

*Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers*

Discussion Meet 2018



*The 2018 Discussion Meet contest will be held during the
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation LEAP Conference,
January 26-27, 2018 at Treasure Island Resort & Casino*

Discussion Meet Manual
MINNESOTA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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Awards

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION CONVENTION

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Discussion Meet winner and spouse will be awarded transportation, lodging and registration costs necessary to compete in the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Discussion Meet competition and participating in the recognition and awards program at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, January 11-16, 2019.

YOUNG FARMERS AND RANCHERS TO WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP

The eight Discussion Meet finalists will have the opportunity to take part in a 2018 MFBF Farmers to Washington, D. C. trip. A fee of \$150 per finalist will be charged to the individuals. It will include round trip airfare, lodging while in Washington, D.C., sightseeing tours and some meals. The participants will meet with their congressional delegation, top governmental officials and the American Farm Bureau Federation government affairs staff. Counties will also pay a matching \$150. Spouse/guest are welcome to participate at own expense (less hotel).

MINNESOTA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION LEAP CONFERENCE

The winner of the Minnesota Discussion Meet competition and their spouse will receive a complimentary registration and hotel room at the 2019 Minnesota Farm Bureau LEAP Conference.

\$500 CASH AWARD MINNESOTA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

MFBF will provide a \$500 cash award to the Minnesota Discussion Meet winner. This presentation will take place during the MFBF Annual Meeting. Other prizes may also be awarded.

NATIONAL COMPETITION PRIZES

To be announced in 2018

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 ranchers. 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 Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers & Ranchers 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

- Competitors must be voting members in their county Farm Bureau to be eligible and between the ages of 18 and 35. They shall not have reached their 36th birthday by January 31 of the year in which they will compete at the AFBF Annual Meeting.
- Individuals who have competed in a previous AFBF Discussion Meet are ineligible.
- Previous MFBF State Discussion Meet winners are ineligible.
- Present MFBF YF&R Committee members are ineligible.
- Counties should screen competitors so that professional speakers do 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.
- Competitors may only compete in one national YF&R competitive event per year.

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 Minnesota 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 competitive event facilitators and competitors will meet in the pre-assigned competition room 15 minutes prior to the start of the competition to receive last minute comments by the room chairman. The competition facilitators are MFBF designated room chairmen and MFBF 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 MFBF Committee Chair and/or the MFBF Coordinator.
3. Discussion Meet questions will not be provided at the competition table during state and national level rounds of competition.
4. The room chairman 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 flash a red time 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 in the Round Robins competitions and 30 minutes in the Final Four competition. 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 in the Round Robins and in the Final Four. The moderator will indicate to competitors the time remaining by raising a yellow time 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 in the Round Robin competitions and 30 minutes in the Final Four competition have elapsed with a red time 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 a 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 farming/ranching operations for the audience.

Competition Structure

Orientations

- Discussion Meet Orientation
 - a) Held prior to the 1st Round Robin.
 - 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 during Orientation and again in competition room by Room Chair 10 minutes prior to start of First Round.
 - Each subsequent round topic announced at close of prior round.
 - e) Distribute room locations.

- Judges Orientation
 - a) Held prior to the 1st Round Robin.
 - 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.
 - f) Distribute competition room locations.

- Volunteer Orientation (Timekeeper)
 - a) Held 30 minutes before competition begins.
 - b) Roll call of timekeepers.
 - c) Distribution of time schedule.
 - d) Distribution of time cards.
 - e) Distribute competition room locations and Round Robin bracket sheets.

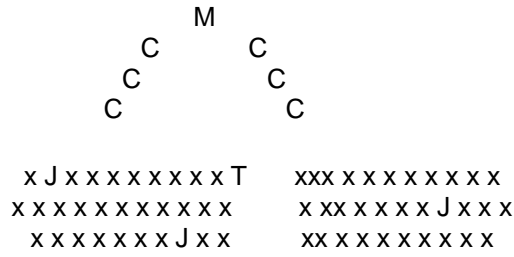
Competition

- All competitors will compete in the first two rounds of the competition, known as "Round Robins." Round Robins will have four to six competitors and this competition will take place at the MFBF Leadership Conference in the winter. The Top 8 competitors from the Round Robins will be put into a "semi-final" round at the MFBF Annual Meeting in November. The semi-final round will have two groups of four competitors from which the top two of each group will be selected to move on to the final round. The four finalists will compete in the "Final Four" round to determine the winner.

- Final Four Judges are not permitted to attend any rounds preceding those in which they judge.

