

Alabama Farmers Federation Young Farmers Excellence in Agriculture Award

Rules for 2026 Competitive Event

Background

The Excellence in Agriculture Award competition is designed as an opportunity for young farmers to earn recognition, while actively contributing and growing through their involvement in the Alabama Farmers Federation. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, and participation/involvement in the Federation 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 his/her gross income subject to normal production risk.** The winner from Alabama's program will compete at the American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting held in Charlotte, NC in January 2027.

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

Eligibility

- 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. **Applications submitted without membership numbers and/or all signatures will not be accepted.**
- The individual or spouse shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by Jan. 31, 2027
- Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of his/her income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in any of the past three years.
- Applicant(s) may only compete in one national YF&R Competitive Event per year.
- Applicant(s) may compete in either the Achievement Award (OYFF) or the Excellence in Agriculture Award, but not both in the same year.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
- Past state OYFF winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Past state Excellence in Agriculture Award winners and/or previous AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award winners 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.

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's state beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers. Verbal and presentation reference to applicant's 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. "A1"/"A2" may not be used for questions 1-5. Applicants must use "A1"/"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. For example, United States Department of Education (USDE). AFBF, FB, and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- If applying as an individual, only include information pertinent to applicant.
- 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.
- 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

- Presentations will be delivered on Saturday, August 8, 2026 during the Alabama Farm and Land Conference in Mobile, AL.
- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute interview, in which the applicant(s) has an opportunity to share the contents of his/her entire application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and the audience.
 - The applicant(s) has a total of 25 minutes to present on the topics addressed in the application. At 20 minutes, a warning card will indicate that he/she should move on to the question and answer session. It is up to the applicant to make this transition. No additional time will be given for questions if the applicant(s) does not stop. A card will be shown at the end of 25 minutes, which will conclude the applicant's time in front of the judges.
- The only visual means in which to deliver the information is through a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation. The applicant(s) needs to bring his/her presentation on a USB flash drive. All the necessary presentation equipment will be provided.
- Verbal and presentation references to applicant(s) name, state and county will be allowed during the presentation.
- No props, sound or video will be allowed during the presentation.
- Applicants are not allowed to view other presentations until after they have completed their own.

Application Judging

- The applications and presentations will be judged by one set of three judges.

<u>Application</u>		<u>Approx. %</u>	
Questions II-IV	150 points	37.5%	
Farm Bureau Experience	120 points	30%	
Other Leadership Experience & Goals	100 points	25%	
Application Form	<u>30 points</u>	<u>7.5%</u>	
MAXIMUM POINTS	400 points	100%	(80.0% of Total Score)
<u>Presentation</u>			
Delivery of Presentation	40 points	40%	
Content of Presentation	30 points	30%	
Responses to Questions	<u>30 points</u>	<u>30%</u>	
MAXIMUM POINTS	100 points	100%	(20% of Total Score)

Deadline

Deadline for entry is June 1, 2026. No late applications will be accepted. Applications must be received **SIGNED** to the home office by June 1 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. USPS copies may be mailed to P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191.

**Alabama Farmers Federation
Young Farmers Excellence in Agriculture Award**

2026 Entry Form

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 _____

Education/Degree: A1 _____ A2 _____

Short Courses/Specialized Study: A1 _____ A2 _____

Please provide one of the following for verification purposes:

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. AFF reserves the right to use my (our) photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting the Alabama Farmers Federation. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestant(s) may also be available to sponsors of events. 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 official contest rules and decisions, which are final and binding.

Membership Number: _____ Paid thru date: _____

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

I hereby certify that the above named applicant is representing our county and is eligible to be entered and considered for the Alabama Farmers Federation and American Farm Bureau Federation's Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award.

County President: _____ Date: _____

County: _____

**Alabama Farmers Federation
Young Farmers Excellence in Agriculture Award**

2026 Application

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

Remember no county/ 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) 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) have 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 infrastructure challenges as a local issue, mental health as a state issue and climate change or supply chain disruptions 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 his/her career, Federation 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 per section (20 lines)

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

A. List Farm Bureau/Federation 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 Federation Board of Directors (2018-2019)

County Federation

State/American Farm Bureau

6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (continued)- Approximately 2,500 characters per section (20 lines)**

- 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 (2018 - 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 - Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2017-2019)

If you had any situations or circumstances that may affect your leadership experiences, please use this space to explain. If you don't have any situations or circumstances, please leave blank.

Approximately 250 characters

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