

Alabama Farmers Federation Outstanding Young Farm Family Award

Rules for 2024 Competitive Event

Background

Each year the State Young Farmers Committee, along with the Young Farmers Division, sponsors the Outstanding Young Farm Family program in order to recognize young farm families and farmers between the ages of 18 and 35. The goal of this program is to recognize those who are doing an outstanding job on their farm, in their home and commodity activities and are working to promote a better understanding of agriculture within the urban population. Alfa Farmers and county commodity divisions also assist in the selection and honoring of the young farmers and farm families on the county level. Selection of the winning competitor is based on his/her efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. Participation in this program with individual recognition and the resulting publicity will help build the organization. **The ideal candidate(s) for the Outstanding Young Farm Family competition is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their income subject to normal production risks.** The winner from Alabama's program will compete at the American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting held in San Antonio Texas in January 2025.

Information about the OYFF applicant is requested on the entry form, no additional pages will be accepted. 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. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be an Alabama Farmers Federation member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Federation. The individual or spouse shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by Jan. 31, 2025.
- Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of his/her income coming from production agriculture.
- Applicant(s) may only compete in one national YF&R Competitive Event per year.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee are not eligible to compete.
- Past state winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees of county, state and/or American Farm Bureaus or the Alabama Farmers Federation and their affiliates are not eligible to compete.
- A previous commodity winner (or participant) is eligible to compete again.
- Counties may submit any number of applications they wish.
- **Applications received without membership numbers and/or all signatures will not be accepted.**

Entry Form & Application Guidelines

- Do not use applicant's name, the name of his/her state or county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant beyond the entry form.
- The entry form and application must be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-6. "A1"/"A2" may not be used for questions 1-6. Applicants must use "A1"/"A2" to denote each applicant for all of question 7.
- The entry form and application must be completed in 10-point Times New Roman font.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms.
- Recreating the application on a computer is not allowed; this includes font and format changes, such as bolding.
- The application must be properly signed with no additional pages, including letters of recommendation, scrapbooks or other visual additions.

Note: Disregarding any of the guidelines listed above will result in disqualification.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE TO THE HOME OFFICE BY JANUARY 12, 2024. APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETE (INCLUDING SIGNATURES AND FINANCIALS) TO BE ACCEPTED. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE. Applications must be received SIGNED to the home office by January 12 at 4:00 PM CDT. Scanned copies may be emailed to hmcbrayer@alfafarmers.org. UPS or FedEx copies can be mailed to 2108 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, AL 36116, ATTN: Young Farmers Division. USPS copies may be mailed to P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191, ATTN: Young Farmers Division.

Judging

- The entry form and application will be coded upon receipt. The applicant's name and county will not be revealed to the judges until judging is completed.
- First round judging is based on the application and the interview during the Young Farmers Conference.
- Prior to the 2024 Young Farmers Conference (to be held February 9-11 in Gulf Shores, AL) three judges will score your application. Applicants will then be interviewed on Friday, February 9th. The applicants with the top three scores (combined score of interview and application judging) will be announced as finalists.
- On June 4th, 2024 (Rain Date-TBD), a different set of three judges will visit the finalists' operations and select a state winner. The winner will be announced at the 2024 Farm & Land Expo in Montgomery, AL and will be recognized at the Annual Meeting held in Montgomery in December 2024.
- Each applicant will be asked to select the commodity their farm focuses on most. After the score sheets are received back from the judges, the highest ranking entry in each commodity division will be announced as that commodity division winner. This will have no bearing on the top three finalists for the overall contest as the top three finalists are the top three scorers overall no matter what commodity they may have entered.
- Interviews will be up to 20 minutes in length and are intended to clear up any "gray areas" which may arise from the written application. Competitors should understand that their interview is for verification/clarification purposes and therefore may affect final rankings.
- During the interview process, only the named applicant(s) on the entry form is permitted into the interview. **We encourage you not to take your children into the interview** as they can easily become a distraction to both you and the judges.
- Judges will score applications based on the following scoring system:

Scoring:

Category	Points
1. Personal Background	10
2. Scope of Farm/Ranch	10
3. Growth & Achievements	20
4. Management Decisions	15
5. Goals & Planning	10
6. Overcoming Challenges	10
7. Financial Success Part 1: Debt-to-Asset Ratio and Profit	25
8. Financial Success Part 2: Analysis and Record Keeping	25
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
14. Interview (Top 10 competitors only)	5
TOTAL POINTS	200

Alabama Farmers Federation

Outstanding Young Farm Family Award

2024 Entry Form

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

Complete applications must be received by **4:00 p.m., January 12, 2024.**

The data below and throughout the application applies to you and your spouse, if married. Please indicate "Applicant 1" (A1) and "Applicant 2" (A2) when applicable.

Applicant(s)*: A1 _____ A2 _____

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

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ County: _____

Membership Number: _____ Paid thru date: _____

Email: A1 _____ A2 _____

Date of Birth: A1 _____ A2 _____

Education/Degree: A1 _____ A2 _____

Short Courses/Specialized Study: A1 _____ A2 _____

Name and Ages of Children: _____

- Commodity Division: Bee and Honey Forestry Pork
SELECT ONE Beef Greenhouse, Nursery, Sod Poultry
 Catfish Hay & Forage Soybean
 Cotton Fruit and Vegetable Wheat & Feed Grains
 Dairy Sheep & Goat Wildlife
 Equine Peanut

I (we) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached application to be accurate and true statements. I (we) also agree that you agree with the eligibility criteria listed on page one and that all facts in this document may be used for publication, with the exception of financial information which will be kept confidential. By participating in the Event, I (we) warrant that I (we) fully and unconditionally agree to and accept the official contest rules and the decisions of the judges and staff, which are final and binding.

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

I hereby certify that the above named applicant(s) is representing our county and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for AFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award for 2025.

County President: _____ Date: _____

- 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**

<u>Enterprise</u>	<u>% Management Decisions</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 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			
2023 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			
2023 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				
2023 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			
2023 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.*

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 (2019-2020)

Approximately 2,500 characters

County Farm Bureau

State/American 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 (2017 – 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 (2020-2022)* **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**