- 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



M = Moderator C = Competitor J = Judge T = Timer X = Audience

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. Duties of the Competition Chairman

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

2. Room Chairman'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 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. End discussion at timekeeper's signal.
 7. Call for one-minute quiet time used to prepare closing statements.
 8. Call for one-minute closing statement, in a voluntary order.
 9. Thank competitors.
 10. Dismiss room chairman and judges for tabulation.
 11. Announce topic for next round.
 12. Give competitors the opportunity to introduce themselves and describe their farms.
 13. 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 15 minutes prior to scheduled starting time.
- c) Meet with room chairman, moderator and competitors for last minute questions.
- d) Indicate following timing points to the moderator and competitors as follows:

Round Robins

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)

Final Four

1. The end of each 30-second opening statement. (Time elapsed - red card)
2. The end of 25 minutes of open discussion. (Five minutes remaining - yellow card)
3. The end of 30 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. Judge's 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 10 minutes prior to scheduled starting time.
- f) Meet with room chairman 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 Problem Solving and Implementation and the points vary in the other categories.**
 5. Determine and record ranking.
 6. Sign Rating Sheet.
- h) Judges should not:
 - a) Sit near a fellow judge.
 - b) Judge by applause.
 - c) Confer with each other until all scores are tabulated.
- i) Remain seated until your room chairman calls for you to leave the room to do the final tabulating of your score sheet.
- j) Select winners. (See **Scoring**)

Scoring

The room chairman 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 chairman will assist the judges in determining the final ranking of the competition.

1. The winner will be determined by judges' ranking, and ties will be resolved before the judges are dismissed.
 - a) Ties will be broken at the end of each of the Round Robin competitions and the Final Four 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 chairman will assist with this process.
2. When possible, the above procedure should be conducted in a private room, with only the judges, room chairman and Discussion Meet chairman present.

Round Robins

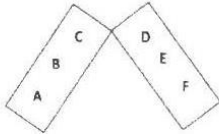
Sample rankings for the two Round Robin competitions follow. (See **Appendix A & B**).

Top Eight Finalists

- a) After competing in two Round Robin competitions, each competitor will be ranked according to his/her scores. From this final determination, the Top Eight final competitors will be chosen.
- b) These competitors will then be broken down into two groups of four competitors.
- c) At the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Annual Conference in November the competitors will compete in two Semi-final rounds using a third topic. Competitors will be judged in the same manner using the same process as the Round Robin competitions.
- d) The winner from each room will advance to the Final Four where a final topic will be discussed.

Discussion Meet Judges Sheet

Room Name: _____

<p>In these columns, put the first and last name of the competitors according to where they are sitting using this diagram:</p> 	Comp A Name:	Comp B Name:	Comp C Name:	Comp D Name:	Comp E Name:	Comp F Name:
<p>(1) PROBLEM SOLVING AND IMPLEMENTATION: (200 points)</p> <p>Ability and judgment in seeking answers and solutions, planning and organizational understanding, and the inclusion of Farm Bureau in implementing action programs.</p>						
<p>(2) ANALYSIS OF TOPIC OR PROBLEM: (150 points)</p> <p>Does contestant attempt to identify problem causes and remain on topic?</p>						
<p>(3) COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE: (100 points)</p> <p>Listening, asking pertinent questions, airing all points of view, securing major agreement, minimizing major differences. Courtesy to other participants, encourage discussion from other participants.</p>						
<p>(4) DELIVERY: (100 points)</p> <p>Voice quality, loudness, clear enunciation, communication skills, desirable sentence structure and interesting choice of words.</p>						
<p>(5) OPENING STATEMENT: (50 points)</p> <p>Definition of problem, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problem.</p>						
<p>(6) CLOSING STATEMENT: (100 points)</p> <p>Ability to summarize discussion and formulate direction for the future.</p>						
<p>Total score for each contestant is to be tabulated by Judge. Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge. TOTAL → Total of 700 points possible.</p>						
<p>Rank contestants: 1(highest) – 6(lowest) RANK →</p>						

