

**Texas Farm Bureau
Young Farmers & Ranchers
2017 Collegiate Discussion Meet
Registration and Information Sheet**

This Form is available online, please visit www.texasfarmbureau.org

Note: The applicant should carefully read through this application form before filling out any part of it. This application and entry form must be in the office of the Texas Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 2689, Waco, Texas 76702-2689 on or before March 29, 2017. Attention: Young Farmers and Ranchers Coordinator.

(Type or Print)

(As it should appear in a program)

Contestant Information:

Name: _____

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____

School Name: _____

Contestant:

School Residential Mailing Address: _____

City & State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Permanent (Home) Address: _____

City & State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

County: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Month/Day/Year

Biographical Information

1. Please give a 5 – 7 line biographical sketch.

I certify that the above named applicant has met all the contestant qualifications to participate in this year's Collegiate Discussion Meet.

Mail to: **Texas Farm Bureau**
ATTN: Whit H. Weems, Ed.D.
P.O. Box 2689
Waco, TX 76702

Email: youngfarmers@txfb.org

Or Fax to: **254-751-8723**

Collegiate Advisor, Professor or Department Head	
Signature:	_____
Printed Name:	_____
Email:	_____
Phone:	_____

- How Did you hear about this contest?
- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School/Professor/Instructor | <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> TFB Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TFB Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Solicited by: _____

Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest Specifics

- Eligible contestants include college students who are 18 to 35 years of age as of February 28, 2018 and have a sincere interest in agriculture.
- Members of the TFB State YF&R Advisory Committee are not eligible to participate.
- Individuals who are professional speakers or who have received a fee or honorarium for public speaking are not eligible to participate.
- Deadline for entry is **Tuesday, March 29, 2017.**
- Contest and other activities will be conducted 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 8, 2017 at the Texas Farm Bureau Conference Center located at 7410 Fish Pond Road in Waco, TX.
- Lunch will not be provided. A refreshment reception will be held prior to the final round.

For Information Contact:

**Whit H. Weems, Ed.D.,
Director of Leader Development
c/o Texas Farm Bureau
P.O. Box 2689
Waco, TX 76702
254-399-5030 (office)
254-751-8723 (fax)
wweems@txfb.org
younfarmers@txfb.org**

Topics for 2017 Collegiate Discussion Meet

1. Farmers are a shrinking percentage of the population. How can Farm Bureau help first-generation farmers and ranchers get started in agriculture?
2. With a growing demand for US farm products abroad, how can agriculture overcome public skepticism of foreign trade to negotiate new trade agreements and open new world markets?
3. Formation of family farm corporations is common practice. How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that the public's positive perception of the family farm is not lost?
4. How can farmers and ranchers maintain their buying power with the continued trend of input supplier and provider consolidations?
5. How can Farm Bureau help members with increasing legal and regulatory obstacles so they can focus on farming and ranching?

Resources for 2017 Collegiate Discussion Meet

**At the time of this publication,
Collegiate Discussion Meet
Topic Resources are unavailable**

**Resources will be provided to
individuals once applications are
received.**

Eligibility

- Applicant shall be between the ages of 18 and 35. 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 last day of February 28, 2018.
- Applicant must be an undergraduate college student in a state with a recognized YF&R program. Undergraduate status is based on the date of the state contest (**April 8, 2017**).
- Applicant shall not be enrolled in a graduate-level program at the time of his or her state Collegiate Discussion Meet competition.
- Applicant must display a sincere interest in the agricultural industry.
- Applicant 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/spousal-equivalent are not eligible to compete.
- Past state YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet winners and/or previous AFBF Collegiate Discussion Meet competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Past state YF&R Discussion Meet winners and/or previous AFBF Discussion Meet competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees of county, state and/or American Farm Bureaus and their affiliates are not eligible to compete.
- 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.

