

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

Rules for 2027 SCBF State Competition

Background

The Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Excellence in Agriculture Award competition 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 Award is an individual or couple who does not have the majority of their gross income subject to normal production risk.

Information about the Excellence in Agriculture applicant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

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 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. Award Finalist must be in attendance on-site at the 2026 SCFB Annual Convention (December 4, 2026) to compete.
- Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of their gross income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in any of the past three years.
- Past state YF&R Achievement Award winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Previous AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees or agents of 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.

Agreement

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

- The State winner(s) must agree to compete in the 2027 AFBF Excellence in Agriculture 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.

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 applicants beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search

feature to locate any identifiers. Verbal and presentation references to the applicant's name and county will be allowed during your presentation for personalization of the presentation.

- 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 6.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless it has 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.
- The attached entry form and application are examples of the information needed for the official online application. No emailed or mailed entry forms 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.

Presentation Guidelines

- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute presentation in which the applicant(s) has an opportunity to share the contents of their entire application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and the audience.
- Applicant(s) will have 25 minutes to present on the topics addressed in the application and address questions from the judges. Applicants will be notified by the timekeeper when 10 minutes remain and again when 5 minutes remain. 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 their time; no additional time will be given for questions. If the answers to the judges' questions are complete before time is called, the room moderator will call time.
- The only visual means by which to deliver the information is through a PowerPoint presentation. The applicant(s) need to submit their presentation on a USB flash drive during the Excellence in Agriculture Competitor Orientation as a .ppt file. Once the presentation has been downloaded onto the laptop, it cannot be changed. If downloading from Google Slides or a similar application, be sure the formatting translates after downloading or exporting to PowerPoint prior to arriving at the orientation. 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 computers.
- Verbal and presentation references to the applicant's name and county will be allowed during the presentation.
- No props (including notes/note cards), sound, or video of any kind will be allowed during the presentation.
- Applicants are not allowed to view other presentations.

Application Judging

- All applications will be judged prior to the SCFB Convention by three representatives from the industry. These are the only judges that will be reviewing and scoring the applications.
- All judges will use the application rubric to score the applications. (The rubric is a separate document)
- The following breakdown of points will be used for the application:

Application (80% of total score)

Questions 2-4: Ag Involvement, Impact on Ag and Issues Facing Ag Goals	180 points	45.0%
Farm Bureau Experience	40 points	10.0%
Other Leadership Experience	90 points	22.5%
Application Form: Writing should be clear, descriptive and free of grammatical errors.	80 points	20.0%
	<u>10 points</u>	<u>2.5%</u>

MAXIMUM POINTS 400 points 100%

Presentation Judging

- The top three finalist will present to a panel of three judges who represent the industry at the 2026 SCFB Annual Meeting on December 4, 2026.
- The winner and finalists of the competition will be determined based on the combined application and presentation scores. The winner will be announced at the 2027 YF&R Conference on January 30, 2027, in Greenville at the Awards Banquet.
- All judges will use the same presentation rubric to score the presentations.
- The following breakdown of points will be used for the presentation:

Presentation (20% of total score)

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

MAXIMUM POINTS 100 points 100%

****The above breakdowns are not the rubric. Please refer to the separate rubric documents for all scoring criteria.**

Prizes

Excellence in Agriculture Award prizes are sponsored in part by the South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation and Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company. The three finalist will receive:

- \$500 Cash
- One-night stay at the SCFB Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach, December 4, 2026.
- One-night stay at the 2027 SCFB YF&R Conference in Greenville, SC, January 29-31, 2027.

The winner or winning couple will receive:

- A Up to \$8,000 toward the purchase of a 4x4 UTV
- 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 attend and/or compete* 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 is they meet eligibility requirements.

**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.

Award Timeline

ALL APPLICANTS	May 2025	Applications Available
ALL APPLICANTS	October 1, 2026	Application Deadline
ALL APPLICANTS	October 29, 2026	Finalist Notified
3 Finalists	December 4, 2026	In-person presentations given at the SCFB Annual Meeting.
Top Three Finalists	January 30, 2027	Finalist Recognized & Winner announced at 2027 YF&R Conference
Winner	March 12-15, 2027	2026 AFBF Fusion Conference, New Orleans, LA (Optional)
Winner	By April 2027	Winner selects & purchases a new ATV
Winner	December 3, 2027	2025 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

SAMPLE

**SC Farm Bureau Federation
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 Excellence in Agriculture Award Application](#)

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) when responding to question 6.

Applicant(s)*: A1 _____ A2 _____

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

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: A1 _____ A2 _____

Date of Birth: A1 _____ A2 _____

Age on October 1, 2026: A1 _____ A2 _____

Education/Degree: A1 _____ A2 _____

Are you an alumnus of: 4-H AFA FFA MANNRS? _____

Do you have any ADA-specific requirements we should be aware of? _____

Please provide one of the following for verification purposes – ***email to bjeffcoat@scfb.org***

- Copy of Form 1099 or Form W-2
- A letter of verification from your employer or company on letterhead that includes length of employment and a brief description of your job responsibilities

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: _____

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

2027 Application

Note: Remember to write in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, us) for questions 1-5. Remember not to use any state-specific identifiers.

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

2. **AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT** - ***Approximately 2,500 characters***

- A. Please explain the applicant's (applicants') occupation.

2. AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT (continued) - *Approximately 2,500 characters*

B. Please explain the applicant's (applicants') personal involvement in agriculture/agribusiness.

3. IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

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.

4. ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

- A. 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.

4. ISSUES FACING AGRICULTURE (continued) - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

- B. 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.

5. **GOALS - Approximately 5,000 characters**

What goals does the applicant(s) have for the next five years related to their career, Farm Bureau involvement and involvement with other organizations? What steps have been made to reach these goals?

6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (from age 18 to current)- Approximately 2,500 characters**

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

- A. List 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 (2023-2024)*

County Farm Bureau

State/American Farm Bureau

6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (continued)- Approximately 2,500 characters**

- B. 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 (2021 – present)

- C. 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 – Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2024)

If you had any situations or circumstances that may have affected your leadership experience, please use this space to explain. **Approximately 250 characters**

*Note: There are **no** points associated to this section and can be left blank.*