

**Florida Farm Bureau Federation  
Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award**

**Rules for 2026 FFBF Competition**

**Purpose:**

Recognize young farmers/ranchers for their achievements in production agriculture and leadership.

**Background**

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF) annually conducts a Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Achievement Award competition. Selection of the winning YF&R competitor is based on their efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. **The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.** (The award is given to the winner of the competition held in North Carolina in January, 2027.)

ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

**Eligibility:**

**The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement in Agriculture Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.**

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the Florida law. An applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) in good standing with their county Farm Bureau.
- The applicant(s) must be at least 18 years old at the time the application is submitted and must be no more than 35 years of age as of January 31, 2027.
- Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of their gross income coming from production agriculture. Applicant(s) must have at least three years of financial records showing that the majority of income came from production agriculture.
- Applicant(s) may only compete in one national YF&R competition per year.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
- Previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete. Past Florida YF&R Achievement in Agriculture Award winners are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees or agents of county, state and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as an entity owned or controlled in whole or in part by another entity through, for example, ownership (including partial ownership) or positions on the AFBF board of directors. Past employees and interns who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events at the state or national level since January 1, 2021, are ineligible.

## **Entry Form & Application Guidelines**

- Do not use the applicant's name, the name of their state or county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant's state beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers.
- The entry form and application should be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, us), but proper names of the applicant(s) may not be used. Couple applications should follow these instructions: For personal statements, put (A1) or (A2) at the beginning of the paragraph/sentence to denote which applicant is "speaking," and for joint statements, simply use the word "we." Applicants must use (A1)/(A2) to denote each applicant's involvement for all of question 2b and 10-12.
- The Financial Success section must be typed, signed and notarized; handwritten financial forms will be disqualified. If the notarization includes a state identifier such as a state name or seal, the identifier needs to be blacked out.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms, unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. For example, the United States Department of Education (USDE). AFBF, FB and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- The attached entry form and application questions is what will be needed for the official online application. The entry form and financial succession sections will need to be uploaded. (They are separated in their own documents to be filled and uploaded online.
- You will also have to upload three pictures and a W-9 form.
- No emailed or mailed applications will be accepted.
- It will be up to the judges' discretion to deduct points if applicants include activities before they were 18.

***Note: Disregarding the guidelines will result in disqualification of the application.***

## **Judging**

- The entry form and application will be coded upon receipt. The applicant's name and county will not be revealed to the judges until judging of the written application is completed.
- A panel of three qualified judges will select the Top Three applicants based on the written application (see rubric). The Top Three applicants will be interviewed, on farm, by the same judges who reviewed the written applications.
- The on farm interviews will take place the week of August 17, 2026. The on farm interview along with the written application scores determines final scores, rank and winners.
- The on farm interviews will be up to 120 minutes in length and are intended to evaluate the competitor's command of the farm/ranch business and financials, familiarity of the contents of the application and appreciation for the value of Farm Bureau (see rubric document). In addition to the five (5) points allocated for the interview, judges may alter scores/ranks from other sections based on what they learn in the interview.

## **Scoring\*\*:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Points</b>
1. Personal Background	10
2. Scope of Farm/Ranch	15
3. Growth & Achievements	25
4. Management Decisions	15
5. Goals & Planning	10
6. Resiliency	10
7. Financial Success Part 1: Debt-to-Asset Ratio and Profit	25
8. Financial Success Part 2: Analysis and Record Keeping	15
9. Financial Success Part 3: Off-Farm Income	10
10. Leadership Experience: Farm Bureau	30
11. Leadership Experience: Other Ag Organizations	10
12. Leadership Experience: Other	10
13. Leadership Growth and Development	10
<b>Total Application Points</b>	<b>195</b>
On Farm Interview (Top 3 competitors only)	5
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>200</b>

**\*\*The chart above is NOT a rubric. Please refer to the separate rubric document for all scoring criteria.**

**Deadline**

The application must be submitted on or before **5:00 p.m. EST May 1, 2026**. Please complete the online application and upload the supplemental documents: entry form (with County Farm Bureau President signature), printed and notarized financials, three pictures and a W-9 form. The online form can be accessed on the FFBF website on the Achievement in Ag Award page or with QR Code below.