Contest Objectives

Agriculture's strength depends on producers' ability to analyze problems and decide on solutions that best meet their needs. The Discussion Meet is an activity designed to build these crucial skills in young people. By participating, individuals build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach a consensus and solve problems.

As a leadership training and self-improvement activity, the Discussion Meet experience will:

1. Stimulate logical thinking and a desire for accurate information.
2. Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking.
3. Improve the ability to listen.
4. Aid the participant in overcoming timidity or stage fright.
5. Assist the individual in the practice of giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner.
6. Teach the value of compromise.
7. Develop leaders for effective problem solving through group discussion.

Background Information

- The Discussion Meet is a contest promoted by the Texas Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Committee.
- The Discussion Meet is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member.
- The contestants discuss a pre-selected topic.
- The four fundamental bases of general discussion are:
 - Constructive Criticism
 - Cooperation
 - Communication
 - Problem Solving
- The discussion should not be “conversation” or aimless talk, nor should the participant take the role of a persuasive speaker. The participant should try to cooperatively shed light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position.
- A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader. Sometimes it’s reasonable to change positions whenever new information and ideas are presented.
- This is not a panel symposium wherein each participant, in turn, makes a presentation with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in cooperative problem solving, with the questions, answers, and statements coming from any person at any time.

Helpful Hints for Contestants

- Study as much material as possible relating to the overall topic. Sources: library, newspapers, magazines, Farm Bureau policies, county, state, and American Farm Bureau publications and conversations with experts or knowledgeable people.
- The Discussion Meet should be a conflict of ideas, not personalities. **Remember this is a discussion, not a debate.**
- Be prepared to ask questions, state facts and opinions, and urge others to be specific.
- Be aware of the audience, but generally address the panel. Speak loud enough to be heard by the whole audience.
- Participate whenever your contribution will further the discussion. Do not monopolize the discussion.
- Make notes of key points as the discussion proceeds for use in a summary statement.
- Use the one minute of quiet time to organize your summary statement.
- Stand and make your closing statement to the audience. Use accepted speech techniques. Stay within the time limit.

Contest Format

1. All contest facilitators and contestants will meet in the pre-assigned contest room ten minutes prior to the start of the contest to receive last minute comments by the room chairman.
2. No contestant notes are allowed at the table prior to the moderator starting the meet.
3. The room chairman will call the meeting to order, announce the topic to be discussed, and introduce the timekeeper and moderator.
4. The moderator will introduce the contestants, in voluntary order, the opportunity to make a 30-second opening statement directed to the audience.
5. The timekeeper may stand or otherwise indicate when 30 seconds has elapsed. Judges may subtract points at their discretion for contestants who abuse the time limit.
6. The moderator will then indicate the opportunity for open discussion, which will continue for a total of 20 minutes in Round Robins and 25 minutes in the Final Four contest. The discussion should be directed to fellow contestants during open discussion.
7. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when five minutes of open discussion time remains in each contest. The moderator will indicate to contestants the time remaining by raising a table tent. He/She will ensure each contestant has seen the table tent before it is removed.
8. If the discussion is lagging, the moderator may close the discussion at this time.
9. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when 15 minutes in the Round Robin and 20 minutes in the Final Four contests have elapsed.
10. The moderator will call for open discussion to stop and for one minute of quiet time allowing the contestants to consider a closing statement.
11. The moderator will give each of the contestants, in voluntary order, the opportunity to make a one-minute closing statement directed to the audience.
12. The moderator will recognize the judges and request them to leave the room with the room chairman to finalize the tabulation of their score sheets. Judges are not to confer with each other until the room chairman has collected their tabulated score sheets.
13. The next round topic to be discussed will be announced.
14. The moderator will thank the panel and ask the audience to recognize their efforts.
15. The open discussion time may be lengthened or shortened to fit the contest format.

