

Young Farmer Discussion Meet



The Discussion Meet helps young farmers build discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important ag issues, and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach a consensus and solve problems. Two of the following questions will be selected for the 2024 Discussion Meet preliminary rounds:

1. Consumers continue to be disengaged and misinformed about food production. Farm families comprise less than 2% of the overall population, yet one farm feeds 166 Americans each year on average. Despite how agriculture is portrayed by some outlets, 98% of U.S. farms are operated by families. How can young farmers utilize social media and resources from Farm Bureau to share their story and engage with non-farmers?
2. Property taxes continue to increase and is a cost of doing business that goes up regardless of farm profitability. Local governments levy property taxes which fund services that benefit your farm, like roads and bridges. Property taxes also fund other services that don't provide a benefit to your property. How can young farmers get involved in local government to advocate for the best interest of farmers and the taxpayers?
3. As the average age of farmers continues to rise, it's harder for young farmers to find each other to talk about experiences and share ideas on how to succeed. How can Farm Bureau go beyond the Young Farmer Conference to bring young farmers together to collaborate, create a support network that understands some of the challenges YF's are facing, and gain invaluable leadership training?

During the preliminary rounds held during the 2024 Young Farmer Conference, participants compete in two rounds, each addressing one of these questions. Individuals compete on a panel of three to six people in a free-wheeling style, as if they were sitting around the kitchen table discussing a problem where they exchange ideas and information to solve the problem. The format is a 30 second opening statement, 25 minutes of group discussion, and a 60 second closing statement. Contestants are judged on cooperative attitude, problem solving & implementation, delivery, analysis of the topic, and opening and closing statements. Based on cumulative ranking, the top eight finalists (and two alternates) will be determined.

Finalists receive coaching throughout the year to prepare for the final rounds held during the Iowa Farm Bureau Annual Meeting December 10-11, 2024 in Des Moines. Questions for the final rounds will be selected from the five questions provided by AFBF.



Prizes are awarded to four state finalists. First place receives a \$2,500 Grainger gift certificate, \$1,500 cash from GROWMARK, an expense paid trip to 2025 IFBF Young Farmer Conference, and will advance to the AFBF Discussion Meet with an expense paid trip to 2025 AFBF Annual Convention in San Antonio, TX January 24-29, 2025.

Eligibility: Must be 35 years of age or younger as of Jan. 31, 2025, and a regular member in good standing with your county Farm Bureau. Previous state winners and current young farmer advisory committee members are ineligible. Participants may not have received a public speaking fee or honorarium.

Register for the Discussion Meet at the 2024 Young Farmer Conference!

Limited to 30 participants on a first-come, first-served basis through sign up in the Whova Conference App.