

SC Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award

Rules for 2027 SCBF State Competition

Purpose:

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

Background

The SCFB annually conducts a Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Achievement Award competition. County Farm Bureaus are encouraged to promote this activity. The selection of the winning YF&R competitor(s) is based on their 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 their gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.

Information about the Achievement Award applicant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

Eligibility:

The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their 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. An applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- The applicant must be a Farm Bureau member in good standing with their county Farm Bureau.
- Applicant(s) shall have reached their 18th birthday and shall not have reached their 36th birthday at the time the state application is submitted on October 1, 2026.
- Previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of their 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.
- Past state YF&R Achievement Award winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- 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 an entity controlled by another Farm Bureau entity through, for example, ownership (including partial ownership) or the ability to elect the board of directors. Past employees and interns who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events at the state or national level since January 1, 2021, are ineligible.

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

- The State winner(s) must agree to compete in the 2028 AFBF Achievement Award competition, scheduled to take place at the 2028 AFBF Annual Convention in Oklahoma City, OK, January 14-19, 2028, if they meet AFBF eligibility requirements.
- 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 of the AFBF EA application is due.
- The State winner(s) must complete the AFBF EA application if they are eligible before the December 2028 deadline.

*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 the applicant’s name, the name of their county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant’s beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers.
- The entry form and application should be completed in first-person narrative (i.e., I, me, we, us), but proper names of the applicant(s) may not be used. Couple applications should follow these instructions: For personal statements, put (A1) or (A2) at the beginning of the paragraph/sentence to denote which applicant is “speaking,” and for joint statements, simply use the word “we.” Applicants must use (A1)/(A2) to denote each applicant’s involvement for all of question 2b and 10-12.
- The Financial Success section must be typed, signed, and notarized; handwritten financial forms will be disqualified.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless they have been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. For example, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). AFBF, FB, and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- No emailed or mailed entry forms or applications will be accepted. Only the online application.
- It will be up to the judges’ discretion to deduct points if applicants include activities before they were 18.

Note: Disregarding the guidelines will result in the disqualification of the application.

Judging

- The entry form and application of each entry will be coded upon receipt by SCFB. The applicant’s name and county will not be revealed to the judges until judging is completed.
- A panel of three qualified judges will select the Top three finalists and the state winner. The top three competitors will be visited by the same three judges who reviewed the written applications.
- The on-farm interview for the top three finalists will be scheduled for early November 2026 and will last no longer than 2 hours. The on-farm interviews are intended to clear up any “gray areas” that may arise from the written application. The three finalists should understand that their on-farm visit by the judges is for verification/clarification purposes and therefore may affect final rankings.

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 3 competitors only) | 5 |
| TOTAL POINTS | 200 |

****The chart above is NOT a 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 2026 SCFB Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach on December 4, 2026.
- A one-night stay at the 2027 SCFB YF&R Conference in Greenville, SC, January 30, 2027.

The winner or winning couple will receive:

- \$35, 000 towards the purchase of a new Ford truck
- A one-night stay at the SCFB Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach in December 2027, to be highlighted as the 2027 winner*.
- An opportunity to attend the 2027 AFBF Fusion Conference in New Orleans, LA, March 12-15, 2027*
- A trip to compete (required) at the 2028 American Farm Bureau (AFBF) Annual Convention in Oklahoma City, OK, January 14-19, 2028*.

*Disclaimers: Winner(s) will be required to compete nationally at the 2027 AFBF Annual Convention if they meet eligibility requirements.

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

Award Timeline

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| ALL APPLICANTS | May 2026 | Applications Available |
| ALL APPLICANTS | October 1, 2026 | Applications Due |
| ALL APPLICANTS | October 29, 2026 | Finalist Notified |
| Top Three Finalists | Early Nov. 2026 | On-Farm Judging |
| Top Three Finalists | January 30, 2027 | Finalists Recognized & Winner announced at 2027 YF&R Conference in Greenville. |
| Winner | March 12-15, 2027 | 2026 AFBF Fusion Conference, New Orleans, LA (Optional) |
| Winner | By April 2027 | Winner selects & purchases a Ford Truck |
| Winner | December 3, 2027 | 2026 Winner recognized at SCFB Annual Meeting |
| Winner | Early Dec. 2027 | AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award application due |
| Winner | January 14-19, 2028 | 2028 AFBF Annual Convention, Oklahoma City, OK |

**SC Farm Bureau Federation Achievement
Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award**

2027 Entry Form

Please submit this form via the online application process no later than Thursday, October 1, 2026. No emailed or mailed entry forms or applications will be accepted. Link to apply: [2027 SCFB Young Farmer & Rancher Achievement Award Application](#)

The data below and throughout the application applies to you and your spouse/spouse-equivalent, if married. Please fill out in first person, following guidelines above, and indicate "Applicant 1" (A1) and "Applicant 2" (A2) on questions 2b and 10-12.

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

**Will be used in the program and for recognition*

Phonetic Pronunciation: A1: _____ A2: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: A1: _____ A2: _____

Date of Birth: A1: _____ A2: _____

Age on October 1, 2026: A1: _____ A2: _____

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 If yes, please list: _____

I (we) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached 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) have not derived a majority of my (our) income from an owned production agricultural enterprise in any of the past three years. 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 SCBF, which are final and binding.

SCFB Reserves the right to use my(our) photos and/or video for use promoting SC Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestants(s) may also be made available to Farm Bureau sponsors.

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

I hereby certify that the above-named applicant(s) is the official state entry and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for SCBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award for 2027.

State President/Administrator: _____ Date: _____

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.

| <u>Enterprise</u> | <u>% Management Decisions</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
|-------------------|-------------------------------|

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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 | | | |
| 2025 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

- a. 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

County Farm Bureau

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 (2020-2024)* **Approximately 2,500 characters**

13. LEADERSHIP GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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

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

SAMPLE