Room Chair's Signature

Judge's Signature

Room Chair: _____

Judge: _____
 State / Affiliation

Moderator: _____

Time keeper: _____
 State / Affiliation

MFBF Area Program Directors

SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

Michael Knight

3926 70th Avenue

Byron, MN 55920

515-313-1538

Email: michael.knight@fbmn.org

Dodge

Fillmore

Freeborn

Goodhue

Houston

Mower

Olmsted

Steele

Wabasha

Waseca

Winona

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

Yvonne Simon

20827 489th Avenue

Lake Crystal, MN 56055

507-995-1652

Email: yvonne.simon@fbmn.org

Blue Earth

Brown

Carver

Faribault

Le Sueur

Martin

McLeod

Nicollet

Scott

Sibley

Watsonwan

SOUTH WEST DISTRICT

Amanda Revier

31407 760th Avenue

Olivia, MN 56277

320-894-2600

Email: amanda.revier@fbmn.org

Cottonwood

Jackson

Lincoln

Lyon

Murray

Nobles

Pipestone

Redwood

Renville

Rock

Yellow Medicine

EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Dennis Sabel

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Eagan, MN 55123

612-756-1230

Email: dennis.sabel@fbmn.org

Anoka

Benton/Mille Lacs

Chisago

Dakota

Hennepin

Kanabec/Isanti

Pine

Rice

Sherburne

Washington/Ramsey

Wright

NORTH DISTRICT

James Dodds

2331 Wee Gwaus Dr SW

Bemidji, MN 56601

218-556-4667

Email: james.dodds@fbmn.org

Arrowhead Regional

Beltrami

Cass

Crow Wing

Headwaters Regional

Koochiching

Lake of the Woods

Morrison

East Otter Tail

East Polk

Wadena

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Riley Maanum

1126 – 18 ½ Street N

Moorhead, MN 56560

320-260-6417

Email: riley.maanum@fbmn.org

Becker

Clay

Grant

Kittson

Mahnomen

Norman

Northwest Regional

Traverse

Wilkin

West Otter Tail

West Polk

WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

DelRay Johnson

25642 Hwy 210 West

Staples, MN 56479

218-639-2092

Email: delray.johnson@fbmn.org

Big Stone

Chippewa

Douglas

Kandiyohi

Lac qui Parle

Meeker

Pope

Stearns

Stevens

Swift

Todd

**Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet**

Rules for 2018 MFBF Leadership Conference Competition

Background

The Discussion Meet is a competition promoted by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Committee. Farm Bureau's strength depends on its members' abilities to analyze agricultural issues and decide on solutions that best meet their needs. The competition is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member. Participants 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. **A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader. He/she will assist the group in creating ways to implement the solutions discussed and highlight Farm Bureau's involvement in those actions/steps.** The Minnesota Farm Bureau will provide, as part of the state recognition award, an expenses-paid trip to the AFBF Annual Convention held in 2019 in New Orleans, LA, January 11-16, 2019. Appropriate recognition will be given to all state competitors in attendance at the MFBF Annual Meeting. The MFBF YF&R Committee and the MFB Foundation Department will coordinate the program at the state level.

Information about the Discussion Meet participant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

Eligibility

- Participant shall be a Farm Bureau member between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual shall have reached his/her 18th birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the state competition and shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by Jan. 31, 2019.
- Participant must be actively engaged in agriculture.
- Participant may only compete in one national YF&R Competition per year.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse/spousal-equivalents are not eligible to compete.
- Past state YF&R Discussion Meet winners and/or previous AFBF Discussion Meet competitors are not eligible to compete.
- Current employees of county, state and/or Minnesota Farm Bureaus and their affiliates are not eligible to compete.
- Professional speakers are not eligible to 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.

Entry Form & Application Guidelines

- The application must be properly signed with no additional pages, including letters of recommendation, scrapbooks or other visual additions.

Note: Disregarding any of the guidelines listed above will result in disqualification.

Competition

- The participants will discuss pre-selected topics using four bases for the general discussion: cooperation, constructive criticism, problem solving and communication.
- The competition will consist of four rounds: two Round Robins, Sweet 16 and Final Four.
- All competitors will compete in the first two rounds. The top 16 competitors based on judges' scores will move on to the Sweet 16 round.
- The top competitor in each of the third round rooms will move on to the Final Four round in order to determine the winner.
- Each round will begin with a 30-second opening statement and end with a one-minute closing statement by each participant.
- During the Round Robins and Sweet 16, participants will have 25 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time.
- During the Final Four round, participants will have 30 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time.

Note: More detailed information regarding the competition can be found in the MFBF Discussion Meet Manual.

Deadline

Contestants must have submitted their application by January 27, 2018. Applications may be emailed to michelle.degeest@fbmn.org or faxed to 651-768-2159. Application is available at www.fbmn.org We will be accepting applications up until 1 hour prior to the contest at the LEAP Conference.

QUESTIONS ARE YET TO BE ANNOUNCED!

**Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet**

2018 Entry Form and Application

Please electronically complete this form. No handwritten applications will be accepted. One hour prior to the beginning of the contest at the 2018 LEAP Conference, Jan 27th.

Applicant*: _____

** Will be used in the program and for recognition*

Phonetic Pronunciation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Education/Degree: _____

Spouse/Spousal-Equivalent's Name: _____

Bio:

Please write a 3-4 sentence bio of yourself to be used in MFBF publications and the media:

I hereby certify the information on this entry form to be accurate and true statements. **MFBF DOES NOT ACCEPT LIABILITY FOR APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED INCORRECTLY BY A COUNTY FARM BUREAU OFFICES.** MFBF reserves the right to use my photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestant may also be available to Farm Bureau sponsors. By participating in the event, I warrant that I fully and unconditionally agree to and accept the YF&R official contest rules and the decisions of the MFBF YF&R Committee, which are final and binding.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

I hereby certify that the above named applicant is the official county entry and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for MFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet for 2018. The county agrees to pay \$150 per person to participate in the MFBF Farmers to Washington D.C. trip.

County Farm Bureau President: _____ Date: _____

DEADLINE: 1 hour prior to competition at the LEAP Conference