT

Qualifications are for those who are under the age of 23 and pursuing a secondary or post-secondary education. Student members have the same privileges as associate members.

“Farming isn’t something that can be taught. Each plant tells its own story that has to be read repeatedly.”

— Kelsey Timmerman, Author

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Privileges and services of your membership are extended to include the immediate family of the member, i.e., the spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age who permanently reside with the member.

STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Florida Farm Bureau Federation has a total of 16 advisory committees that represent over 300 commodities that Florida grows, raises or catches. These advisory committees are made up of active members that are directly involved in the specific commodity and/or industry they work in. Through these advisory committees, members work together to form Farm Bureau policy.

Each year, advisory committee members are nominated and approved by their county president to represent their challenges, which are specific to their industry, at the state level. A committee member must be an active Farm Bureau member engaged in the commodity or industry they are representing. Below are the current advisory committees at Florida Farm Bureau Federation.

- Apiculture
- Aquaculture
- Beef
- Budget/Economy
- Citrus
- Dairy
- Environmental Horticulture
- Equine
- Fruit/Vegetable
- Forestry
- Labor
- Oversight*
- Peanut/Cotton
- Sugar
- Trade
- Water/Natural Resources

*Nominated and appointed by the FFBF President.

FARM BUREAU POLICY

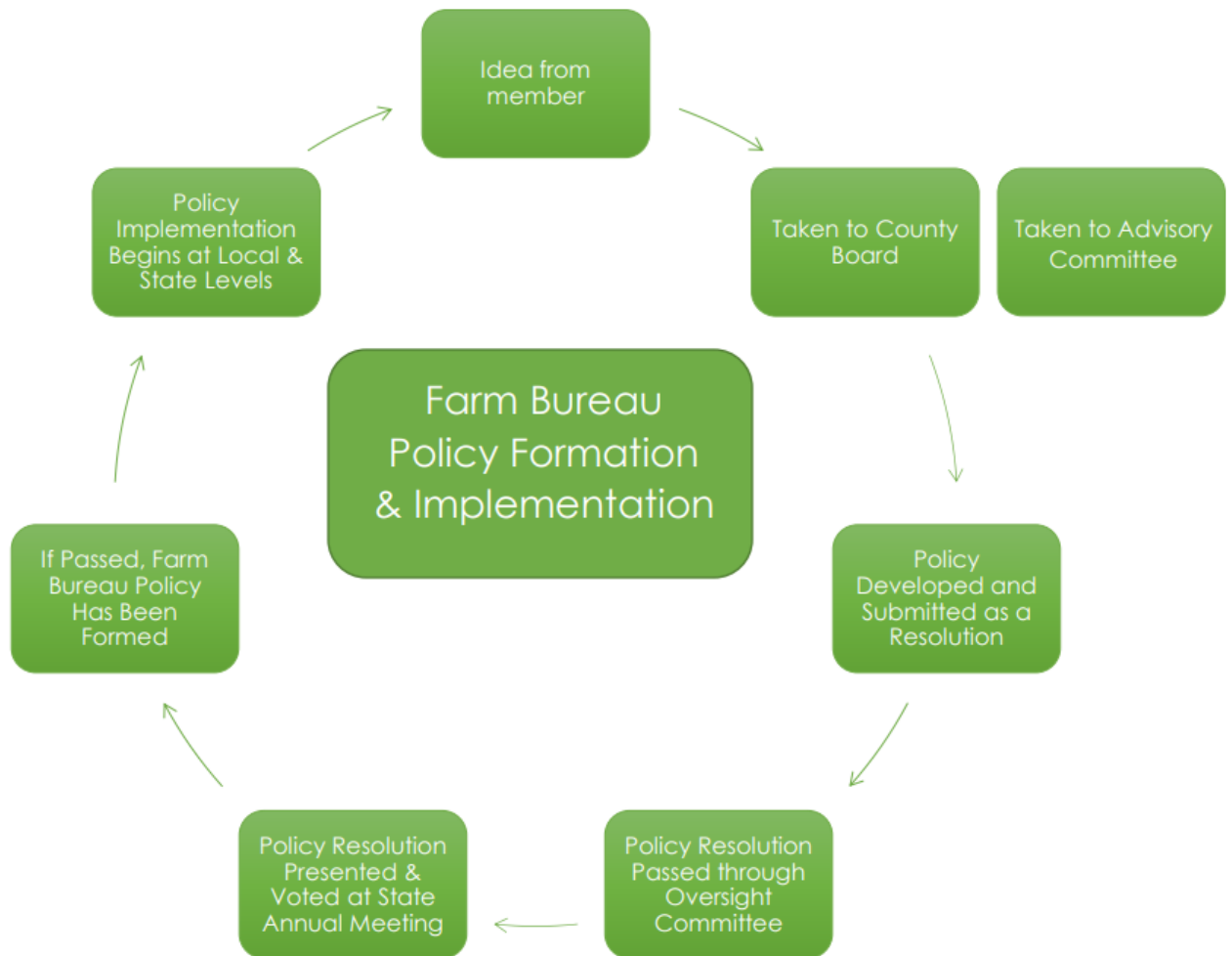
Florida Farm Bureau Federation's policy is defined as the beliefs, philosophies and ideas of our members that have been adopted over the years. These policies represent how Florida Farm Bureau Federation as a whole advocated in the past, present, and future to come. Without policies, Florida Farm Bureau Federation would not have a unified voice on the multiple challenges we face in agriculture each day. This policy process allows one small voice to be heard and amplified by thousands to ultimately create solutions.

