



2009
Young Farmer & Agriculturist (YFA)
District Contest
Discussion Meet
Manual & Application

DISTRICT DISCUSSION MEET MANUAL
WISCONSIN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
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Competition Objectives

Farm Bureau's strength depends on its members' ability to analyze agricultural issues and decide on solutions that best meet their needs. The Discussion Meet is an activity designed to build these crucial skills in young, active farmers and agriculturalists. By participating, members build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems.

As a leadership training and self-improvement activity, the Discussion Meet experience will:

- Stimulate logical thinking and a desire for accurate information.
- Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking.
- Improve the ability to listen.
- Aid the participant in overcoming timidity or stage fright.
- Assist the individual in the practice of giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner.
- Teach the value of compromise.
- Develop leaders for effective problem solving through group discussion.

Background Information

- The Discussion Meet is a competition promoted by the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Committee and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau YFA Committee.
- The Discussion Meet is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member.
- The competitors will discuss pre-selected topics.
- The four fundamental bases of general discussion:
 - Cooperation
 - Constructive Criticism
 - Problem Solving
 - Communication
- The discussion should not be "conversation" or aimless talk, nor should the participant take the role of a persuasive speaker. The participant should try to cooperatively shed light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position.
- A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader. Sometimes it's reasonable to change positions whenever new information and ideas are presented.
- This is not a panel symposium wherein each participant, in turn, makes a presentation, with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in cooperative problem solving, with the questions, answers and statements coming from any person at any time. The moderator plays an inactive role during the discussion.

Competitor Qualifications

- The WFBF District Discussion Meet contest is for voting members from the counties that comprise that district.
- Competitors shall be voting Farm Bureau members between the ages of 18 and 35. They shall not have reached their 36th birthday by January 31st of the year in which they will compete at the AFBF Annual Meeting.
- Individuals who have been a WFBF Discussion Meet state winner are ineligible.
- Past and present AFBF YF&R committee members are ineligible.
- Competitors must be WFBF voting members to be eligible.
- Professional speakers may not compete. Professional speakers are those who have received a fee, royalty or honorarium for speaking (i.e., paid speaking appearances or speaking engagements) within 24 months prior to this annual competition. This excludes reimbursement for travel or expenses attendant to the appearance.
- County, State, and American Farm Bureau employees are not eligible; this also includes affiliated companies.
- All District winners participating in the WFBF state Discussion Meet contest must attend the YFA Luncheon and Orientation Meeting, which will be held prior to the contest at the WFBF YFA Conference/Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 5, 2009, at 12 noon at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells.
- No more than two persons per county are eligible to compete in the WFBF state Discussion Meet contest.
- Only one member of a household may win a WFBF YFA contest in any given year. Participants may enter more than one contest; however, they may only be a state winner in one contest.

Helpful Hints for Competitors

- Study as much material as possible relating to the overall topic. Sources: internet, library, newspapers, magazines, Farm Bureau policies, county, state, and American Farm Bureau publications and conversations with experts or knowledgeable people.
- The Discussion Meet should be a conflict of ideas, not personalities. **Remember this is a discussion, not a debate.**
- Be prepared to ask questions, state facts and opinions, and urge others to be specific.
- Be aware of the audience, but generally address the panel. Speak loud enough to be heard by the whole audience.
- Participate whenever your contribution will further the discussion. Do not monopolize the discussion.
- Make notes of key points as the discussion proceeds for use in summary statement.
- Use the one minute of quiet time to organize your closing statement.
- Stand and make your closing statement to the audience. Use accepted speech techniques. Stay within the time limit.

