

South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award

Rules for 2025-2026 Competition

Purpose:

Recognize young farmers/ranchers for their achievements in production agriculture and leadership.

Background

The South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation (SCFB) annually conducts a Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Achievement Award competition. Selection of the winning YF&R competitor is based on his/her efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of his/her gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.

Eligibility

The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of his/her gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the law applicable to the state Farm Bureau organization. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual or spouse/spousal-equivalent shall have reached his/her 18th birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the state competition and shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by the completion of the national competition. Competitors qualify at the time the State application is submitted and the completion of the national competition is the day awards are given out (January 12, 2026)
- Applicant(s) must be in attendance on-site at the AFBF Annual Convention to compete nationally.
- Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of his/her gross income coming from production agriculture. Applicant(s) must have at least three years of financial records showing that the majority of income came from production agriculture.
- 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.
- Previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete. Past state YF&R Achievement Award winners are eligible if they have not previously competed at the national level.
- Current employees or agents of the county, state, and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as any entity owned or operated 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 are responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events since January 1, 2018, at the state or national level are ineligible.

Agreement

All applicants MUST agree to the following; in the event they are named a finalist or the State winner(s):

- The state winner must complete the AFBF AA application before the December 2026 deadline.
 - The state winner must agree to compete in the 2027 AFBF Achievement Award competition, scheduled to take place at the AFBF Annual Convention held in Charlotte, NC, January 8-12, 2027.
 - The state winner must be willing, within reason, to accept Farm Bureau leadership and or assignments between the time they are announced as the State winner(s) and the time the AFBF AA application is due.
- *Disclaimers for Awards & Competitions: Awards programs are subject to change. Out-of-town trips are based upon availability. Winner must agree to represent SCFB in the national competition to receive the prize package.

Entry Form & Application Guidelines

- Do not use applicant's name, the name of his/her county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant's county beyond the entry form.
- The entry form and application must be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-9 and 13. "A1"/"A2" may not be used for questions 1-9 and 13. Applicants must use "A1"/"A2" to denote each applicant for all of question 10-12.
- The Financial Success section must be typed and notarized; handwritten financial forms will be disqualified. If the notarization includes a county identifier such as county name or seal, the identifier needs to be blacked-out.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms, unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. For example, United States Department of Education (USDE). AFBF, FB, and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- The attached entry form and application is an example of the information needed for the official online application. No emailed or mailed entry forms or applications 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.

Judging

- The entry form and application of each entry will be coded upon receipt by SCFB. The applicant's name will not be revealed to the judges until judging is completed.
- Judging is based on the application and an on-farm interview that will be scheduled for November 2025.
- A panel of three qualified judges will select the finalists and state winner. The top three competitors will be visited by the same three judges who reviewed the written applications.
- On-farm visits will last no longer than 2 hours and are intended to clear up any "gray areas" which may arise from the written application. The three finalists should understand that their on-farm

Scoring:

Category	Points
1. Personal Background	10
2. Scope of Farm/Ranch	15
3. Growth & Achievements	25
4. Management Decisions	15
5. Goals & Planning	10
6. Resiliency	10
7. Financial Success Part 1: Debt-to-Asset Ratio and Profit	25
8. Financial Success Part 2: Analysis and Record Keeping	15
9. Financial Success Part 3: Off-Farm Income	10
10. Leadership Experience: Farm Bureau	30
11. Leadership Experience: Other Ag Organizations	10
12. Leadership Experience: Other	10
13. Leadership Growth and Development	10
Total Application Points	195
Interview (Top 10 competitors only)	5
TOTAL POINTS	200

****The chart above is not the rubric. Please refer to the separate rubric document for all scoring criteria.**

Prizes

Achievement Award prizes are sponsored in part by the SC Farm Bureau Federation and Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company.

Three finalists will receive:

- \$1,000 cash
- A one-night stay at the 2025 SCFB Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach on December 5, 2025
- A one-night stay at the 2026 SCFB YF&R Conference in Charleston, SC on February 6, 2026.

The winner or winning couple will receive:

- \$35,000 towards the purchase of a new Ford truck
- An opportunity to attend the 2026 AFBF YF&R Conference in Portland, OR*
- A one-night stay at the SCFB Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach to be highlighted as the 2026 winner*.
- A trip to compete (required) at the 2027 American Farm Bureau (AFBF) Annual Convention in Charlotte, NC, January 8-12, 2027.

*Disclaimers for Awards & Competitions: Awards programs are subject to change. Out-of-town trips are based upon availability. Winner must agree to represent SCFB in the national competition to receive the prize package.

