

VIRGINIA FFA COMPETITIVE EVENT GUIDE



Virginia FFA does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation.

PHILOSOPHY FOR VIRGINIA FFA CAREER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

Students are important customers of agricultural education and the FFA who recognize quality and value in products and activities. When provided an opportunity to fashion their educational experiences, they generally make wise decisions based on needs, perceptions, image and the opinions of others influence students. They value change based on their perceived personal needs as well as the needs of others. They sometimes value change for the sake of variety. Adults are concerned about the experiences of students and want to help organize experiences that will meet the future needs of students while accomplishing the purposes of agricultural education and the FFA organization. The Virginia FFA Association should assume the leadership role in developing and continuously improving relevant FFA career and leadership development events and awards. Although the Virginia FFA Association should be aware of the needs of local chapters and should react to those needs, it should help initiate opportunities that reflect relevant and emerging technology.

Virginia FFA career and leadership development events (CDE/LDE) and awards should be developed with significant input from FFA members, teachers, partners, respective industry sponsors, and others involved in agricultural education. Virginia career development events and awards should reflect instruction that currently takes place in the entire agricultural education program, including classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, individualized instruction, and/or supervised agricultural experience. However, it is appropriate for the state organization to develop career development events and awards that stimulate instruction in emerging areas that reflect both current and future community, national, and global work force needs. The authority for insuring the relevance of an FFA activity is ultimately vested in the Virginia FFA Advisory Council. The primary goal of career and leadership development events is to develop individual responsibilities, foster teamwork and promote communication and individual achievement.

The activities in each career and leadership development event:

- Promote Virginia's 5C's for preparing the workforce: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creative Thinking and Citizenship. Includes problem solving and teamwork skills where appropriate;
- Encourage appreciation for diversity by reducing barriers to participation among members;
- Develop general leadership and recognize individual and team achievement;
- Promote concentrated focus on future needs of members and society.

The state association should promote individual, chapter, and team career development events and awards. Chapter and team career development events and awards should be based on cooperation and teamwork while recognizing the value of competition and individual achievement. The role of career and leadership development events and awards is to motivate students and encourage leadership, personal growth, citizenship, and career development.

Students should be recognized for achievement in career and leadership development events and awards. Quality standards should be used as a basis for achievement. The state association should ensure that the recognition is appropriate and meaningful. Recognition for achievement should be reflective of the total effort required by the chapter/team/individual and should take place at all levels of participation.

The Virginia FFA Association shall encourage accessibility and provide opportunities for achievement and recognition for students with diverse backgrounds. High expectations should be consistently communicated to those who are involved in career development events and awards.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES (AFNR) CAREER CLUSTER CONTENT

Agriculture is a highly technical and ever-changing industry upon which everyone is dependent. In order to maintain agriculture as the nation's number one industry, it is crucial to understand the importance of agrisciences, marketing strategies, safe food production and continuous research. Strong, relevant agriscience programs are one way to maintain the nation's agricultural edge.

GENERAL RULES AND OFFICIAL POLICIES

Violations of any of the following rules may be grounds for the event superintendent to disqualify the participants.

State FFA Staff and CDE Superintendents will use the published rules and procedures to organize and implement the State FFA Career and Leadership Development Events. Event activities may not be conducted due to lack of necessary materials, expertise, extreme impact to event budgets, or extenuating unforeseen circumstances (ex. Avian Influenza).

TEAM ACTIVITIES

The primary goal of team career development events and awards is to develop individual responsibilities, foster teamwork, and promote communications while recognizing the value of ethical competition and the value of individual achievement. A team career development event/award requires two or more members from one chapter working cooperatively. Team career development events and awards are intended to be an outgrowth of instruction.

Team career development events and awards should:

- include problem solving and critical thinking.
- promote an appreciation for diversity by reducing barriers to participation.
- promote new directions and focus on future needs of members and society.
- include cooperative activities.
- encourage broad participation among members and recognize excellence within levels of experience.
- recognize individual and team achievement, develop general leadership, and recognize levels of ability.
- provide local recognition for superior performance at the state and national level.

ELIGIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS

1) Each participant must be a current bona fide dues paying FFA member in good standing with the local chapter, state FFA association, and the National FFA Organization at the time of the career development event (or by May 1 for the Virginia FFA, whichever date comes first.) In the event a participant's name is not on the chapter's official roster for the years in which the dues were payable to the National FFA Organization, a past due membership processing fee of \$35, in addition to the dues must be paid.