Competition Format

1. All contest facilitators, competitors and judges will attend the District contest orientation prior to the start of the competition to receive a short orientation. The competition facilitators are WFBF designated room chairs and WFBF designated moderators.
2. Competitors may not take prepared notes of any form with them to the competition table. After all competitors have been introduced, notes may be written on the paper provided. At the point a note is brought to the table and is noticed by the competition facilitator, there will be a disqualification called at the end of the round by the Discussion Meet Chair, the WFBF Committee Chair and/or the WFBF Coordinator.
3. Discussion Meet questions/topics will not be provided at the competition table during the district, state, and national level rounds of competition.
4. The room chair will call the meeting to order, announce the topic to be discussed, and introduce the timekeeper and moderator. Any competitor not present at this time will be disqualified.
5. The moderator will introduce the competitors and re-announce the topic to be discussed. He/she will give each of the competitors, in voluntary order, the opportunity to make a 30-second opening statement directed to the audience.
6. The timekeeper will raise a red card indicating when 30 seconds has elapsed. Judges may subtract points at their discretion for competitors who abuse the time limit.
7. The moderator will then indicate the opportunity for open discussion, which will continue for a total of 25 minutes. The discussion should be directed to the fellow competitors during open discussion.
8. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when five minutes of open discussion time remains. The moderator will indicate to competitors the time remaining by raising a yellow card.
9. If the discussion is lagging, the moderator may close the discussion at this time.
10. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when 25 minutes have elapsed with a red card.
11. The moderator will call for open discussion to stop and for one minute of quiet time allowing the competitors to consider a closing statement.
12. The moderator will give each of the competitors, in voluntary order, the opportunity to make an one-minute closing statement directed to the audience.
13. The moderator will recognize the judges and request them to leave the room with the room chairman to finalize the tabulation of their score sheets. Judges are not to confer with each other until the room chairman has collected their tabulated score sheets.
14. The next round topic to be discussed will be announced.
15. The moderator will thank the panel and ask the audience to recognize their efforts. The moderator may then request the competitors to each discuss their personal agricultural involvement for the audience.

Competition Structure

Orientations

- District Discussion Meet Orientation
 - a) Held just prior to the 1st Round.
 - b) All competitors are required to attend.
 - c) Roll call of competitors.
 - d) Release of Discussion Meet topic time schedule.
 - First Round topic will be announced in the competition room by Room Chair 10 minutes prior to start of First Round.
 - If necessary, each subsequent round topic announced at close of prior round.

- Judges' Orientation
 - a) Held 15 minutes prior to the start of the contest.
 - b) Review judge's duties in **Roles and Responsibilities of Competition Facilitators** along with any announcements.
 - c) Review timing sequences.
 - d) Allow time for questions.
 - e) Roll call of judges.

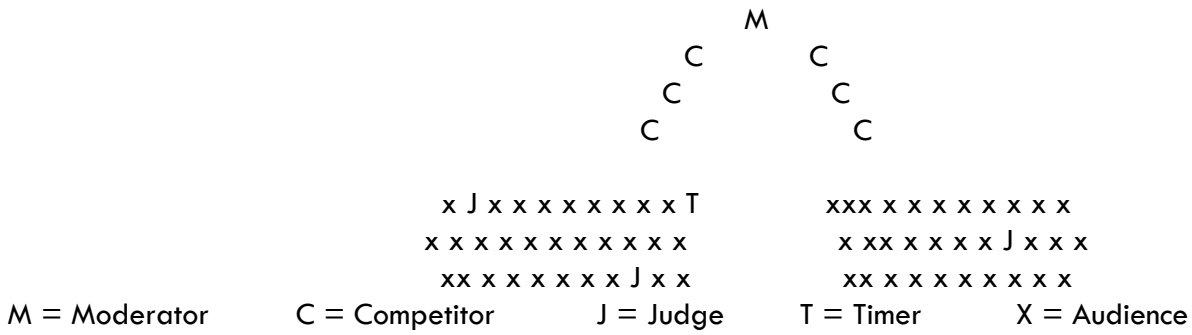
- Volunteer Orientation (Timekeeper)
 - a) Held in conjunction with the Judges' Orientation.
 - b) Roll call of timekeepers.
 - c) Distribution of time schedule.
 - d) Distribution of time cards.

