



FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

2026 Youth Speech Contest

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

ABOUT THE CONTEST:

Florida Farm Bureau Federation's Women's Leadership Program hosts an annual statewide Youth Speech Contest to encourage understanding and appreciation of agriculture.

COMPETITION LEVELS:

- **County** → **District** → **State**
- Some counties/districts may offer Senior and Intermediate divisions. Contact your local County Farm Bureau for details.
- **State level:** Senior Division only.

PURPOSE:

- Promote interest and knowledge of agriculture.
- Highlight agriculture's values and importance.

ELIGIBILITY:

- **Senior Division:** Ages 14–18 (as of September 18, 2026; not 19).
- **Intermediate Division:** Ages 11–13 (as of September 18, 2026; not 14).
- Must reside in the sponsoring County.
- Farm Bureau membership not required but encouraged.
- Speech must align with Farm Bureau policies.

CONTEST DETAILS:

- **2026 topic:**

“

What are some of the proactive, collaborative steps that farmers, ranchers, local communities, and organizations like Farm Bureau can take to help guard against invasive species threatening Florida agriculture?

”

- **Speech Length:** 5 minutes (+/- 30 seconds).
- No visual aids allowed.
- Judges use a standardized scoring rubric.

DEADLINES:

- County & District contests: **Before September 18, 2026.**
- District winners (Senior Division): Submit application and speech to FFBF no later than **September 18, 2026, at 4:30 PM EST.**
- State contest: October 29, 2026 at 9am at FFBF Annual Meeting in Daytona. (County Farm Bureau covers one night hotel for District winner to attend state Annual Meeting. FFBF provides tickets for the State winner and two guests to the luncheon following the contest, where the winner will give their speech to all attendees).

PRIZES:

- **County Level:** Determined by County Farm Bureau.
- **District Level:** Determined by District, minimum prizes are:
 - Senior: \$500
 - Intermediate: \$250
- **State Level (Senior Division only):**
 - Finalists: \$100 + plaque
 - 2nd Place: \$500 + plaque
 - Winner: \$1,000 + plaque



RULES:

- Must meet age and residency requirements.
- Previous State winners cannot compete again.
- Online applications must be submitted by deadline for County competition.
- Speech must be original and presented by the contestant.
- Application and a copy of the speech of the District winner must be submitted by the Women's District Chair or the District Field Representative to the state office to compete at the state level.
- Length violations result in point deductions.
- Contestants may use AI tools for research and idea generation, but the speech content must be written in their own words and reflect their personal understanding and perspective.
- To enhance the speakers' credibility and ensure that the focus remains entirely on the content of the speech, contestants must wear professional attire.



Scan the QR code to access the application or
[visit our website](#) for more information.



Florida Farm Bureau Federation Youth Speech Contest Scoring Rubric

Oral and Non-Verbal Communication					
Indicators	Very strong evidence of skill is present 8 - 6	Moderate evidence of skill is present 5 - 3	Little evidence of skill is present 2 - 0	Points Possible	Score
Tone	Appropriate tone is consistent. Speaks at the right pace to be clear, Pronunciation of words is very clear and apparent.	Appropriate tone is usually consistent. Speaks at the right pace most of the time; nervous. Pronunciation of words is usually clear, sometimes vague.	Has difficulty using an appropriate tone. Pace is too fast; nervous. Pronunciation of words is difficult to understand; unclear.	8	
Command of Audience	Speaker uses power of presentation to engage and captivate the audience with the message of speech.	Speaker presents speech as mere repeating of facts and speech comes across as a report.	Speaker lacks enthusiasm and power to deliver the speech.	8	
Attention	Eye contact consistently used as an effective connection. Consistently looks at the audience. Speech is delivered entirely from memory.	Eye contact is mostly effective and consistent. Speaker uses minimal or brief glances at written notes or speech.	Eye contact does not always allow connection with the speaker. Speaker heavy relies on written notes or speech.	8	
Mannerisms and Gestures	Does not have distracting mannerisms that affect effectiveness. Gestures are purposeful and effective.	Sometimes has distracting mannerisms that pull from the presentation. Usually uses purposeful gestures.	Have mannerisms that pull from effectiveness of the presentation. Occasionally gestures are used effectively.	8	
Poise	Speaker is extremely poised. Poised and in control at all times.	Usually is well-poised. Poised and in control most of the time; rarely loses composure.	Isn't always well-poised. Sometimes seems to lose composure.	8	
Speech Content					
Indicators	Very strong evidence of skill is present 20 - 15	Moderate evidence of skill is present 14 - 7	Little evidence of skill is present 6 - 0		
Demonstrates Knowledge of Topic	Speech content shows through knowledge of the speech topic. Supports with strong evidence.	Speech content shows some knowledge of the subject. Some evidence, but lacking in strength.	Speech content shows little knowledge of the subject. Evidence is lacking to support the topic.	20	
Examples	Examples are vivid, precise and clearly explained. Examples are original, logical and relevant.	Examples are usually concrete, sometimes need clarification. Examples are effective, but need more originality or thought.	Examples are abstract or not clearly defined. Examples are sometimes confusing, leaving the listeners with questions.	20	
Response to Questions	Responds with organized thoughts and concise answers. Exhibits thorough knowledge.	Answers effectively but has to stop and think and sometimes gets off focus. Shows some knowledge but not strong command of topic.	Rambles or responds before thinking. Shows little command of topic.	20	
				Subtotal	
				Time Deduction (5 points per 15 seconds over/under time)	
				Total Score	
				Rank	

Contestant Name: _____

Judge Initials: _____