Deadline

The completed and signed entry forms and online application MUST be submitted no later than 11:59 pm on Wednesday, October 1, 2025.

2025-2026 SCFB YF&R Achievement Award Timeline

ALL APPLICANTS	June 2025	Applications Available
ALL APPLICANTS	October 1, 2025	Applications Due
ALL APPLICANTS	October 27, 2025	Top Three Finalists Notified
Top Three Finalist	December 5, 2025	In-Person presentations at SCFB Annual Meeting. Finalist Recognized during the Awards Ceremony.
Top Three Finalist	February 7, 2026	Finalist recognized & Winner announced during Awards Banquet at 2026 YF&R Conference
Winner	March 13-15, 2026	2026 AFBF YF&R Conference in Portland, OR (expense paid)* optional
Winner	By April 2026	Winner selects & purchase a new Ford Truck
Winner	December 5, 2026	Winner recognized at SCFB Annual Convention (One-night stay covered)*
Winner (Required)	Early December 2026	AFBF Achievement Award Application Due
Winner (Required)	January 8-12, 2027	2027 AFBF Annual Convention, Charlotte, NC (Expense-paid) SC winner competes nationally

**South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award**

2024-2025 Entry Form

THIS FORM IS INTENDED FOR REVIEW ONLY.

The applicant(s) should read this entry form and application carefully before completing any part of it.

The application must be submitted no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday, October 1, 2025.

All applications MUST be completed in the online award application portal. No emailed or paper applications will be accepted.

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) on question 10-12.

Applicant(s)*: A1: _____ A2: _____

*Will be used in the program and for recognition

Phonetic Pronunciation: A1: _____ A2: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Best Daytime Phone: A1 _____ A2 _____

Email: A1 _____ A2 _____

Date of Birth: A1 _____ A2 _____

Education/Degree: A1 _____ A2 _____

Short Courses/Specialized Study: A1 _____ A2 _____

**South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
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2026 Entry Form

1. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- a. Briefly tell us about yourself, your family, education, and personal interests. **Approximately 2,000 characters**

- b. Please describe your farm/ranch including how you acquired it, acres owned and rented, years in operation, crops and livestock. **Approximately 2,000 characters**

- c. List any other related business enterprises and their relationship to/importance in the total farm/ranch. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

d. Tell us about how you advocate for agriculture. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

2. SCOPE OF YOUR FARM OR RANCH

a. Explain the ownership structure of your farm/ranch and your vested interest. Please include all enterprises in your explanation, if applicable. **Approximately 2,000 characters**

b. What percentage of the farm/ranch management decisions are you responsible for? Please break down for each enterprise, if applicable. **Approximately 1,250 characters – 10 lines**

****Remember to indicate A1/A2 throughout this response, if applicable.**

Enterprise	% Management Decisions

c. Please add any additional information that helps explain the previous two responses, if needed. **Approximately 1,000 characters**

d. Describe your role in the operation. Explain specifically your duties and decision-making responsibilities. **Approximately 2,000 characters**

3. GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- a. Please tell the story of your farm growth since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. Where were you then and where are you now? Use specific examples to show how your operation has grown and highlight your contributions to the success of the operation over time. **Approximately 3,000 characters**
- b. List and describe any production efficiency growth you have achieved since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

4. MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Please explain how your understanding of the market has led you to create strategies that make your operation thrive and ensure its success now and into the future. Discuss up to two impactful strategic or management decisions you have made on your farm/ranch, why you made them, and the changes that resulted from implementing those decisions. **Approximately 3,500 characters**

5. GOALS & PLANNING

Moving forward, what short-term and long-term goals do you have for your farm/ranch? Explain how you plan to achieve these goals. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

6. RESILIENCY

- a. Describe any major business challenges your farm/ranch has encountered and what you did to overcome them (i.e., policy, financial, family, management, etc.). **Approximately 2,000 characters**

- b. Describe the transition or succession plan(s) you have for your farm/ranch. If you do not have either, please explain. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

7. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 1

NOTE: In considering financial situation, judges will consider the whole application and how the financials are connected to the history, goals and strategies of the farm/ranch. Financials are not to be evaluated independent of the other sections.

**All figures must appear as whole numbers.*

- a. Using the grid below, please show your debt-to-asset ratio, including farm/ranch/personal debts and assets for each year requested:

Year	Total Debt (combined farm/ranch and personal debt)	Total Assets (combined farm/ranch and personal assets)	Debt to Asset Ratio (total debt divided by total assets)
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			
1 year ago			
2025 year-end projections			

Please indicate whether the above reflects:

- ☐ the portion of the farm/ranch you own, as indicated in 2(a).

