

Agriculture Issues Forum

A Special Project of the South Dakota FFA Foundation

Important Note

Please thoroughly read the General Rules at the beginning of this handbook for complete rules and procedures that are relevant to all South Dakota FFA Leadership and Career Development Events.

Purpose

The agricultural issues forum aims to present a current issue to a public audience; therefore, professional ethics and standards are to be considered. Ignoring truthful information, falsifying needed information, using unreliable sources, and plagiarism are examples of violations that could result in disqualification.

Objectives

- Investigate a variety of local, state, national, and international issues facing agriculture through classroom instruction.
- Engage students in selecting, researching, planning, and presenting a local, state, national, or international agricultural issue relevant to the local community.
- Demonstrate through the portfolio, presentation, and questioning an understanding of the principles and fundamentals of agricultural issue analysis.
- Connect agriculture students with professionals in the industry as they research and present their forum.
- Increase awareness of local, state, and national agricultural issues through forum presentations.
- Apply teamwork, leadership, and communication skills for career success.

Event Rules

Team and Presentation Requirements

A team should be composed of a minimum of three and a maximum of seven students who are actively participating, orally presenting and available to answer the judges' questions. To be eligible for awards, each student must take an active role in the presentation. This includes active participation in the presentation and making themselves available for questions from the judges in all rounds of competition. Only the certified team members can take an active role in the presentation of materials and use of technology during the presentation.

Presentations may include official FFA dress, costumes, props, skits and other creative paraphernalia. Costumes, props, skits and other paraphernalia must be professional in nature and used to showcase respect of all cultures. The Contest Superintendent and South Dakota State FFA Staff reserve the right to remove any team whose presentation, props, skits or other actions are disrespectful of others or shows lack of good judgement.

Use of Technology and Props

Teams are encouraged to be creative in the approach used to develop their team presentations including the use of technology and other props. Teams are cautioned that the use or over use of any technology or prop that reduces the focus on the content provided by the team and team's presentation of the content can result in a lower presentation score.

Showcase Respect of all Cultures

The agricultural Issues LDE respects and promotes the practice of one's first amendment rights; however, respect should always be demonstrated to cultures different from the speaker. In no manner should a team provide a forum that could be considered offensive to a culture different from themselves. Answers to questions should be answered with facts rather than opinions or stereotypes. The definition of culture is broadly defined, therefore, it is recommended to consider all cultures as professionals. It is further recommended that teams present their forums to diverse audiences, including the dynamic of cultures represented in the presentation. By completing this task, written and verbal feedback should provide a quality measure on the cultural sensitivity of the forum.

Judges

A minimum of three competent and unbiased judges will be provided. They will be instructed not to take sides on the issue(s). Professors and industry representatives are recommended. The superintendent of this LDE will adequately prepare the judges before the event. Seeding of teams in the preliminary rounds will be determined based on portfolio scores.

Event Format

Basic Overview

Each team will conduct a presentation on the issue developed and presented at the local level.

A front projection screen, 2 tables, and 7 chairs will be provided. Other equipment is allowed, but the presenting team must provide any other equipment they may need.

The agricultural issue could come from one of the following eight agricultural issue topic areas as listed in the Focusing on Agricultural Issues Instructional Materials

(www.FFA.org/resources/ag-issues)

- Environmental Issues
- Agricultural Technology Issues
- Animal Issues
- Agricultural Career Issues
- Economy and Trade Issues
- Agricultural Policy Issues
- Food Safety Issues
- Biotechnology Issues

The same general agricultural issue question will not be used in the following three years by the same chapter and/or advisor.

Research on the topic must be current and students must be involved in all the research of the topic and development of the portfolio

Portfolio

Individual Districts may set their own due dates for paperwork.

Beginning in 2017, all written materials including portfolios will be submitted electronically per instructions from the State FFA Office. Please refer to the website (<https://www.sdaged.org/>) for more information about electronic submission of written materials.

Portfolio Requirements

The portfolio will be limited to 10 pages maximum, not including the cover page.

The following information is required to avoid deductions. A maximum of 10 points will be deducted for exceeding the maximum amount of pages.

Statement of Originality: Participants shall submit a signed Statement of Originality at the time of portfolio submission, verifying that the portfolio results from the participants' work. A sample statement is provided: 'I certify that all materials presented here are of my creation and that any work adopted from other sources is duly cited and referenced as such.'

Cover

- Title of the issue, stated as a question
- Date of the state event (this date is to be used throughout all LDE events)
- Name, address, state, and phone number of the chapter.

Summary

A maximum of two pages of the portfolio will include a summary of the issue.

- The summary pages should be written using a font no smaller than Times New Roman 10.
- The purposes of the summary are to provide an overview of the issue and to demonstrate understanding of the principles and fundamentals of agricultural issue analysis.
- The summary needs to include the course(s) in which instruction occurred and the number of students involved in the instruction on agricultural issues.
- Summary must include in-text citations where appropriate.
- Citations to conform to most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual.
- The summary may also include, but is not limited to, responses to the following questions:
 - o Why is this issue important now?
 - o What is the nature of the issue?
 - In the answer, include the Agricultural Issue Topic Area and Question
 - o Who is involved in the issue?
 - o How can the issue be defined?
 - o What is the historical background of the issue?
 - o What caused the issue?
 - o What are the risks?
 - o What are the benefits?
- A bibliography of all resources and references cited which should include personal interviews, when appropriate, and any other supporting material. Bibliography to conform to most current edition of the American Physiological Association (APA) publication manual.

