

Texas Farm Bureau

# 2019 Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest Manual

## **Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest Specifics**

- Deadline for entry is **Wednesday, February 27, 2019**.
- Contest and other activities will begin at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 30, 2019, and conclude Sunday, March 31, 2019 at 11:45 a.m. at the Texas Farm Bureau Conference Center located at 7410 Fish Pond Road in Waco, TX.

### **Eligibility**

- Applicant shall be between the ages of 18 and 35. The individual shall have reached his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the national competition and shall not have reached his/her 36<sup>th</sup> birthday by the last day of February 28, 2020.
- 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 (**March 30, 2019**).
- 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 TFB or AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse/spousal-equivalent are not eligible to compete.
- Past state YF&R Discussion Meet and Collegiate Discussion Meet winners and/or previous AFBF Discussion Meet and Collegiate 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.

## **Topics for 2019 Texas Collegiate Discussion Meet**

These questions are for the [Texas Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest](#) only. Questions for the American Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest to be held in 2020 will be provided upon publication of the topics.

1. How can young farmers and ranchers work to encourage membership growth and member engagement for the county, state and national Farm Bureau organizations?
2. American agriculture depends on a foreign-born labor force. How would you draft a national immigration policy?
3. Today's food companies employ many tactics to gain a marketing edge. What is the purpose of food labels? How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that consumers understand the labels and have confidence in the safety and quality of their food?
4. Farmers are a shrinking percentage of the population. How can Farm Bureau help first-generation farmers and ranchers get started in agriculture?
5. 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?

## **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 7:30 a.m. on March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 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 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 7:30 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

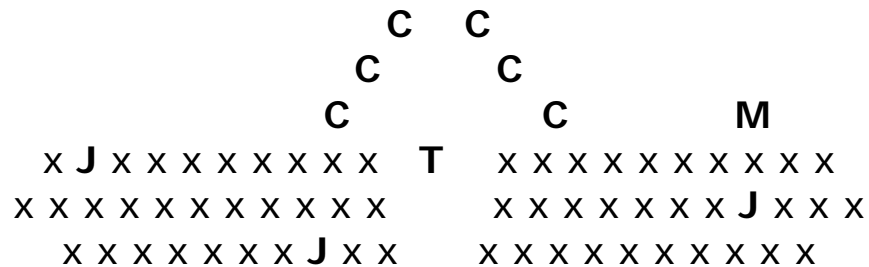
- a. Held Saturday at 7:30 a.m. on the contest date.
- b. Roll call of timekeepers.
- c. Distribution of a time schedule.
- d. Distribution of time cards.
- e. Distribute contest room locations and Round Robin bracket sheets.



## 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



**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**  
**Award Package**

**Winner:**

- A \$2,000 cash award and a plaque
- TFB will pay travel expenses for the first place winner to attend the Texas Farm Bureau Annual meeting in San Antonio in December of 2019.
- TFB will pay travel expenses for the winner to compete in the American Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest in February/March of 2020.

**Runner Up:**

- A \$500 cash Award and a plaque
- TFB will pay travel expenses for the second place winner to attend the Texas Farm Bureau Annual meeting in San Antonio in December of 2020.

**Remaining 2 Finalists:**

- A \$500 cash Award and a plaque

**Contestants:**

- TFB will waive conference registration fees for those competing in the
- contest.

## Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

**Participants' Names**  
(Left of Moderator)

**Participants' Names**  
(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"/>
<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.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5) OPENING STATEMENT (50 points) Definition of problems, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problems.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6) CLOSING STATEMENT (100 points) Ability to summarize discussion and formulate direction for the future.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Total score for each contestant is to be tabulated by Judge.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>← TOTAL</b>	<b>Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge.</b>	<b>TOTAL →</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>← RANK</b>	<b>Rank contestants: 1(highest) - 6(lowest)</b>	<b>RANK →</b>		

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Room Chairman**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Judge**

For More Information about Texas Farm Bureau

**Please visit our Website @**

**[www.texasfarmbureau.org](http://www.texasfarmbureau.org)**

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