

For Reference Only – application must be submitted via the online portal

**Indiana Farm Bureau  
Excellence in Agriculture Application  
For use in the 2025 Indiana Farm Bureau Contest ONLY**

**Background**

The Indiana Farm Bureau Excellence in Agriculture Award was developed using the American Farm Bureau (AFBF) award application. The winner of the Indiana state contest will represent the state at the AFBF convention, held annually in January.

The Excellence in Agriculture Award competition is designed as an opportunity for young farmers and ag professionals to earn recognition, while actively contributing and growing through their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, and participation/involvement in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service and community). The ideal candidate(s) for the Excellence in Agriculture Award is an individual or couple who does not have the majority of their gross income subject to normal production risk.

Please note that the Indiana Farm Bureau Excellence in Agriculture Award application varies from the AFBF application. The state winner will be required to complete the AFBF application prior to the submission deadline in early December. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

**Eligibility:**

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the law applicable to the state Farm Bureau organization. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with their county Farm Bureau. The individual or spouse/spousal-equivalent shall have reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time they qualify for the national competition and shall not have reached their 36<sup>th</sup> birthday by the completion of the competition. Competitors qualify at the time the national application is submitted and the completion of the competition is the day awards are given out (exact date TBD – January 2026).
- Applicant(s) must be in attendance on-site at the Indiana State YF&AP awards judging day (exact date TBD, typically in late June/early July).
- Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of their gross income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in any of the past three years. Applicant(s) may only win one YF&AP award area per year (Rising Star, Excellence in Agriculture, Achievement Award, Discussion Meet).
- Current members of the Indiana YF&AP State Committee are not eligible to compete. Past members of the committee may compete.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
- Previous state winners of the Indiana YF&AP Achievement Award are not eligible to compete. Previous runners-up are eligible to compete again.
- Current employees or agents of county, state and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as an entity owned or controlled in whole or in part by another entity through, for example, ownership (including

For Reference Only – application must be submitted via the online portal

partial ownership) or positions on the board of directors. Past employees and interns who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events at the state or national level since January 1, 2020, are ineligible.

### **Contest Structure**

- All applicants will complete the written application (must submit it via the online portal). The finalists (top 3) will be required to deliver an oral presentation.

### **Entry Form & Application Guidelines**

- Do not use applicant's name, the name of their state or county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant's county beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers. Verbal and presentation reference to applicant's name, state and county will be allowed during your presentation for personalization of presentation.
- The entry form and application should be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, etc.), but proper names of the applicant(s) may not be used. Couple applications should follow these instructions: For personal statements, put (A1) or (A2) at the beginning of the paragraph/sentence to denote which applicant is "speaking," and for joint statements, simply use the word "we". Applicants must use (A1)/(A2) to denote each applicant for all of question 6.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. For example, United States Department of Education (USDE). AFBF, FB, and YF&AP, INFB are acceptable to use throughout the application.
- No emailed or mailed entry forms will be accepted. This document is meant to be a reference only. All applications must be submitted via the online portal.
- It will be up to the judges' discretion to deduct points if applicants include activities before they were 18.

### **Presentation Guidelines**

- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute presentation in which the applicant(s) has an opportunity to share the contents of their entire application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and the audience.
- Applicant(s) will have 25 minutes to present on the topics addressed in the application and address questions from the judges. Applicants will be notified by the timekeeper when 10 minutes are remaining and again when five minutes are remaining. Each judge will be prepared to ask one question. At 25 minutes, time will be called and the applicant's time in front of the judges will conclude even if judges have not been able to ask their questions. It will be up to the applicant(s) to determine how to use this time. If the answers to the judges' questions are complete before time is called, the room moderator will call time.
- The only visual means in which to deliver the information is through a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation. The applicant(s) needs to submit their presentation on a USB flash drive during the Excellence in Agriculture Competitor Orientation. Once the presentation has been downloaded onto the laptop, it cannot be changed. A computer, LCD projector, screen and one slide advancer remote will be provided. All presentations must be formatted to work on a PC. Contestants will not be allowed to use their own computer.