2) The participant, in a State Senior Career or Leadership Development Event, must be:

- A high school FFA member, (a graduating senior is considered eligible to compete in state career development events the convention directly after graduation.) (High school refers to grades 9-12.)
- A middle school team consisting of FFA members in 5th-8th grade.
- While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career. For this purpose a student needs to be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the year they qualified for the event. If the student was previously enrolled in an agriculture class and was an FFA member, they may compete in a contest if they have scheduling issues (ex. Advanced Placement classes) that do not allow them be enrolled in an agriculture class but they must still have an SAE.

3) The participant in a State Junior Career or Leadership Development Event must be:

- At the time of the event must be a 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th or 9th grade full dues paying member.
- While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career. For this purpose a student needs to be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the year they qualified for the event.

Note: For nationally qualifying events, students must be in the 7th grade at the time of the state qualifying contest in order to be eligible to compete at the national contest.

- 4) The participant in a State Middle School Career Development Event must be:
- At the time of the state competition has qualified as either a 5th, 6th, 7th or 8th grade middle school member.
 - While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career. For this purpose a student needs to be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the year they qualified for the event.
- 5) To compete in the creed speaking event, the member has qualified as either a 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th or 9th grader by state convention.
- 6) CDE/LDE participants who start an event and do not complete the event without notifying event officials at the time of departure will be disqualified. This can affect the overall team rank and position. In some events, this will also disqualify the entire team
- 7) The state supervisor/executive secretary of agricultural education must certify that participants are eligible. If an ineligible student is entered in any career or leadership development event, the entire team of which that student is a member may be declared ineligible.
- 8) **The first contest that a school wins in the current year will be the contest that the individuals on that team will represent Virginia at the National FFA Convention.** To explain, if an FFA chapter puts more than one current winner of an FFA contest on an additional team, then the second place team will be declared the State Winner and will compete at the National FFA Convention. Excluding contests sanctioned by National FFA, if one person is a duplicate and the national rules allow for a three-person team, then the first place team will represent Virginia (ex. national land judging or AQHA nationals for hippology). If a student that wins a contest is declared ineligible, or cannot attend the Convention, then the other members of the team will be allowed to compete for individual awards only. (A medical waiver may be granted if a member of a winning team is unable to attend due to a medical condition.)
- 9) Individuals who have been state winners or have represented the state in any official national FFA career development event are not eligible to enter the same FFA event again. However, FFA junior division state winners are eligible for state senior division. Individuals on a state winning team cannot compete in that division again.
- 10) A chapter may enter any number of career and leadership development events; however, a chapter may have no more than one certifiable team in each division in each event. If the contest allows a Junior and Senior Team then only the team, as designated by the advisor prior to the event may advance to the National Level. If the event is a joint FFA & 4-H contest, then a school must declare an official team but will be allowed to enter the number of teams permitted by 4-H.

CHECK-IN

Participants will check-in at the state FFA convention or other statewide event as indicated in the annual State Guidelines. Dates, hours and place of check-in will be sent annually when available to the agricultural education teacher. All participants will be given a team identification number by which they will be designated throughout the event.

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

- 1) Emergency Conditions: Under emergency conditions, a state team participating in a Virginia FFA Career or Leadership Development Event may be made up of less than the required members. Fewer than the required number could compete if an emergency condition such as illness, death in the family or an act of God would occur. Those individuals competing would still be eligible to qualify for individual awards.
- 2) Event committees will strive to divide teams into groups so that no two participants from a team will be in the same group. In any case, no two members will be placed side-by-side.

3) Disqualification:

- Any communication, verbal or non-verbal between participants during a career development event will be sufficient cause to eliminate the team member involved from the career development event. The only exception to this would be communication between team members during the team activity portion of a given career development event.
- Teams arriving after the career development event has begun may be disqualified or penalized. No member substitutions may be made after the career development event begins.
- Any assistance given to a team member from any source other than the career development event officials or assistants will be sufficient cause to eliminate the team from the career development event.
- Event superintendents may stop any participant if they deem their manner to be hazardous either to themselves or others. Such stoppage shall deem the individuals disqualified for that section of the career development event.
- CDE/LDE participants who start an event and do not complete the event without notifying event officials at the time of departure will be disqualified. This can affect the overall team rank and position. In some events this will also disqualify the entire team.
- Participants will not be allowed to utilize personal electronic communication devices, other than those approved by the event officials, during the entire course of the event. Participants who access personal electronic communication devices (example: cell phone, smart watch, etc.) without prior approval of the event officials will be disqualified.
- No participant shall gain access to real materials that will be utilized by the event committee during the competition. Any team, participant, advisor or coach reported and proven to do so will be disqualified from the national event.