Competition

- All competitors will compete in the first round of the District competition. The 3 top ranked individuals qualify to compete at the state competition during the WFBF Annual Meeting/YFA Conference. If there are seven or more contestants prepared to compete at a district contest, the group will be split into one group of 4 and one group of 3, or whatever combination is necessary. Contest facilitators will conduct a round for Group 1 and Group 2 using the same question/topic. Before Group 1 begins their round, contest facilitators will direct those in Group 2 to another location so they cannot see or hear Group 1's discussion. Before Group 2 begins their round, contest facilitators will direct those in Group 1 to another location so they cannot see or hear Group 2's discussion. The 2 top ranked individuals from Group 1 and the 2 top ranked individuals from Group 2 will now compete. Contest facilitators will hold another round with a new question/topic and the 3 top ranked individuals qualify to compete at the state competition during the WFBF Annual Meeting.

- The physical arrangements of the Discussion Meet rooms should provide for two tables at the front of the room facing each other and the audience. Half the participants should be seated at each table with the moderator in the center. Name cards identifying competitors should be visible to both the moderator and audience. Cards should show only the competitor's name, not their county.

Room Layout



Flow of Competition

Generally speaking, the discussion should follow these steps:

1. State problem or need.
2. Explore, define, and understand problem or need.
3. Identify causes of problem or need.
4. Elaborate all possible alternative solutions.
5. Evaluate and compare alternatives.
6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution.
7. Arrive at ways to implement the solution.

Facilitators' Roles and Responsibilities

1. Competition Chair's Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Conduct Discussion Meet Orientation Session at the District Contest for competitors and judges.
 1. Make introductions.
 2. Give brief explanation of Discussion Meet competition procedures.
 3. Allow time for questions.
 4. Draw and announce topics to determine sequence to be used for the competition.
 5. Announce First Round topic during Orientation.
- c) Settle any and all disputes during the competition.

2. Room Chair's Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Review Tally Sheet (**Appendix A & B**).
- c) Ensure all judges are present and check their identities. Report any changes to the moderator.
- d) Meet in the assigned room with competitors, judges, moderator and timekeeper to answer any questions they may have.
- e) Call the competition to order at the appointed time. Introduce the timekeeper and moderator. Announce topic to be discussed.
- f) Introduce and thank judges.
- g) Escort judges to the judges tabulating room at the end of the competition and allow them to finish tabulating and ranking the competitors. Assist judges in final ranking of competitors.
- h) Ensure each competitor has been ranked in all sections of the rating sheet.
- i) Supervise tiebreakers (See **Scoring**).

3. Moderator's Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Become acquainted with competitors.
- c) Open the competition with the following to ensure that all understand the format:
 1. Welcome the audience.
 2. Introduce competitors from left to right by name.
 3. Announce topic to be discussed.
 4. Ask for competitors to make a 30-second opening statement in voluntary order.
 5. After the last opening statement, say "You have heard the opening statements; you may proceed with the discussion."
 6. When alerted by timekeeper, set up five minute yellow table tent and ensure each competitor has seen it before taking it down.
 7. End discussion at timekeeper's signal.
 8. Call for one-minute quiet time used to prepare closing statements.
 9. Call for one-minute closing statement, in a voluntary order.
 10. Thank competitors.
 11. Dismiss room chair and judges for tabulation.
 12. Announce topic for next round.
 13. Give competitors the opportunity to introduce themselves and describe their operations.
 14. Announce time of next competition.

Note: The moderator should not comment on the topic or encourage discussion. This is the responsibility of the competitors. However, if the discussion seems to really be lagging, the moderator should use their best judgment to end the discussion early.

4. Timekeeper's Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Go to assigned competition room fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
- c) Meet with room chair, moderator and competitors for last minute questions.
- d) Indicate following timing points to the moderator and competitors as follows:
 1. The end of each 30 second opening statement. (Time elapsed - red card)
 2. Warning at 20 minutes of open discussion. (five minutes remaining - yellow card)
 3. The end of 25 minutes of open discussion. (Time elapsed - red card)
 4. The end of one-minute quiet time. (Time elapsed - red card)
 5. The end of each competitor's one-minute closing statement. (Time elapsed - red card)