For Reference Only – application must be submitted via the online portal

- Verbal and presentation references to applicant(s) name, state and county will be allowed during the presentation.
- No props (including notes), sound or video of any kind will be allowed during the presentation.

### **Application Judging**

- All applications will be judged by judges selected by INFB staff. These are the only judges that will be reviewing and scoring the applications.
- All judges will use the application rubric to score the applications.
- The following breakdown of points will be used for the application:

#### Application - 80% of overall score

Questions 2-4: Ag Involvement, Impact on Ag and Issues Facing Ag Goals	180 points	45.0%
Farm Bureau Experience	40 points	10.0%
Other Leadership Experience	90 points	22.5%
Application Form: Writing should be clear, descriptive and free of grammatical errors	80 points	20.0%
	10 points	2.5%
<b>MAXIMUM POINTS</b>	<b>400 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Presentation Judging**

- The judges of the applications will identify three state finalists to move to the presentation round. To the best of our ability, INFB will use the same judges for both the presentation and the application round.
- All judges will use the same presentation rubric to score the presentations.
- The following breakdown of points will be used for the presentation:

#### Presentation – 20% of overall score

Delivery of Presentation	30 points	30%
Content of Presentation	40 points	40%
Responses to Questions	30 points	30%
<b>MAXIMUM POINTS</b>	<b>100 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Acknowledgement of Eligibility:**

I have read and understand the eligibility requirements for this award. To the best of my knowledge, I am eligible to compete in the award area.

### **Notice of State Award vs. AFBF Award**

Indiana Farm Bureau's Excellence in Agriculture Award application was created using the AFBF application. Please note that the application you are about to complete is the Indiana version only. Should you be chosen as the state winner, you will be required to complete the AFBF National award application. The national application is more in-depth and will require you to provide more detailed information about yourself and your off-farm job (such as a copy of Form 1099 or Form W-2 and

For Reference Only – application must be submitted via the online portal

employer verification). Indiana Farm Bureau staff will be available to assist you in the completion of the application. To view a previous year's AFBF application, [click here](#).

### Questions

Are you applying as an individual or as a couple? (select one)

Applicant 1 (A1): \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant 2 (A2): (if applying as a couple): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (A1): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (A2): \_\_\_\_\_

Email (A1): \_\_\_\_\_ Email (A2): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (A1): \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth (A2): \_\_\_\_\_

Education Level (A1): \_\_\_\_\_ Education Level (A2): \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Personal Background** (family, education, and personal interests) *maximum characters: 2,000*
2. **Agricultural Involvement**
  - a. Please explain the applicants occupation and involvement in agriculture/agribusiness – *maximum characters: 3,500*
3. **Impact on Agriculture**
  - a. Clearly describe the efforts the applicant(s) has taken to positively promote and impact the agriculture industry. Examples may include things such as hosting farm tours, legislative visits, writing a blog, etc. – *maximum characters: 5,000*
4. **Issues Facing Agriculture**
  - a. Agriculture faces important issues at the local, state, national and international levels. Explain three important issues that the industry needs to address in the next five years. Choose one issue from three of the four levels mentioned above. For example, an applicant might select ag literacy as a local issue, mental health as a state issue and rural broadband as a national issue. – *maximum characters: 5,000*
  - b. Choose one of the issues in your response to 4A and discuss how you personally have addressed, or can address, that issue and work towards a resolution. *Maximum characters: 5,000*
5. **Goals**
  - a. What goals does the applicant(s) have for the next five years related to their career, Farm Bureau involvement and involvement with other organizations? What steps have been made to reach these goals? – *maximum characters: 5,000*
6. **Leadership Experience in Farm Bureau**

*(From age 18 to current. Indicate A1, A2, or Both when applicable)*

*List Farm Bureau leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years and level of involvement (county, state, national). Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2020-2021)*

For Reference Only – application must be submitted via the online portal

**a. County Farm Bureau**

**b. State/American Farm Bureau**

**c. Leadership in other agricultural organizations**

*List other agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, 4-H, etc.). Please include organization, description and years of involvement. Example: A1 & A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2019 – present)*

**d. Other leadership experience**

*List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. civic/service clubs, church, school, volunteer leadership, etc.) Please include organization, description and years of involvement. Example: A1 – Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2021)*