Contest Structure

Orientations

1. Discussion Meet Orientation

- a. Held Saturday at 1:00 p.m. on the contest date. Lunch will not be provided, a refreshment reception will be held following the Second Round, before the Final Round begins.
- b. All contestants are required to attend.
- c. Roll call of contestants.
- d. Release of Discussion Meet topic time schedule.
 - First Round topic will be announced during Orientation at 1:15 p.m. and then again in contest room by Room Chair 15 minutes prior to start of First Round.
 - Each subsequent round topic announced at close of prior round.
- e. Distribute contest room locations.

2. Judges' Orientation

- a. Held Saturday at 11:30 a.m. on the contest date.
- b. Review judges' duties along with any announcements.
- c. Review timing sequences.
- d. Allow time for questions.
- e. Roll call of judges.
- f. Distribute contest room locations.

3. Volunteer Orientation

- a. Held Saturday at 11:30 a.m. on the contest date.
- b. Roll call of timekeepers.
- c. Distribution of a time schedule.
- d. Distribution of time cards.
- e. Distribute contest room locations and Round Robin bracket sheets.

Contest

1. All contestants will compete in at least two rounds of the contest, known as "Round Robins". Round Robins will have four to six contestants. A "Final Four" will be selected from the Round Robins. The four finalists will compete in the "Final Four" round to determine the winner.
2. The physical arrangements of the Discussion Meet rooms should provide for two tables at the front of the room facing each other and the audience. Half the participants should be seated at each table with the moderator in the center. Name cards identifying contestants should be visible to both the moderator and audience. Cards should show only the contestant's name. These cards will be provided for you and distributed at orientation.

Room Layout

```
      C   C
     C   C
    C       C       M
x J x x x x x x x x T x x x x x x x x x x
x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x J x x x
x x x x x x x J x x x x x x x x x x
```

M = Moderator **C** = Contestant **J** = Judge **T** = Timer **X** = Audience

Contest Flow

Generally speaking, the discussion should follow these steps:

1. State Problem or need.
2. Explore, define, understand problem or need.
3. Identify causes of problem or need.
4. Elaborate all possible alternative solutions.
5. Evaluate and compare alternatives.
6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution.
7. Arrive at ways to implement the solution.

Texas Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet Awards

- A \$2,000 cash award and a plaque will be presented to the winner of the Contest.
- Three finalists will receive a cash award of \$500 each.
- TFB will pay travel expenses for the winner to compete in the American Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest in February of 2018.
- Participation gifts will be provided to all contestants.
- TFB will reimburse contestants for actual driving mileage to and from the contest.

Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

Participants' Names
(Left of Moderator)

Participants' Name
(Right of Moderator)

			Total of 700 Points possible	Superior – 100% Excellent 80% Good – 60% Fair – 40% Poor – 20%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2) PROBLEM SOLVING AND IMPLEMENTATION: (200 points) Ability and judgment in seeking answers and solutions, planning and organizational understanding, and the inclusion of Farm Bureau in implementing action programs.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4) ANALYSIS OF TOPIC OR PROBLEM: (150 points) Does a contestant attempt to identify problem causes and remain on topic? Knowledge, extent and accuracy of facts.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE (100 points) Listening, asking pertinent questions, airing all points of view, securing major agreement, minimizing major differences. Courtesy to other participants, encourage discussion from other participants.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			(3) DELIVERY: (100 points) Voice quality, loudness, clear enunciation, communication skills, desirable sentence structure and interesting choice of words.				
			(5) OPENING STATEMENT (50 points) Definition of problems, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problems.				
			(6) CLOSING STATEMENT (100 points) Ability to summarize discussion and formulate direction for the future.				
			Total score for each contestant is to be tabulated by Judge. ↔TOTAL Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge TOTAL↔				
			↔RANK Rank contestants: 1 (highest) -6 (lowest) RANK↔				

SIGNED: _____

SIGNED: _____

(Room Chairman)

(Judge)

For More Information about Texas Farm Bureau

Please visit our Website @

www.texasfarmbureau.org

**For information concerning the
Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest contact:**

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