5. Judges' Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Review discussion topics.
- c) Review Rating Sheet.
- d) Attend the Discussion Meet Judges Orientation Session.
- e) Go to assigned room ten minutes prior to scheduled starting time.
- f) Meet with room chair and moderator for last minute questions.
- g) Judges should:
 1. List competitors on Rating Sheet from left to right for ease in identification.
 2. Score competitors using the Rating Sheet.
 3. Total the scores.
 - 4. Note: There are 700 points available: 200 points for Cooperative Attitude and 100 points each for the other categories.**
 5. Determine and record ranking.
 6. Sign Rating Sheet.
- h) Judges should not:
 1. Sit near a fellow judge.
 2. Judge by applause.
 3. Confer with each other until all scores are tabulated.
- i) Remain seated until your room chair calls for you to leave the room to do the final tabulating of your score sheet.
- j) Select winners. (See **Scoring**)

Scoring

The room chair will supervise the final tabulation by the judges. Judges will use the point system indicated on the score sheet to assist in selecting their winners. Each judge will be instructed to total his/her score sheet and rank the competitors. Each judge is to break ties that occur on his/her own score sheet. The room chair will assist the judges in determining the final ranking of the competition.

- a) The winner will be determined by judges' ranking, and ties will be resolved before the judges are dismissed.
 1. Ties will be broken at the end of each round(s) by an automatic procedure using Cooperative Attitude as the first tiebreaker, followed by Problem Solving and Delivery, respectfully. (See **Appendix A**).
In the event of an irresolvable tie between all three categories, total points from judges' score sheets will be used to resolve the tie. The room chair will assist with this process.
- b) When possible, the above procedure should be conducted in a private room, with only the judges, room chair, and Discussion Meet chair present.

WISCONSIN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION 2009 YFA DISCUSSION MEET

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau YFA Committee is pleased to announce the 2009 Discussion Meet Contest. This program gives YFAs the opportunity to take part in an educational debate experience. The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, GROWMARK, Inc., Rural Insurance Companies, and Midwest Stihl, Inc. are proud to sponsor the following awards:

AFBF ANNUAL MEETING IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The Discussion Meet winner and spouse will be awarded transportation, lodging and registration costs toward competing in the AFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet contest. They will also participate in the recognition and awards program at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington on January 9-12, 2010.

WFBF YFA WASHINGTON, D.C. TRIP

The four state Discussion Meet finalists and their spouses will take part in the WFBF YFA Washington D.C. Trip on April 10-14, 2010. The trip includes round trip airfare, lodging while in Washington, D.C., sightseeing tours, and some meals. The participants will meet with their congressional delegation, USDA staff, and the AFBF Washington Staff. A modest fee of \$150 per person will be charged to trip participants.

GROWMARK, INC. ANNUAL MEETING

The winner and spouse will also be the guests of GROWMARK, Inc. at its annual meeting in Chicago on September 2-3, 2010. Up to three participants at the district level will receive a \$50 FS Gift Certificate.

CHAIN SAW FROM MIDWEST STIHL, INC.

The winner will be awarded a model MS290 Farm Boss chain saw from Midwest Stihl, Inc.

2010 WFBF YFA CONFERENCE

The winner and spouse will be the guests of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation at the WFBF YFA Conference/Annual Meeting on December 3-6, 2010.

You may download the Discussion Meet form from the web at www.wfbf.com.

2009
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
YFA
Discussion Meet Questions/Topics

1. How can agricultural producers reach out to the public to gain their support on important issues impacting agriculture?
 - Environmental
 - Animal Welfare
 - Food
 - Collaborating with other industries

2. The U.S. has the safest food supply in the world. How do farmers continue to improve the public's perception of their products?
 - Domestic supply
 - International supply
 - Industry safety standards vs. government safety standards
 - Conventional and/or organic

3. What can be done to encourage young people to get involved in the agricultural industry and remain there?
 - Profitability
 - Niche marketing
 - Production agriculture
 - Agri-business

4. How can we continue to bridge the gap between farmers/ranchers and lawmakers in order to have an influence in the changing political environment?
 - Different generations
 - Training (county, state, national)
 - Different industry segments

Question 1: How can agricultural producers reach out to the public to gain their support on important issues impacting agriculture?

