

**Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award**

Rules for 2026 FFBF Competition

Background

The Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Excellence in Agriculture Award competition is designed as an opportunity for young farmers and ranchers to earn recognition, while actively contributing and growing through their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability and participation/involvement in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service and community). **The ideal candidate(s) for the Excellence in Agriculture Award is an individual or couple who does not have the majority of their gross income subject to normal production risk.**

ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

Eligibility

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under Florida law. An applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- The applicant must be a Farm Bureau member in good standing with their county Farm Bureau.
- The applicant(s) must be at least 18 years old at the time the national application is submitted and must be no more than 35 years of age as of January 31, 2027.
- Applicant(s) must be in attendance on-site at the FFBF Annual Convention to compete.
- Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of their gross income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in any of the past three years.
- 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.
- Past state YF&R Achievement Award winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Previous AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award competitors are not eligible to compete. Past Florida YF&R Excellence in Agriculture 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 identification of the applicant's state or county beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers. Applicant's name, state and county will be allowed during your presentation for personalization of presentation.
- 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 6.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind. For example, the United States Department of Education (USDE). FFBF, 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. You will also have to upload 3 pictures, a W-2 or other employment verification, 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.

Top 3 Presentation Guidelines

- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute presentation in which the top 3 applicant(s) have an opportunity to share the contents of their entire application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and the audience.
 - Applicant(s) will have 25 minutes to present on the topics in the application and address questions from the judges. Applicants will be notified by the timekeeper when 10 minutes are remaining and again with five minutes remaining. Each judge will be prepared to ask one question. At 25 minutes, time will be called and the applicant's time in front of the judges will conclude even if the judges have not been able to ask their questions. If the answers to the judges' questions are complete before time is called, the room moderator will call time.
- The only visual means in which to deliver the information is through a PowerPoint presentation. A computer, LCD projector, screen and one slide advancer remote will be provided. All presentations must be formatted to work on a PC. Contestants will not be allowed to use their own computer.
- Verbal and presentation references to applicant(s) name, state and county will be allowed during the presentation.
- No props (including notes), sound or video of any kind will be allowed during the presentation.
- Applicants are not allowed to view other presentations until after completing their own.

Application Judging

- All applications will be judged prior to the FFBF YF&R Leadership Conference by three representatives from the industry. These are the only judges that will be reviewing and scoring the applications.
- All judges will use the application rubric to score the applications.

| | <u>Points</u> | <u>Approx. %</u> |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| • The following breakdown of points will be used for the application: | | |
| Questions 2-4: Ag Involvement, Impact on Ag and Issues Facing Ag Goals | 180 points | 45.0% |
| Farm Bureau Experience | 40 points | 10.0% |
| Other Leadership Experience | 90 points | 22.5% |
| Application Form: Writing should be clear, descriptive and free of grammatical errors. | 80 points | 20.0% |
| | 10 points | 2.5% |
| MAXIMUM POINTS | 400 points | 100% (80% of Total Score) |

Presentation Judging – Top 3

- Top 3 competitors will present during the first round of competition during the FFBF Annual Convention.
- Competitors will present to a panel of three judges who represent the industry. The judges will not be the judges who scored the application. Competitors will draw for their presentation order the morning of the competition.
- All judges will use the same presentation rubric to score the presentations.

| | | |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| • The following breakdown of points will be used for the presentation: | | |
| Delivery of Presentation | 30 points | 30% |
| Content of Presentation | 40 points | 40% |
| Responses to Questions | 30 points | 30% |
| MAXIMUM POINTS | 100 points | 100% (20% of Total Score) |

The above breakdowns are not the rubrics. Please refer to the separate rubric documents for all scoring criteria.

Deadline

The completed online application must be submitted on or before **5:00 p.m. EST May 1, 2026**. The completed application is the filled out online form along with the following items to be uploaded : entry form (with County Farm Bureau President signature), 3 photos. W-2 or other employment verification and a W-9 form. The online form is linked on the FFBF website on the Excellence in Ag Award page or accessed through the QR code below.

If you have any questions, please contact your District Field Representative or the Leadership Programs Coordinator at YFR.Leadership@ffbf.org.



Florid Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award
2026 Entry Form

The state's entry form and 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/spousal-equivalent, if married. Please indicate "Applicant 1" (A1) and "Applicant 2" (A2) when responding to question 6.

Applicant(s)*: A1 _____ A2 _____

** Will be used in the program and for recognition*

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: A1 _____ A2 _____

Date of Birth: A1 _____ A2 _____

Age on January 31, 2027: A1 _____ A2 _____

Education/Degree: A1 _____ A2 _____

Please provide one of the following for verification purposes – **upload to the application site:**

- Copy of Form 1099 or Form W-2
- A letter of verification from your employer or company on letterhead that includes length of employment and a brief description of your job responsibilities

Are you an alumnus 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 BY A STATE FARM BUREAU OFFICE.** 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. I (we) have not derived a majority of my (our) income from an owned production agricultural enterprise in any of the past three years. 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 of the county Farm Bureau in good standing and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for FFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award for 2026.

County President: _____

Date: _____

County: _____

**Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award**

2026 Application

Note: Remember to write in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, us) for questions 1-5. Remember not to use any state-specific identifiers.

1. **PERSONAL BACKGROUND** (family, education and personal interests) – *Approximately 2,000 characters*

2. **AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT** – *Approximately 2,500 characters*

A. Please explain the applicant's (applicants') occupation.

2. AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT (continued) - *Approximately 2,500 characters*

B. Please explain the applicant's (applicants') personal involvement in agriculture/agribusiness.

3. IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

Clearly describe the efforts the applicant(s) has taken to positively promote and impact the agriculture industry. Examples may include things such as hosting farm tours, legislative visits, writing a blog, etc.

4. ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

- A. Agriculture faces important issues at the local, state, national and international levels. Explain three important issues that the industry needs to address in the next five years. Choose one issue from three of the four levels mentioned above. For example, an applicant might select ag literacy as a local issue, mental health as a state issue and rural broadband as a national issue.

4. ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE (continued) – *Approximately 5,000 characters*

- B. Choose one of the issues in your response to 4A and discuss how you personally have addressed, or can address, that issue and work towards a resolution.

5. **GOALS - *Approximately 5,000 characters***

What goals does the applicant(s) have for the next five years related to their career, Farm Bureau involvement and involvement with other organizations? What steps have been made to reach these goals?

6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (from age 18 to current)- Approximately 2,500 characters**

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

- A. List Farm Bureau leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years of involvement. *Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2023-2024)*

County Farm Bureau

State/American Farm Bureau

6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (continued)- Approximately 2,500 characters**

- B. List other agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, 4-H, etc.). Please include organization, description and years of involvement.

Example: A1 & A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2021 – present)

- C. List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. civic/service clubs, church, school, volunteer leadership, etc.) Please include organization, description and years of involvement.

Example: A1 – Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2024)

If you had any situations or circumstances that may have affected your leadership experience, please use this space to explain. ***Approximately 250 characters***

*Note: There are **no** points associated to this section and can be left blank.*