



Career & Leadership Development Event Awards & Recognition Updates 2026-2027

These revisions & updates will go into effect this school year (2026-2027).

** Designates an update/revision that is a result of a National FFA update.*

Career & Leadership Development Events

These changes will be reflected in the CDE/LDE rules available on FLAFFA.org in the coming weeks. All rules are marked with a revision date on the cover page. You are encouraged to download a new set of rules for each event to ensure that you are using the most current version.

General CDE/LDE Updates

Nature of Change

No-Show Policy for In-Person Events

Chapters that qualify for an in-person CDE/LDE and fail to attend without providing at least two weeks' notice will:

- Be charged a \$100 no-show fee.
- Forfeit all Quality Chapter Report points associated with that CDE/LDE.
- Be ineligible to compete in any additional CDEs/LDEs until the \$100 fee is paid.

Agricultural Education

Nature of Change

Six students will advance to the final round.

Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems

Nature of Change

Team Activity

Reduce team activity to 100 points

Safety Certification/Precautions

Advisors will be required to certify that teams are properly trained to safely participate in the event.

Event officials will have the authority to stop any participant/team who are deemed to be unprepared to safely conduct any practicum.

Citrus

Nature of Change

Updated version of Florida Citrus Production Guide

Employment Skills LDE*

Nature of Change

Change the submission of personal information across all submitted documents and designate the advisor as the point of contact for the setup of all "pre-convention/preliminary components".

- Students should list their names by their first name and last initial. i.e. – Anne/Adam S.
- Student contact information shall be the local school address, school email and agriculture department phone number.
- Email addresses and phone numbers should only be those of the advisor as a point of contact.

Agilities.org helps people discover their strengths and interests, build confidence, explore

career options, and plan their future. Provided for free by The DeBruce Foundation, Agilities.org features interactive tools for career exploration and development:

- Agile Work Profiler©: A 15-minute assessment to identify work strengths and interests.
- Career Explorer Tools©: Interactive tools to explore the income, preparation, work activities and demand for each career.
- K-12 Career Literacy Resources: 90+ lessons, ready to embed in classrooms.
- [Agile Work Profiler](#)

Interview Preparation Guidelines (will be posted in resources folder),
<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/rha3s1a4w13y5d7jro76gp69csff5y5>

Environmental Science CDE*

Nature of Change

Updated Team Activity (Reduced to 600 points) and added a rationale for the team activity. Updated the rubric with point values for each indicator level to be broken into one-point increments on the e-rubric.

Extemporaneous Public Speaking*

Nature of Change

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) language models is allowed for research purposes within the 10 minutes of internet access. Competitors may not use any AI or generative language modelers to construct speech components (full speeches, introductions, conclusions, main points, outlines, etc.). Use of language modeling to generate speech components or verbiage will result in disqualification.

Updated Topic Areas

High School

- Agriculture & Society (Agricultural literacy and advocacy)
- Agricultural Policy & Governance (Agricultural issues)
- Agricultural Innovation & Science (Advancing agriculture through agriculture science)
- Agricultural Economics & Markets (Agri marketing and international agriculture)
- Food, Environment & Sustainability (Food and fiber systems)

Middle School

- Agriculture & Society (Agricultural literacy and advocacy)
- Agricultural Innovation & Science (Advancing agriculture through agriculture science)
- Food, Environment & Sustainability (Food and fiber systems)

Note: Middle School will have 15 topics to select from, 5 from each of the 3 areas.

Farm & Agribusiness Management

Nature of Change

Removal of specified number of test questions.

Food Science CDE*

Nature of Change

Updated the Exam References. Principles of Food Science. 6th edition. 2026. Janet D. Ward, Larry Ward, and Jodi Songer Riedel. The Goodheart-Willcox Company, Inc

Livestock Evaluation CDE

Nature of Change

Updated Middle School tiebreakers:

Middle School Preliminary

Individual

1. Written exam
2. Total of placing classes

Team

1. Drop score
2. Total written exam score
3. Total of placing classes

Middle School State Finals

Individual

1. Total of placing classes
2. Total of questions

Team

1. Drop score
2. Total of placing classes
3. Total of questions

Updated High School tiebreakers:

High School Virtual Preliminary

Individual

1. Written exam
2. Total of placing classes

Team

1. Drop score
2. Total written exam score
3. Total of placing classes

High School In-Person Preliminary

Individual

1. Total of placing classes
2. Total of questions

Team

1. Drop score
2. Total of placing classes
3. Total of questions

High School State Finals

Individual

1. Total of reasons
2. Total of placing classes
3. Lower total placing score in the reasons classes. *

Team

1. Drop score
2. Total of reasons
3. Total of placing classes
4. Lower total placing score in the reasons classes. *

Parliamentary Procedure

Nature of Change

Updates to the reference list.

Prepared Public Speaking*

Nature of Change

Cover page includes the speech title, participant's first name and last initial, chapter, state and year.

Clarified language on breaking ties. Ties will be broken based on the greatest number of low ranks as follows: the tying participant with the greatest number of first-place ranks shall be declared the winner. If there is no winner or there is a tie, then the tying participant with the greatest number of second-place ranks shall be declared the winner. If there is no winner or a tie remains, the participant with the greatest number of third-place ranks among the tied participants shall be declared the winner.

Safe Tractor Operations

Nature of Change

Written Exam

Written exam will be removed from district and state level event.