“As the Republican platforms says, the welfare of the farmer is vital to that of the whole country.”

– William Howard Taft, 27th President of the United States

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING POLICY

Before policies are adopted at the State Annual Meeting each year, they have to be formed and properly submitted through the policy resolutions process. The process of submitting a policy resolution can be accomplished in three ways: (1) by your county Farm Bureau, (2) by a State Advisory Committee or (3) by the Florida Farm Bureau Federation board of directors. Once a policy resolution has been submitted, with ample time before the State Annual Meeting, the oversight committee then checks for redundancy and any conflicts the resolution may have with an existing policy. All options end at the same road with the policy resolution being voted on at the State Annual Meeting in front of the voting delegates. Below is a simple process of how this works.



“Cultivators are the most valuable citizens...they are tied to their country.”

– Thomas Jefferson, 3rd President of the United States

A critical part of the policy development process is writing a straightforward resolution which provides an implementation process. Sound policy clarifies the problem to be addressed and the result expected from implementing the policy, includes a specific goal, and is general enough to allow for creative paths to reach the goal of the policy resolution. Each policy in the policy book should read as a directive giving stakeholders and county Farm Bureaus a course of action to support Florida Farm Bureau Federation's stance on issues facing farmers and ranchers in our state.

If you would like more information pertaining to this process and tips on developing and implementing Farm Bureau policy, [click here](#).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Whether you are starting your county's YF&R committee, or if you have been the chair for a few years, this resource is a helpful tool for navigating some of the frequently asked questions you may encounter with your committee. Throughout this document are answers to questions from a variety of areas targeted at strengthening your YF&R committee. The information has been organized based under these topic areas in order to assist in committee members efficiently finding answers to their questions.