For additional background on these questions, refer to the resource "Focusing on Agricultural Issues Instructional Materials" and review the PowerPoint "Agricultural Issues Analysis" in the Teaching Materials section at: FFA.org/resources/ag-issues

Documentation

In order for a forum to be awarded points, it must have occurred prior to the state qualifying event, and there must be independent verification of the forum presentation date.

"Independent" means that verification needs to be provided by someone in the organization or the group to whom the presentation was made. The independent documentation needs to state when, where and to whom the forum was presented and must include the exact question and topic that were presented.

All forums, require independent verification of when, where and to whom forums were presented, and independent verification of presentation times if more than one forum is held on the same day.

Documentation can include:

- Letters from organizations
- News articles, that also include the date of the presentation and/or the date the article is printed
- Photos showing attendance at forums, but also need independent documentation of the date of the forum presentation
- If more than one forum is held on the same day, the starting times of the multiple forums held on the same day also must be independently documented

Forum Presentations

A chapter must have a minimum of five high-quality public forum presentations prior to their state qualifying event; for South Dakota, this would be the State LDE competition held in December, in order to receive the maximum of 15 points. Forum presentations given after the state qualifying event are encouraged, but will not count toward the National portfolio score.

- Multiple organizations attending the same forum will count as one forum.
- Portfolio judges may take into consideration the quality and quantity of presentations made to audiences outside of the school. No points will be awarded for presenting to other classes or teacher at the schools or neighboring schools. In addition, no points will be awarded for forums presented as any part of a local or state FFA competition.
- High quality forums are those presentations made to community groups that would have an interest in the issue. Suggested procedures for setting up these presentations and examples of community groups have been provided in the Agricultural Issues Forum Presenter's Guide.
- High quality forums can also be with smaller numbers of individuals who hold elected, appointed or some other official position that will be making decisions on the issue.
- Examples of low quality forums would be dropping in at a local business and giving a presentation to the workers or going to the home of one of the parents to make a presentation. Low quality forums will receive zero or minimal points.

Time Limits

- Five minutes will be allowed for set-up. Advisors may help with technology set-up.
- The presentation will be a maximum of 15 minutes in length.
- The presenters will receive a signal at 10 minutes and 14 minutes.
- At 15 minutes the timekeeper will announce that time is up, and the presentation will end.
- Five minutes will be allowed for questions from judges.
- Three minutes will be allowed for take-down.
- The presentations will be designed to be viewed by the judges.
- The audience at-large will not be of concern to the presenters.
- The judges may ask questions of all individuals of the presenting team.
- Each individual is encouraged to respond to at least one question from the judges.

Scoring Portfolio

	Possible Points
Summary of issue, two pages maximum	5
Bibliography	5
Documentation of local forums	15
Total Portfolio Points	25

Ten single-sided pages or five double-sided pages maximum.

Maximum of ten points will be deducted for exceeding the maximum number of pages and/or not including cover page containing required information.

Proper grammar, correct spelling and proper editing of text are important. The most current edition of The American Psychological Association (APA) style guide should be used for all research citations. Adherence to these editorial guidelines is expected to receive maximum points for the portfolio score.

Presentation

	Possible Points
Introduction of Issue	20
Pro side	20
Con side	20
Summary of Pro and Con	20
Effectiveness of Presentation	20
Questions	25
Total Presentation Points	125

Effectiveness of Presentation (20 points)

- Participation of each team member.
- Creative in how main points are made. (It makes no difference, for the "creativity" score, if team is in costume or official FFA dress.)
- Quality and power of the presentations.

- Speaks at the right pace to be clear.
- Pronunciation of words is clear and intent apparent.
- No distracting mannerisms that affect effectiveness.
- Gestures are purposeful and effective.
- Well poised with good stage presence.
- Use or overuse of any technology or prop that reduces the focus on the content provided by the team and team's presentation of the content can result in a lower presentation score.

Questions (25 points)

- Appropriate response and knowledge of the issue will be evaluated from team members' responses.
- There will be a five point deduction from the scorecard of any team that draws a conclusion supporting a pro or con viewpoint during the formal presentation. During the question period, students may draw a conclusion supporting a pro or con viewpoint if asked to do so by a judge.
- Presentation comment cards will be completed by presentation judges and presented to the teams at the awards function.

Ranking

Judges' ranking will be used to place teams. Teams will be ranked in numerical order on the basis of the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judges' ranking of each team then shall be added, and the winner will be that team whose total ranking is the lowest. (Low rank method of selection where a rank of "1" is assigned to the highest place team, "2" to the second place team, etc.)

Tiebreakers

Ties will be broken based on the highest team score from response to questions. If a tie still exists, it will be based on the team's total score.

Agricultural Issues References

The list of references is not intended to be all-inclusive. Other sources may be utilized and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparations.

- National FFA Ag Issues Materials: <https://www.ffa.org/participate/cde-lde/>
- <https://www.keloland.com/>
- <https://www.dakotanewsnw.com/>
- <https://southdakotaagconnection.com/news>
- KOTA, <https://www.kotatv.com/>

South Dakota FFA Association

Agricultural Issues

Statement of Originality

Chapter: _____

Date: _____

Topic Area: _____

Question: _____

We certify that this script is the original work of the chapter presenting OR that we have obtained explicit permission from the original author to use this script. Please note that any founded protests or disputes regarding your authorization to use this script may result in your disqualification from the contest. If the protest or dispute is requested under false pretenses, both teams may be disqualified.

All members of the team, including alternates, must sign below. We understand you may not fill all the lines.

_____ Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Teacher Name	_____ Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Teacher Signature
_____ Member Name	_____ Member Signature
_____ Member Name	_____ Member Signature
_____ Member Name	_____ Member Signature
_____ Member Name	_____ Member Signature
_____ Member Name	_____ Member Signature
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