

**American Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet**

Rules for 2024 AFBF Annual Convention Competition
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Background

The Discussion Meet is a competition promoted by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Committee. Farm Bureau's strength depends on its members' abilities to analyze agricultural issues and decide on solutions that best meet their needs. The competition is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member. Participants build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems. **A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader. He/she will assist the group in creating ways to implement the solutions discussed and highlight Farm Bureau's involvement in those actions/steps.** It is recommended that state Farm Bureaus provide, as part of the state recognition award, an expenses-paid trip to the AFBF Annual Convention held in 2024 in Salt Lake City, Jan. 19-24. Appropriate recognition will be given to all national competitors in attendance at the AFBF Annual Convention. The AFBF YF&R Committee and the AFBF Leadership, Education and Engagement department will coordinate the program at the national level

Information about the Discussion Meet participant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

Eligibility

- Participant shall be a Farm Bureau member between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual shall have reached his/her 18th birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the national competition and shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by the completion of the competition. Competitors qualify at the time the national application is submitted and the completion of the competition is the day awards are given out (Monday, January 9, 2023).
- Participant must be actively engaged in agriculture.
- Participant 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.
- Applicant must be in attendance on-site at the AFBF Annual Convention to compete nationally.
- Previous AFBF Discussion Meet competitors are not eligible to compete. Past state YF&R Discussion Meet winners are eligible if they have not previously competed at the national level.
- 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 board of directors. Past employees and interns who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R competitive events since January 1, 2019, at the state or national level are ineligible.
- Professional speakers are not eligible to compete. Professional speakers are those who have received a fee, royalty or honorarium for speaking (i.e., paid speaking appearances or speaking engagements) within 24 months prior to this annual competition. This excludes reimbursement for travel or expenses attendant to the appearance.
- Each state Farm Bureau may submit one entry to be considered for national recognition and must use the AFBF online entry form.

Entry Form & Application Guidelines

- The entry form below is an example of the information needed for the official online application. State YF&R coordinators will have access to the online portal for official state submission. No emailed or mailed entry forms will be accepted.
- State Farm Bureaus have permission to reproduce the attached entry form for state level competition or as a recruitment tool.

Note: Disregarding any of the guidelines listed above will result in disqualification.

VIRTUAL CONVENTION: If AFBF is unable to hold the 2023 Annual Convention in-person for any reason, the competitive events will be held virtually, and all applicants should be made aware of this possibility prior to their application. If the competition will be virtual, all contestants will be given the opportunity to withdraw their application for 2024 to ensure eligibility for future years.

Competition

- The participants will discuss pre-selected topics using four bases for the general discussion: cooperation, constructive criticism, problem solving and communication.
- The competition will consist of four rounds: two opening rounds, Sweet 16 and Final Four.
 - All competitors will compete in the first two rounds. The top 16 competitors based on judges' scores will move on to the Sweet 16 round.
 - The top competitor in each of the third-round rooms will move on to the Final Four round in order to determine the winner.
- Each round will begin with a 30-second opening statement and end with a one-minute closing statement by each participant.
- During the Opening Rounds and Sweet 16, participants will have 25 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time.
- During the Final Four round, participants will have 30 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time.

****Please refer to the separate rubric document for all scoring criteria.**