AWARDS & AWARD APPLICATIONS

ACHIEVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE AWARD

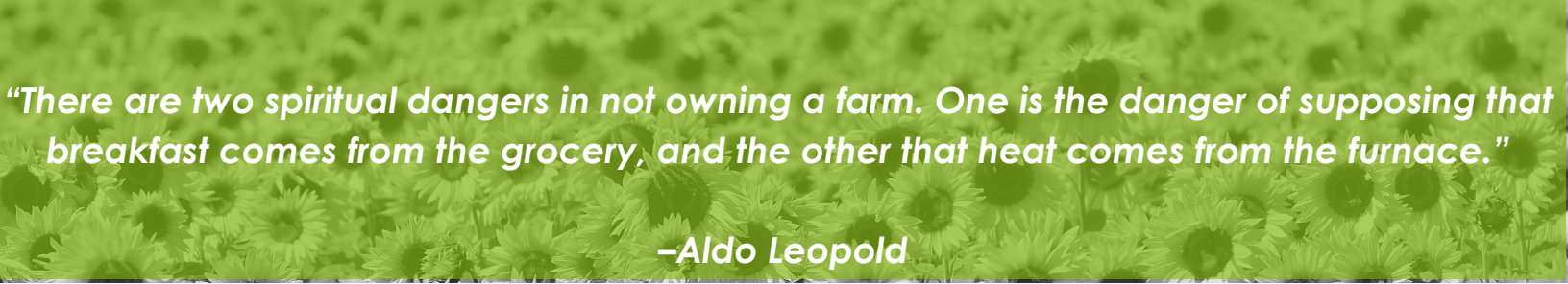
Q: How do I know if I qualify for this?

A: The Achievement in Agriculture Award Program is designed to recognize YF&Rs who have excelled in their farming/ranching operations and showed growth in their leadership abilities to the point of positively impacting others in their communities.

*This application would apply to a YF&R who makes majority of their income from production agriculture. This usually means the YF&R owns parts or all of their operation.

Q: How do I apply for this?

A: This application becomes available each year and can be found on Florida Farm Bureau's website. This application was not designed to be filled out overnight, it requires time and your dedication to ensure your application is written at its very best. Once you finish your application, you can submit through your district field representative or to the state leadership programs coordinator.



"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace."

—Aldo Leopold

Q: Am I ready to apply yet?

A: Knowing if you are ready to apply or not is entirely up to you. One test to see if you are ready is to take the application and begin filling it out with bullet points to see if you have enough to write for each section. If you think you have enough information to properly fill it out, you are ready. Regardless if you win the first year or the fifth year, this application allows you to not only evaluate your operation from a financial standpoint but also marketing, operational, and plans for the future.

Q: How do I start?

A: The first step in starting the application is looking through the application many months before the due date. This will ensure a strong start to the application. It is also a great idea to have friends, family, board members, and your district field representative help you look through the application for edits and ideas that you may have not thought of.

Q: What are the financials for in the application and do I need to do them?

A: The financials of this application are necessary for the judges to solidify that majority of your income comes from production agriculture. This also allows the judges to see the progression of your operation over the years. Many past contestants have been very grateful for the financials because they have gotten many tips and an even better understanding of their own financials.

*Note: The confidentiality of the applicant's financials is taken very seriously and only the judges will be able to view the financials. All financial information is shredded following the judging portion of the competition.

Q: What is the process if I get top 3?

A: Congrats on making it in the top three! You will now move on to the on-farm judging where three judges will come to your operation and spend two hours with the applicant(s) to learn more about your operation. This allows the applicant(s) to show their operation to the judges and answer any questions they may have from the application when determining the placements for that year. Work with your district field representative on planning for their visit to ensure you utilize the two hours as efficiently and effectively as possible.

“Without the farmer, there is no food.”

–Lailah Gifty Akita, founder of Smart Youth Volunteers Foundation

Q: I won! What happens next?

A: Congrats on being Florida's Achievement in Agriculture winner. Now that you have won, you will represent Florida at the national competition. Farm Bureau will cover the cost for the travel and hotel during the trip to American Farm Bureau's National Convention. You will be awarded a brand-new truck in the coming weeks to months depending on the order status from the dealer. Being that the award is over \$600, Farm Bureau will need a W9 form on the individual who will be receiving the truck for IRS purposes.

EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE AWARD

Q: How do I know if I qualify for this?

A: The Excellence in Agriculture Award Program is designed as an opportunity for young farmers and ranchers actively contributing and growing through their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture to earn recognition.

*This application would apply to a YF&R who does not make majority of their income from production agriculture.

Q: How do I apply for this?