OR

- ☐ the portion of the farm/ranch for which you make management decisions *if more than the amount you own*, as indicated in 2(b).

Give an explanation of related irregularities or strategies, if needed: **Approximately 1,000 characters**

- b. Using the grids below, please show total **farm/ranch** income, expenses and net profit for each year requested. *This should reflect anything related to the farm/ranch business(es) described in the application regardless of marketing practices, production methods or sources.*

TOTAL INCOME = Farm/Ranch Income + All other income related to the farm/ranch business(es)

Other Income Examples: farm bill payments, trade aid, conservation payments, net crop insurance benefits, and/or income derived from the marketing or selling of farm/ranch products/services such as specialty marketing, agritourism, etc. *(do not include off-farm or other enterprises that are unrelated to the farm/ranch operation)*

Year	Farm/Ranch Income	+ All other farm/ranch-related income	= Total Income
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			

1 year ago			
2024 year-end projections			

TOTAL EXPENSES = Farm/Ranch Expenses + Interest + Depreciation

Year	Farm/Ranch Expenses	+ Interest	+ Depreciation	= Total Expenses
First year (____)				
3 years ago				
2 years ago				
1 year ago				
2025 year-end projections				

NET PROFIT = Income - Expenses

Year	Total Income	- Total Expenses	= Net Profit
First year (____)			
3 years ago			
2 years ago			
1 year ago			
2025 year-end projections			

Please indicate whether the above reflects:

☐ the portion of the farm/ranch you own, as indicated in 2(a).

OR

☐ the portion of the farm/ranch for which you make management decisions *if more than the amount you own*, as indicated in 2(b).

Give an explanation of related irregularities or strategies, if needed: **Approximately 1,000 characters**

Banker/Loan Officer/Tax Accountant Signature: _____

**This signature verifies the years completed, not the projections and/or irregularities.*

Notary Signature: _____ **Notary Stamp:**

8. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 2

- Describe the practices you use to evaluate the financial success of your farm/ranch, including ratios or analysis, record keeping systems and/or advisors used to support successful financial management.

Approximately 2,000 characters

- b. Describe where you see your greatest financial strengths and weaknesses in your farm/ranch business.
Approximately 2,000 characters

9. FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 3

- a. Do you have any other **farm/ranch business** income not otherwise shown in the financials section (such as supporting agri-businesses)? If so, how is that income used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**
- b. Is any **off-farm** income earned by you or your spouse and how is that income used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**
- c. What **additional income**, if any, from inheritances, winnings, etc. did the applicant(s) accept and how is/was it used? **Approximately 1,000 characters**

10. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: FARM BUREAU (from age 18 to current)

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

List Farm Bureau leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years and level of involvement (county, state, national).

Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2022-2023)

Approximately 2,500 characters

11. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS (from age 18 to current)

List other agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, adult roles in 4-H or FFA) *Example: A1 and A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2021 – present)* **Approximately 2,500 characters**

12. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER (from age 18 to current)

List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, civic/service clubs, church, school, scouts, coaching, etc.) *Example: A1 – Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2012-2023)* **Approximately 2,500 characters**

13. LEADERSHIP GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

a. Describe actions you have taken to better yourself as a leader or businessperson. Be specific. **2500 characters.**

b. Describe your most impactful leadership experience and any actions you have taken to better yourself as a leader or businessperson. **Approximately 2,500 characters**

- c. Describe your goals for leadership growth and development. **Approximately 1,500 characters**

14. County Farm Bureau Membership Information

After the application has been submitted, the applicant's County Farm Bureau President and County Secretary will be notified in order to verify that the applicant is a member in good standing with their County Farm Bureau. None of the information provided in this application will be shared with anyone other than the SCFB YF&R Program Coordinator and the 3 judges selected to review these applications. Personal identifying information on the Entry Form may be used to verify County Farm Bureau membership.

- a. County Farm Bureau _____
- b. Farm Bureau Membership Number _____
- c. I hereby certify the information on this entry form and online application to be accurate and true statements. SCFB DOES NOT ACCEPT LIABILITY FOR APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED INCORRECTLY BY AN INDIVIDUAL OR COUNTY FARM BUREAU OFFICE. I (we) am (are) actively involved in production agriculture with a majority of my (our) net income subject to normal production risks. 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 SCFB, which are final and binding.
- i. I. SCFB 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.

Sign (A1): _____

Sign (A2): _____