If you have any questions, please contact your District Field Representative or the Leadership Programs Coordinator at [YFR.Leadership@ffbf.org](mailto:YFR.Leadership@ffbf.org).



**Florida Farm Bureau Federation  
Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement in Agriculture Award  
2026 Entry Form**

The online application must be submitted **on or before 5:00 p.m. EST May 1, 2026.**

The data below and throughout the application applies to you and your spouse/spouse-equivalent, if married. Please fill out in first person, following guidelines above, and indicate "Applicant 1" (A1) and "Applicant 2" (A2) on questions 2b and 10-12.

Applicant(s)\*: A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_  
*\*Will be used in the program and for recognition*

Phonetic Pronunciation: A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_

Age on January 31, 2027: A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an alumnus of any of the following youth organizations? (Check all that apply)

4-H    AFA    FFA    MANRRS

Do you have any ADA special requirements we should be aware of?

Yes    No   If yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached application to be accurate and true statements. **FFBF DOES NOT ACCEPT LIABILITY FOR APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED INCORRECTLY.** FFBF reserves the right to use my (our) photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestant(s) may also be available to Farm Bureau sponsors. By participating in the Event, I (we) warrant that I (we) fully and unconditionally agree to and accept the YF&R official contest rules and the decisions of the FFBF, which are final and binding.

Applicant(s) Signature(s): A1: \_\_\_\_\_ A2: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that the above-named applicant(s) is a member in good standing of the county Farm Bureau and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for FFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement in Agriculture Award for 2026.

County President: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_



- c. List any other related business enterprises and their relationship to/importance in the total farm/ranch. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

- d. Tell us about how you advocate for agriculture. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

## **2. SCOPE OF YOUR FARM OR RANCH**

- a. Explain the ownership structure of your farm/ranch and your vested interest. Please include all enterprises in your explanation, if applicable. **Approximately 2,000 characters**

- b. What percentage of the farm/ranch management decisions are you responsible for? Please break down for each enterprise, if applicable. **Approximately 1,250 characters – 10 lines**  
 \*\*Remember to indicate A1/A2 throughout this response, if applicable.

<u>Enterprise</u>	<u>% Management Decisions</u>

- c. Please add any additional information that helps explain the previous two responses, if needed.  
**Approximately 1,000 characters**

- d. Describe your role in the operation. Explain specifically your duties and decision-making responsibilities.  
**Approximately 2,000 characters**

### 3. GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS

a. Please tell the story of your farm growth since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. Where were you then and where are you now? Use specific examples to show how your operation has grown and highlight your contributions to the success of the operation over time. **Approximately 3,000 characters**

b. List and describe any production efficiency growth you have achieved since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

#### 4. MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Please explain how your understanding of the market has led you to create strategies that make your operation thrive and ensure its success now and into the future. Discuss up to two impactful strategic or management decisions you have made on your farm/ranch, why you made them, and the changes that resulted from implementing those decisions. **Approximately 3,500 characters**

**5. GOALS & PLANNING**

Moving forward, what short-term and long-term goals do you have for your farm/ranch? Explain how you plan to achieve these goals. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

**6. RESILIENCY**

- a. Describe any major business challenges your farm/ranch has encountered and what you did to overcome them (i.e., policy, financial, family, management, etc.). **Approximately 2,000 characters**

- b. Describe the transition or succession plan(s) you have for your farm/ranch. If you do not have either, please explain. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

**7. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 1**

*NOTE: In considering financial situation, judges will consider the whole application and how the financials are connected to the history, goals and strategies of the farm/ranch. Financials are not to be evaluated independent of the other sections. \*All figures must appear as whole numbers.*