A: This application becomes available each year and can be found on Florida Farm Bureau's website. This application was not designed to be filled out overnight, it requires time and your dedication to ensure your application is written at its very best. Once you finish your application, you can submit through your district field representative or to the state leadership programs coordinator.

Q: Am I ready to apply yet?

A: Knowing if you are ready to apply or not is entirely up to you. One test to see if you are ready is to take the application and begin filling it out with bullet points to see if you have enough to write for each section. If you think you have enough information to properly fill it out, you are ready.

Q: How do I start?

A: The first step in starting the application is looking through the application many months before the due date. This will ensure a strong start to the application. It is also a great idea to have friends, family, board members, and your district field representative help you through the application for edits and ideas that you may have not thought of.

"Every battle you face can be won every time, and the more you practice winning, the more you win."

—Patricia King, Irish Trade Unionist

Q: What is the process if I get top 3?

A: Since you have proven yourself as a highly qualified competitor through your application in comparison to the other applicants, you then get to create a 25-minute presentation to share the contents of your application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and an audience. Think of this as getting the opportunity to bring your application to life and allow the judges to better get to know you. The contestant has the freedom to utilize the 25-minute time period at their discretion. It is important to keep in mind the judges will have questions at the conclusion of the presentation, and the question time is factored into the 25-minute presentation time. The contestant will receive a 10-minute warning as well as a 5-minute warning during their presentation to let them know how much time they have left. Contestants may only use PowerPoint or Prezi as a means to deliver their presentation. No props, sound, or video of any kind is allowed during the presentation, and contestants are not allowed to use their own computer. Contestants are not allowed to view the other presentations until they have completed their own.

Q: I am a champion! What happens next?

A: Congratulations! You will be awarded a John Deere XUV 560E (courtesy of Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company), \$500 cash, and an expense-paid trip to the American Farm Bureau (AFBF) Annual Convention where you will represent Florida in the national YF&R competition. At the AFBF Annual Convention, you will give your presentation again to another panel of judges in order to be considered for the national title. The top ten contestants will be announced and brought up to the stage at the AFBF Annual Convention, and the winner will be awarded a brand new Ford truck (or price comparable vehicle).

YF&R ACTIVITY AWARD

Q: What is an "Activity Award" and who completes it?

A: The Activity Award is bestowed upon those counties who have an active YF&R committee who showcase exemplary efforts and participation in activities throughout the year.

*This is an online application filled out by the YF&R chair. If there are any questions or concerns, contact your district field representative.

Q: How extensive is the online application, and what types of questions are asked?

A: The application is simple to complete and provides a great method for measuring how active your county YF&R should strive to be in order to make a positive impact on your community. The questions asked reference the topic areas listed below:

*"I take things as they come and find that patience and persistence
tend to win out in the end."*

—Paul Kane, English Writer

- Types of activities, events, and opportunities your committee plans and participates in
- Methods used to spread positive message about agriculture
- Leadership roles held by committee members in other organizations which positively impact the community
- How often your committee has meetings
- What Florida Farm Bureau Federation events your committee members attend

DISCUSSION MEET

Q: What is a Discussion Meet?

A: The Discussion Meet is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each participant. The competitors are evaluated on their exchange of ideas and information on a pre-determined topic. The judges are looking for the contestant that offers constructive criticism, cooperation, and communication while analyzing agricultural problems and developing solutions.

Q: What am I discussing in a "Discussion Meet"?

A: Each year American Farm Bureau Federation releases five questions related to topics in agriculture that are used to formulate questions for the YF&R Discussion Meet competitors to deliberate, in order to come up with a solution.

Q: Should I practice?

A: Many YF&R committees have begun to do "Mock Discussion Meets." With these discussion meets, the YF&R works with their committee and/or district field representative to create a discussion meet with 3-5 YF&R members that are interested in competing at the state competition. This allows the applicants to practice competing on the topics and to encourage other applicants to know more about what the discussion meet is. It is important to practice many times before the state competition to better prepare yourself.

