

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

CONTEST BACKGROUND

The Young Farmer & Rancher (YF&R) Excellence in Agriculture Contest 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 Contest is an individual or couple who does not have the majority of his/her gross income subject to normal production risk.

Information about the YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Contest applicant is requested on the entry form. All information is handled in strict confidence and is destroyed after judging is completed.

ELIGIBILITY

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the law applicable to the Texas Farm Bureau Organization. Applicants may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be a Texas Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual and/or spouse-equivalent 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 **January 8, 2027**.
- Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of his/her net 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.
- Applicant(s) may compete in either the Outstanding YF&R or the Excellence in Agriculture Contest, but not both in the same year.
- Past Texas Outstanding YF&R winners are not eligible to compete.
- Past Texas YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Contest winners are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees of county, state and/or American Farm Bureau 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.
- Current employees of county, state and/or American Farm Bureau 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, 2021, at the state or national level are ineligible.

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

ENTRY FORM & APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- **Do not use applicant's name, the name of his/her city, schools, state, county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant beyond the entry form. The Written versions of the application have a search feature to locate identifiers. Verbal and presentation reference to applicants' name state and county will be allowed during your presentation for personalization of presentation.**
- The entry form and application must be completed in first person narrative (i.e., I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-5.
- Applicants must use 'A1' and 'A2' to denote each applicant for all of question 6.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. *Exp: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)*
- AFBF, FB, and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- All applications must be **submitted online**. No emailed or mailed entry forms will be accepted.
- It will be up to the judges' discretion to deduct points if applicants include activities before they were 18.

NOTE: Disregard of the guidelines will result in disqualification of the application.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES FOR THREE FINALISTS

- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute presentation, in which the applicant(s) has an opportunity to share the contents of his/her entire application in narrative for a panel of three judges.
- Applicants(s) will have 25 minutes to present on the topics addressed in the application and address questions from judges. Applicants will be notified by the timekeeper when ten minutes are remaining and again when five minutes are 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. It will be up to the applicant(s) to determine how to use this time. 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 or Prezi-presentation. The applicant(s) needs to submit their presentation on a USB flash drive prior to their presentation. Once the presentation has been downloaded onto the laptop, it cannot be changed. 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 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 they have completed their own.

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

JUDGING PROCESS

The entry form and application of each entry will be coded upon receipt by Texas Farm Bureau.

The applicant's name and county will not be revealed to the judges until judging is completed.

PLEASE DO NOT USE APPLICANT(S) NAME | STATE | COUNTY | CITY | OR ANY NAMES THAT MAY BRING ABOUT THE RECOGNITION OR IDENTIFICATION OF THE APPLICANT(S) IDENTIFICATION AFTER SECTION 1 WITHIN THE APPLICATION.

- All applications will be evaluated using the application judging criteria below.
- All judges will use the application rubric to score the applications.
- A panel of three qualified judges will review the written applications and will rank each. Judges scores will be tallied to determine the top eight applications. The top three ranked applications will be selected as the top three finalists.
- The three finalist applications are evaluated by another set of three, well-qualified judges.
- The three finalists will present a 25-minute interactive presentation to a separate set of 3, well-qualified judges, using the presentation judging criteria below. The winner is then determined based on both the Application and Presentation criteria scoring.

Application

The following breakdown of points will be used for the application:

Application	Points	Approx. %
Questions 2-4	180 points	45.0%
<i>*Ag Involvement, Impact on Ag and Issues Facing Ag</i>		
Goals	40 points	10.0%
Farm Bureau Experience	90 points	22.5%
Other Leadership Experience	80 points	20.0%
<u>Application Form</u>	<u>10 points</u>	<u>2.5%</u>

**Writing should be clear, descriptive and free of grammatical errors*

MAXIMUM POINTS 400 points 100% (80% of Total Score)

Presentation

Delivery of Presentation	30 points 40%
Content of Presentation	40 points 30%
<u>Responses to Questions</u>	<u>30 points 30%</u>

MAXIMUM POINTS 100 points 100% (20% of Total Score)

****The above breakdowns are not the rubric.**

Please refer to the separate rubric documents for all scoring criteria.

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

TFB EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE CONTEST AWARD PACKAGE:

WINNER:

- \$15,000 Member Dealer Voucher**
- Engraved crystal award
- Expense paid trips to TFB Annual Meeting and AFBF Annual Convention

TWO STATE FINALISTS

- \$500 cash award
- Engraved acrylic award
- Expense paid trip to TFB Annual Meeting

TOP EIGHT APPLICANTS

- \$1,000 cash award
- Engraved crystal award

***Voucher must be used within one calendar year. The winner may choose from one or more of the member service dealers: Ford, Case IH, Grasshopper, CAT & John Deere. Must be a member benefit company product to qualify (Ford from a Ford Dealer, etc.). Up to three transactions may be used to spend the prize money. Arrangements and approval must be made prior to purchase.*

AFBF CONTEST NATIONAL AWARDS

The AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Contest award package will be published at a later date.

PHOTOGRAPHS – ALL APPLICANTS

Applicant may provide up to three (3) color pictures, including one of your family. Please follow the recommended guidelines provided on the YF&R website.