- a. Using the grid below, please show your debt-to-asset ratio, including farm/ranch/personal debts and assets for each year requested:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Debt</b> (combined farm/ranch and personal debt)	<b>Total Assets</b> (combined farm/ranch and personal assets)	<b>Debt to Asset Ratio</b> (total debt divided by total assets)
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			
1 year ago			
2026 year-end projections			

Please indicate whether the above reflects:

- the portion of the farm/ranch you own, as indicated in 2(a).
- OR
- the portion of the farm/ranch for which you make management decisions *if more than the amount you own*, as indicated in 2(b).

Give an explanation of related irregularities or strategies, if needed: **Approximately 1,000 characters**

- b. Using the grids below, please show total **farm/ranch** income, expenses and net profit for each year requested. *This should reflect anything related to the farm/ranch business(es) described in the application regardless of marketing practices, production methods or sources.*

**TOTAL INCOME = Farm/Ranch Income + All other income related to the farm/ranch business(es)**

**Other Income Examples:** farm bill payments, trade aid, conservation payments, net crop insurance benefits, and/or income derived from the marketing or selling of farm/ranch products/services such as specialty marketing, agritourism, etc. *(do not include off-farm or other enterprises that are unrelated to the farm/ranch operation)*

Year	Farm/Ranch Income	+ All other farm/ranch-related income	= Total Income
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			
1 year ago			
2026 year-end projections			

**TOTAL EXPENSES = Farm/Ranch Expenses + Interest + Depreciation**

Year	Farm/Ranch Expenses	+ Interest	+ Depreciation	= Total Expenses
First year (____)				
3 years ago				
2 years ago				
1 year ago				
2026 year-end projections				

**NET PROFIT = Income - Expenses**

Year	Total Income	- Total Expenses	= Net Profit
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			
1 year ago			
2026 year-end projections			

Please indicate whether the above reflects:

- the portion of the farm/ranch you own, as indicated in 2(a).

OR

- the portion of the farm/ranch for which you make management decisions *if more than the amount you own*, as indicated in 2(b).

Give an explanation of related irregularities or strategies, if needed: **Approximately 1,000 characters**

**Banker/Loan Officer/Tax Accountant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*This signature verifies the years completed, not the projections and/or irregularities.*

**Notary Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notary Stamp:**

**8. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 2**

- a. Describe the practices you use to evaluate the financial success of your farm/ranch, including ratios or analysis, record keeping systems and/or advisors used to support successful financial management.  
**Approximately 2,000 characters**

- b. Describe where you see your greatest financial strengths and weaknesses in your farm/ranch business.  
**Approximately 2,000 characters**

**9. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 3**

- a. Do you have any other **farm/ranch business** income not otherwise shown in the financials section (such as supporting agri-businesses)? If so, how is that income used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**
- b. Is any **off-farm** income earned by you or your spouse and how is that income used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**
- c. What **additional income**, if any, from inheritances, winnings, etc. did the applicant(s) accept and how is/was it used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**

**10. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: FARM BUREAU (from age 18 to current)**

*Note: This applies to both applicants, if applying together. Please indicate A1 and A2 when applicable.*

List Farm Bureau leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years and level of involvement (county, state, national).

*Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2022-2023)*

**Approximately 2,500 characters**

**County Farm Bureau**

**State/American Farm Bureau**

**11. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS (from age 18 to current)**

List other agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, adult roles in 4-H or FFA) *Example: A1 and A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2021 – present)* **Approximately 2,500 characters**

**12. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER (from age 18 to current)**

List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, civic/service clubs, church, school, scouts, coaching, etc.) *Example: A1 – Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2022)* **Approximately 2,500 characters**

### 13. LEADERSHIP GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

a. Describe your most impactful leadership experience and any actions you have taken to better yourself as a leader or businessperson. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

b. Describe your goals for leadership growth and development. **Approximately 1,500 characters**