Q: What happens if I win?

A: Congratulations! You will be awarded a John Deere XUV 560E (courtesy of Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Company), \$500 cash, and an expense-paid trip to the American Farm Bureau (AFBF) Annual Convention where you will represent Florida in the national YF&R competition. Prior to January the YF&R Program Coordinator will reach out to set up a "DM prep call". This call will include other staff and former DM winners that can offer helpful advice, study tips and useful viewpoints from people who have judged this contest.

"Courage is the discovery that you may not win, and trying when you know you can lose."

– Tom Krause, Motivational Speaker

STATE YF&R LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Q: Who is eligible to come to the State YF&R Leadership Conference?

A: Anyone is welcome to come, as long as they are between the ages of 18-35!

Q: What can I expect if I go to the State YF&R Leadership Conference?

A: Fun, networking, educational sessions, new friends, and contacts in the agriculture industry and so much more! We kick off the conference on Friday night with a banquet to recognize all the hard work and accomplishments of our county YF&R programs put forth to earn the YF&R Activity Award. This conference is designed to be a balance of business and play, with our highly competitive annual volleyball and corn-hole tournaments and our Friday evening social event. There are plenty of options for professional development with over ten breakout sessions to choose from and our new farm tour option. Hear from inspiring and motivational keynote speakers, test your skills in the Discussion Meet event or compete for the top YF&R awards – Achievement or Excellence in Agriculture awards. Come see old friends and make new ones. This event is run by the current YF&R Leadership Group class, so come be a part of one of the highlight events of the YF&R calendar!

YF&R STATE LEADERSHIP GROUP

Q: What are the qualifications needed to be eligible for the YF&R State Leadership Group?

A: In order to be eligible to apply to be a part of the YF&R State Leadership Group, you must meet the following qualifications:

- Be a member of Florida Farm Bureau for a minimum of one year, as of October 1st of the application year.
- Be classified as an "active" member, in good standing, at the county level
- Be between the ages of 18 - 35, not having turned 36 prior to October 31st at the end of the term.
- Application must be submitted by the posted deadline.
- County Farm Bureau president must approve application by emailing program coordinator at YFR.Leadership@ffbf.org by the posted deadline.
- Have two letters of recommendation, (one personal and one professional) emailed to YFR.Leadership@ffbf.org by the posted deadline.

*For a link to the application, go to: <https://www.floridafarmbureau.org/programs/young-farmers-and-ranchers/>.



"Anyone, anywhere can make a positive difference."

– Mark Sanborn, American Entrepreneur

Q: What is the purpose of the State YF&R Leadership Group?

A: The intent of the program is to develop and refine participants' leadership abilities, so they will be better prepared to become more involved in Farm Bureau at the county, state and national level. The program strives to surface and develop young leaders by focusing on personal growth and leadership development in the areas of public speaking, media training, legislative awareness, issue advocacy, business development, networking, and service leadership.

Q: How long is the term for being on the State YF&R Leadership Group?

A: Individuals are appointed for a two-year term, during which members participate in a leadership development program of approximately 45 days, conducted in 13 separate seminars.

Q: I applied! When do I find out if I made it on the State YF&R Leadership Group?

A: Thank you for applying! You should hear back from the state office by the beginning of September. Reach out to your district field representative if you have not heard back from the state office by the second week of September.

OTHER

Q: Do I have to be a member of my county Farm Bureau to be on the county YF&R committee?

A: No, you are not required to be a member of the county Farm Bureau in order to be a member of your county's YF&R committee. However, if you intend to serve as a chairperson for the committee, you must be a member. In addition, if you wish to participate in any state level events, competitions, conferences, or programs, you must become a member of your county YF&R.

Q: Do I have to be a farmer or rancher to join a county YF&R committee?

A: Not at all! If you eat and wear clothes, then you are involved in agriculture. This committee is focused on developing leaders from all backgrounds and careers by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and tools to advocate for agriculture to their centers of influence.

"The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership."