4) Advisors:

- Advisors are not allowed to be in contact with their students at any point or time during the competition.
- Advisors may only be allowed at the contest site if they are assigned to supervise a group or part of the contest.

5) Participants are expected to observe the National FFA Code of Ethics and the Proper Use of the FFA Jacket during the career and leadership development events. *Please see the latest edition of the Official FFA Manual.*

6) Official FFA dress is highly recommended for all participants where appropriate and is required for the awards presentation and recognition.

7) Participants or advisors will not be allowed in the career development event area as designated in the specific career development event rules. Infractions of this statement may result in team disqualification.

8) Accessibility for all students—all special needs requests should be submitted two weeks prior to the event for scheduling of assistance during event.

9) Written Document Penalties- a penalty of 10% of the total points allotted will be assessed for the written documents received after the postmarked deadline. If the document is still not received seven days after the postmark deadline, the team/individual may be subject to disqualification. The following procedure will take place for late entries:

- Virginia FFA staff will mark late entries as such.
- Event officials will be notified of late entries at the time written documents are provided for judging.
- Event superintendent will ensure that penalty is applied.

10) Results of all Virginia State FFA Career and Leadership Development Events (with exception of Dairy Judging and Dairy Handlers) will be announced during sessions at State Convention.

TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

The ranking of teams and individuals in each of the career and leadership development events will be on the basis of logical groups within the total range of scores. Awards will be distributed to the winning teams and individuals at award programs following the completion of the career development events.

VIRGINIA FFA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Purpose: To advise the State Staff on issues impacting both FFA Career Development Events and Awards to ensure:

- All activities are consistent with industry needs.
- All activities are available to all members.
- All activities are conducted openly, fairly and in a quality manner.
- Cooperation among various activities occurs, to the degree possible, to promote the interconnectedness of agriculture (i.e. forestry and agricultural mechanics or farm business management and dairy or livestock) and agricultural education (classroom, SAE, FFA).
- New and innovative activities are being put forward for consideration.
- As many students as possible have the opportunity to participate.
- A constant process of local advisor in-service on proper use of these activities as tools for learning is being championed.
- All activities are operated consistently with Advisory Council policy.
- Activities are conducted within available budgets approved by the FFA Advisory Council and, if appropriate, Virginia FFA Foundation Board.

STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section A.

Governing Body

- The governing body of the organization shall be the State Board of Directors, which shall consist of: the state FFA advisor, who shall serve as chairperson; one agricultural education instructor from each of the state FFA areas; one representative from the State FFA Advisory Council, one representative of the State FFA Foundation; and one representative of the State FFA Alumni Association. The state FFA executive secretary and designated staff shall serve as ex-officio members of the State FFA Board of Directors.
- The terms of office of members, other than the ex-officio member, shall be prescribed in the bylaws.
- The State FFA Board of Directors shall meet at least once each year at such time and place as may be prescribed by the board and shall present an annual report.
- The duties of the State FFA Board of Directors shall include: interpret rules governing the activities of the state association, including the State FFA Convention; to have full power to prescribe new regulations that the board finds necessary in connection with the operation of the organization, including the State Convention; to interpret rules and regulations applicable to the convention; and to review recommendations from the State FFA Advisory Council and State FFA Executive Committee and take any action deemed appropriate.

Section B.

Governing Committee

The chairperson and two members of the State FFA Board of Directors shall be designated by the board to serve as the Governing Committee and shall have the power to deal with items of business of the state organization. All official actions of the Governing Committee shall be reported to the State FFA Board of Directors.

Meeting Schedule

- Annual fall meeting to report on the completion of activities at convention and provide input into the winter meeting agenda.
- The annual spring meeting will allow for most of the committee's work to be conducted as a whole group and in sub-groups focused on specific issues or specific types of activities (e.g. team career development events, individual awards, chapter awards).
- Local advisors should submit concerns suggestions to the state FFA Specialist/chair of the advisory board and their area representative at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Rules Committee on State Career Development Events

- The advisory committee will meet only when needed and will make all final decisions on interpretation of the rules and regulations of the State FFA Career Development Events or awards programs.
- Official judges' decisions are final. The announced results are the official results.

Conflict of Interest

- If there is a violation of a student whose advisor is a member of the advisory board, the advisor may not vote on the violation. A teacher from that area maybe used to fill in for the advisor whose student has possible committed the violation.