Color headshot will need to be 1200 pixels wide x 1600 pixels tall (4 X 6, 300 dpi) in jpg format.

DEADLINE

The application must be submitted by selecting the blue 'submit' button on the online application no later than 11:59 p.m., **May 15, 2026**.

Once the application has been submitted you **cannot edit** your application.

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By clicking here, I (We) Accept and Acknowledge, that I (We) have read the Rules and Eligibility page and the Online Application Submission Instruction page for the 2026 Excellence in Agriculture Contest. I (We) further acknowledge that I (We) have read, understand, and accept each requirement and eligibility in its entirety.

☐ I (We) Agree

Please submit this form via the online application process. **No emailed or mailed entry forms or applications will be accepted.** The entry form and application must be submitted via the online portal on or before **11:59 p.m., May 15, 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)

This Application is submitted by:

- ☐ An Individual
☐ A Couple

Full name Applicant #1 (A1) (as it appears on Driver's License)

FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST	SUFFIX
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Full name Applicant #2 (A2) (as it appears on Driver's License) (if applicable)

FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST	SUFFIX
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Mailing Address

ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Physical Address (if different than Mailing Address)

PHY_ADDRESS	PHY_CITY	STATE	PHY_ZIP
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Preferred Cell Phone

A1 - CELL PHONE	A2 - CELL PHONE
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Preferred Email

A1 - EMAIL	A2 - EMAIL
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Date of Birth

A1 - DOB	A2 - DOB
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

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

Education/Degree: *Applicant 1 (A1)*

Education/Degree *Applicant 2 (A2)* -- if applicable

Short Courses/Specialized Study: *(A1)*

Short Courses/Specialized Study: *(A2)* -- if applicable

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

1. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Note: Remember to write in first-person narrative (i.e., I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-5.

- **Remember no county/city-specific identifiers.**

1.) PERSONAL BACKGROUND - (family, education and personal interests) (Max of 2,000 characters)

2. AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT

2a.) Please explain the applicant(s) occupation. (Max of 2,500 characters)

2b.) Please explain the applicant(s) personal involvement in agriculture/agribusiness. (Max of 2,500 characters)

3. IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

3a.) 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. (Max of 5,000 characters)

4. ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE

4a.) 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.* (Max of 5,000 characters)

4b.) 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. (Max of 5,000 characters)

5. GOALS

5a.) What goals does the applicant(s) have for the next five years related to his/her career, Farm Bureau involvement and involvement with other organizations? What steps have been made to reach these goals? (Max of 5,000 characters)

2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

6. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (from age 18 to current)

Note: This applies to both applicants if applying together. Please indicate A1 and A2 when applicable. (Approximately 2,500 characters per section)

6a-1.) List county 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 (2020-2021)*

APPLICANT (A1, A2)	LEADERSHIP ROLE / AWARD	ORGANIZATION	COMMITTEE/BOARD/OFFICE	YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT

6a-2.) List State Farm Bureau/AFBF 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 – Served as Chair of the State Farm Bureau YF&R Advisory Committee (2020-2021)*

APPLICANT (A1, A2)	LEADERSHIP ROLE / AWARD	ORGANIZATION	COMMITTEE/BOARD/OFFICE	YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT

6b.) 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 (2019 – present)*

APPLICANT (A1, A2)	LEADERSHIP ROLE / AWARD	ORGANIZATION	COMMITTEE	BOARD	YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT

6c.) 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 – Local Elementary School, Served as PTA President (2018-2021)*

APPLICANT (A1, A2)	LEADERSHIP ROLE / AWARD	ORGANIZATION	COMMITTEE	BOARD	YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT

If you have any situations or circumstances that may affect your leadership experiences, please use this space to explain. If you do not have any situations or circumstances, please leave blank. NOTE: *There are no points associated to this section and can be left blank. (Max 250 characters)*

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2026 TFB Excellence in Agriculture Contest Application

Applicant may attach up to three (3) color pictures, including one of your family. Please follow the recommended guidelines provided on the YF&R website.

- ☐ Choose File
- ☐ Choose File
- ☐ Choose File

I understand that if I am selected as a finalist in the 2026 Excellence in Agriculture Contest, I will be required to submit a W-9 and I will receive a 1099 for the value of any awards.

- ☐ I (We) Agree

The county Farm Bureau President and office in which my Farm Bureau membership is held will receive notification of this application. Upon request, the application will be submitted to them.

I (We) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached application to be accurate and true statements. TEXAS FARM BUREAU DOES NOT ACCEPT LIABILITY FOR APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED INCORRECTLY. Texas Farm Bureau 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 Texas Farm Bureau YF&R Committee, which are final and binding.

- ☐ I (We) Agree

How did you hear about this contest?

- ☐ COUNTY FARM BUREAU
- ☐ TEXAS FARM BUREAU STAFF
- ☐ SOCIAL MEDIA POST
- ☐ PRINT PRODUCTION / ADVERTISEMENT
- ☐ YF&R MEETING
- ☐ YF&R ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER
- ☐ PREVIOUSLY APPLIED