– Harvey S. Firestone, Founder of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company

Depending on your county Farm Bureau's guidelines, you may have to be actively involved in production agriculture to serve as the chair of the county YF&R committee, but to serve as a general committee member you do not have to be an active farmer or rancher. For the State YF&R Leadership Group, you have to be classified as an active member (i.e., an individual who derives part of or the majority of their income from being actively involved in production agriculture).

Q: Why should I be on a county YF&R committee as opposed to just being a member?

A: The YF&R program from the state level to the county level is designed to develop and polish the skills of the future leaders in agriculture. By becoming a member of your county YF&R committee, you will be included on information pertaining to any new programs, events, and conferences.

Q: I see there are different classifications of membership. What do all of these mean?

A: Excellent question! The types of membership are explained below:

ACTIVE

Active membership consist of someone engaged in the production of agricultural products for sale, including lessees and tenants of the land used for the production of such products; and/or lessors and landlords who receive as rents, either in kind or in cash, all or part of the crop raised on the leased or rented premises.

Active members are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation and the Farm Bureaus as defined in the membership agreement, and to the privileges of the floor at regular or special meetings, subject to the rules governing such meetings.

ASSOCIATE

Associate membership consists of someone who does not qualify for active membership, but has a direct or indirect interest in agriculture. Associate members are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of active members except that they may not vote in the annual or special membership meetings of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation or the Farm Bureaus; nor may they hold offices in either organization.

HONORARY

Honorary members are selected by their local board of directors. An honorary member had to have been an active member continuously for 30 years. They are exempt from local and state dues.

STUDENT

Qualifications are for those who are under the age of 23 and pursuing a secondary or post-secondary education. Student members have the same privileges as associate members.

"Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

– John Wooden, American Basketball Coach

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Privileges and services of your membership are extended to include the immediate family of the member, i.e., the spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age who permanently reside with the member.

Q: I'm interested in joining my county YF&R! Who do I talk to about getting involved?

A: We look forward to helping you get involved and developing your personal and professional skills! The best place to start is contacting your district field representative to get in contact with your county Farm Bureau. A list of the contact information is located in the ["General Resources"](#) section of this guide. The district field representative will set up a meeting to introduce you to the county YF&R chair and get you on the contact list to receive updates on the meetings, events, and programs going on.

Q: We need SWAG! Where do we go to order Florida Farm Bureau informational brochures and other items?

A: If your committee is looking to order items with your county YF&R logo, contact your district field representative to request the logo. Following this, your committee has the freedom to work with local vendors to create items that fit your needs such as shirts, hats, pens, and other items. (Note: All uses of the logo must follow the guidelines in the Florida Farm Bureau Brand Guide.)

Q: Are there guidelines on using the logo?

A: Yes. In order to make sure your YF&R committee is using the logo appropriately, [click here](#) to access the Florida Farm Bureau Brand Guide.

YF&R AWARDS, COMPETITIONS & CONFERENCE

The purpose of this resource is to provide a tool that your committee can handout at your annual kickoff meeting in order to inform your committee members of what Florida Farm Bureau Federation has to offer in the YF&R leadership program. [Click here](#) to access the resource.

"The deepest principle of human nature is the craving to be appreciated."

– William James, American Psychologist

GENERAL RESOURCES

Fillable YF&R Program of Activities
Program of Activities Template (PDF)
Budget Example
Budget Template
Florida Farm Bureau YF&R Website
Florida Farm Bureau Federation Policy Development and Current Policy Book
Lasting Legacy: Connecting the Mission to the Vision of Your County Farm Bureau
Growing Our Leaders: Statewide YF&R Toolkit
Dunbar's Meeting Procedure Guide
Agenda Template
Chair's Agenda Template
Florida Farm Bureau Federation Staff Directory
History of Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Florida Farm Bureau Federation Bylaws
Florida Farm Bureau Federation Policy Development Manual
Application Link to all YF&R Competition and Award Applications
Florida Farm Bureau Federation Branding Guide
YF&R Competitions & Awards