Safety Certification/Video

Advisors will be required to certify that participants are properly trained to safely participate in the event.

Safety video will no longer be required – instead safety will be tested in the written exam and oral questions.

Event officials will have the authority to stop any participant who is deemed to be unprepared to safely conduct any practicum.

Vegetable

Nature of Change

Add Tomatillo to Kinds & Varieties

SAE Awards Program

Components of the new National FFA SAE Award Program

1. 2026 will be the final year of the current Agricultural Proficiency and Agricultural Proficiency Research Awards. Starting in 2027, these award programs will be recognized as part of the new National FFA SAE Award Program.
2. Applications will be updated to align with *SAE for All*.
3. Each SAE type will have an application form specific to the type (*Entrepreneurship, Placement, Research, School-Based Enterprise & Service-Learning*). For example, a Placement application will be designed specifically for Placement type SAE projects
4. Submission of a *Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Agreement, Business Plan, Training Plan or Service-Learning Plan* will be a requirement for the application.
5. All previous Agriscience Fair, Agricultural Proficiency Award and Agriscience Research Proficiency Award state winners will be eligible to submit in the new National FFA SAE Award Program in 2027.
 - a. Note members may not use SAE records from work, entrepreneurship or research conducted before Aug 1 of their 7th Grade year.

- b. Members finishing high school may compete for SAE Awards at the state and national level up to and including their second national convention following graduation.
6. State FFA associations may not enter more than one applicant per award area.
7. Up to 6 finalists will be recognized on the Main Stage during the National FFA Convention.
8. Members other than the top 6 national finalists are eligible to compete again in the same level SAE Award area if selected by their state association again.
9. 5 different Applications
 - a. Entrepreneurship – 34 award areas
 - b. Placement – 34 award areas
 - c. Research – 21 award areas in 3 divisions
 - d. School-Based Enterprise – 8 award areas
 - e. Service-Learning – 4 award areas

How will SAE Awards look in Florida this year?

1. Entrepreneurship & Placement
 - Remain combined (current structure)
 - Evaluate expansion based on application numbers
 - Winner will advance to national level + the next highest placing of the opposite type*
2. Research – offer 3 award areas (combine all 7 award areas within each division)
 - Evaluate expansion based on application numbers
 - Winner will advance to national level
 - Highest scoring application of each pathway will be eligible to advance*
3. School-Based Enterprise – offer 1 award area (combine all 8 award areas)
 - Evaluate expansion based on application numbers
 - Winner will advance to national level
 - Highest scoring application of each type will be eligible to advance*
4. Service-Learning – offer 1 award area (combine all 4 award areas)
 - Evaluate expansion based on application numbers
 - Winner will advance to national level
 - Highest scoring application of each type will be eligible to advance*

**This determination will be made by the scoring committee and staff. Applications must be of competitive quality in order to advance.*

2026 – 2027 Award Areas

Entrepreneurship/Placement

- Agricultural Communication – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Education – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Processing - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Sales - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Agricultural Services - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Beef Production - Entrepreneurship

- Beef Production – Placement
- Dairy Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Diversified Agricultural Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Diversified Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Diversified Horticulture Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Diversified Livestock Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Equine Science – Entrepreneurship
- Equine Science – Placement
- Fiber and Oil Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Forage Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Forest Management and Products - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Fruit and Nut Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Goat Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Landscape Installation - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Nursery Operations - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Outdoor Recreation - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Poultry Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Service-Learning - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Sheep Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Small Animal Production and Care - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Specialty Animal Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Specialty Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Swine Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Turf and Landscape Maintenance - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Vegetable Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Veterinary Science - Entrepreneurship/Placement
- Wildlife Production and Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement

Research SAE

- Experimental Research
- Analytical Research
- Invention Research

School-Based Enterprise SAE

Service-Learning SAE

Market Animal SAE

- Market Goat (FL only award) *NEW***
- Market Lamb (FL only award)
- Market Steer (FL only award)
- Market Swine (FL only award)

*NEW** All market animal applications will have a middle school category and a high school category.*

To learn more about the new SAE Award Program and award areas please visit:
<https://www.ffa.org/awards-recognition-updates/>

Agriscience Fair Updates

Handbook Update:

- Merged Individual and Team Divisions together with teams of 1-3 students.
- Changed Divisions to Grade Levels.
- Students with an Agriscience Fair extension should submit a Research SAE Award application instead of the Agriscience Fair. However, Students will be permitted to have extension projects or continuation projects in later years by identifying the project as an extension project and only evaluating the last 12 months of data and results. Previous year's information will not be judged if included.
- Updated Skills, Competencies and Knowledge section to reflect the 2024 Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) Career Cluster Content Standards.
- Students with multi-year research projects should submit a Research SAE Award application.
- Reduce the number of national award areas from 36 to 18.
 - Teams and individuals compete together.
- All Grade Levels will use the same written report format.
- Once a student is placed in the top six of a grade level and pathway, they can no longer compete in that grade level and pathway regardless of the research subject.
- Up to 6 (instead of 10) national finalists named in each Grade Level/Pathway

Rubrics Update:

- Reduced the number of different rubrics/scoresheets from 4 to 2 different rubrics/scoresheets.
 - One Application Rubric/Scoresheet for all Grade Levels and Pathways.
 - One Interview Rubric/Scoresheet for all Grade Levels and Pathways.

Florida FFA will be offering a series of webinars this fall to share more about the changes to the SAE Awards program and to Agriscience Fair.