Feedstuffs Foodlink

<http://feedstuffsfoodlink.com/ME2/Default.asp>

Animal Care and Well-Being: Facts not Fiction

<http://www.animalagriculture.org/proceedings/2008AMProceedings.asp>

Conversations on Care

<http://www.conversationsoncare.com/about-us.aspx>

Your Agriculture

<http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=yourag.home>

Advocates for Ag

<http://advocatesforag.com/>

<http://www.advocatesforag.blogspot.com/>

Animal Welfare bibliography

http://www.agmrc.org/markets_industries/food/animal_rights_and_welfare.cfm

Question 2: The U.S. has the safest food supply in the world. How do farmers continue to improve the public's perception of their products?

Know Your End Users Top Producer magazine , September 2008

<http://www.agweb.com/TopProducer/Article.aspx?id=145421>

Food Safety/Security

Feedstuffs Foodlink

<http://tinyurl.com/9o9ttk>

Organic Foods

Feedstuffs Foodlink

<http://tinyurl.com/9vgtcn>

Phytosanitary Regulations Shape Fruit and Vegetable Trade Patterns

USDA, Amber Waves, April 2008

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/April08/DataFeature/>

Center for Food Integrity

<http://www.foodintegrity.org/index.php>

Question 3: What can be done to encourage young people to get involved in the agricultural industry and

remain there?

Top Producer online -Young Farmer Program seminar

<http://www.agweb.com/TopProducer/YoungFarmer.aspx>

Don't Wait for Dad Top Producer Jan. 2008

<http://www.agweb.com/TopProducer/Article.aspx?id=140730>

Beginning Farmer Center-Resources to help our next generation of farmers

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/bfc/programs.html#Farm%20On>

online publications

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/bfc/pubs.html>

Food Industry MarketMaker

MarketMaker is a national partnership of land grant institutions and State Departments of Agriculture dedicated to the development of a comprehensive interactive data base of food industry marketing and business data. It is currently one of the most extensive collections of searchable food industry related data in the country. All the information can be mapped and queried by the user.

<http://national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>

Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

http://www.agmrc.org/markets_industries/

Farmers for the Future: Two farms in one

Crops, livestock, and sightseers complement each other on this Indiana farm

Successful Farming Dec. 2008

<http://www.agriculture.com/ag/story.ihtml?storyid=/templatedata/ag/story/data/1228514178258.xml>

What are the Skills of Financially Successful Farmers?

http://www.agecon.purdue.edu/topfarmer/newsletter/TFCW12_2008.pdf

Top Farmer Crop Resources on the Web

<http://www.agecon.purdue.edu/topfarmer/resources.asp>

Question 4: How can we continue to bridge the gap between farmers/ranchers and lawmakers in order to have an influence in the changing political environment?

Farmers are Engaging Consumers in a New Way

<http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=newsroom.agenda>

**District Winners
Application and Information Sheet**

Contestant's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____ email: _____

Sex: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Married: Yes _____ No _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Farm Bureau Membership In Name Of: _____

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Please write a 5-7 line biographical sketch written in third person (education, ag related career, size of operation, list major crops, type & number of livestock, off-farm activities, own or rent farm, etc.)

PHOTOS:

Please email three digital photos, including one personal or family portrait and two pictures of your operation, to Dale Beaty at dbeaty.fbcenter@wfbf.com. The pictures will not be used in the judging process, but will be used for display purposes at the WFBF YFA Conference/Annual Meeting. All pictures become the property of WFBF.

I hereby certify that the above named applicant is the _____ County representative in the Farm Bureau Discussion Meet and is eligible to enter and compete in the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Discussion Meet.

Should our applicant be one of the Washington D.C. trip participants, our county Farm Bureau agrees to pay \$150 per person to participate in the WFBF YFA Washington D.C. Trip.

County President: _____ Date: _____

WFBF reserves the right to use your photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of undersigned competitor may also be available to sponsors of WFBF events.

Competitor: _____ Date: _____

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Dale M. Beaty at 608-828-5714 or dbeaty.fbcenter@wfbf.com.

Mail application form to:
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Discussion Meet Contestant
Attn: Dale M. Beaty
P.O. Box 5550
Madison, WI 53705-0550

Discussion Meet application form must be **POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 30, 2009.**