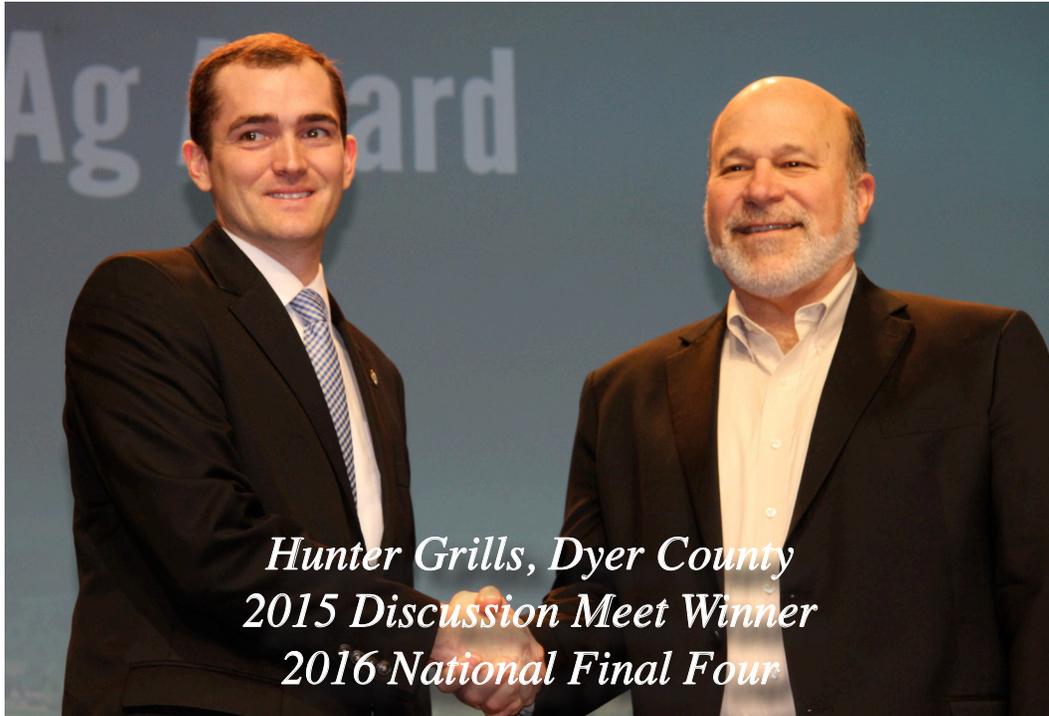
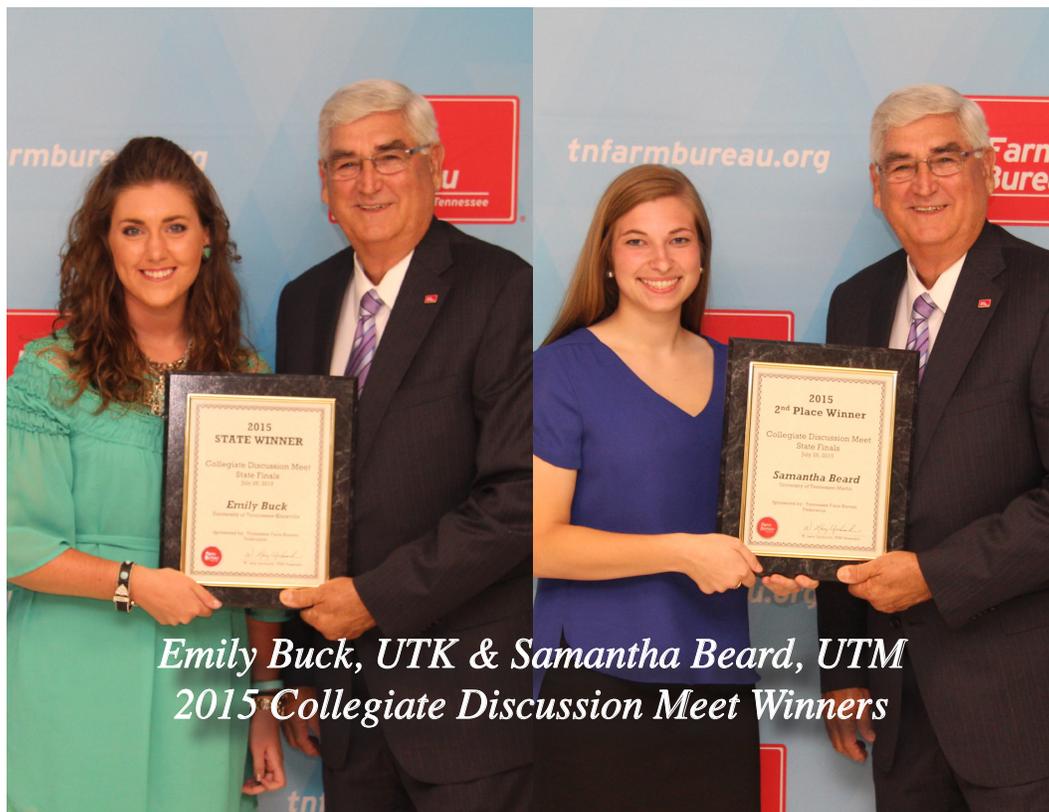


2016 YF&R 2017 Collegiate Discussion Meet Guide



*Hunter Grills, Dyer County
2015 Discussion Meet Winner
2016 National Final Four*



*Emily Buck, UTK & Samantha Beard, UTM
2015 Collegiate Discussion Meet Winners*

2016 YF&R DISCUSSION MEET

**Sunday, December 4, 2016
Embassy Suites - Franklin, Tennessee**

at the

*Tennessee Farm Bureau
Annual Meeting*

**State Winner:
\$1,000 Cash Award**

**Second Place:
\$500 Cash Award**

**Final Four:
\$200 Cash Award**

**Each Contestant:
\$200 Cash Award**

2016 DISCUSSION MEET INFORMATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. What Is The "Discussion Meet"?
- II. Purpose Of The "Discussion Meet"
- III. Who May Participate?
- IV. Awards
- V. Hints For Contestants
- VI. County "Discussion Meet"
- VII. District "Discussion Meet"
- VIII. State "Discussion Meet"
- IX. Physical Arrangements Of The "Discussion Meet"
- X. The "Discussion Meet" Itself
- XI. Topics
- XII. Application
- XIII. Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

I. WHAT IS THE "DISCUSSION MEET"?

- A. The "Discussion Meet" is a contest promoted by the Tennessee Young Farmers and Ranchers State Committee. It is designed for the participation of young farmers between the ages of 18 and 35.
- B. The contest itself involves a moderator and from 4 to 6 contestants. The moderator's responsibility is to introduce the topic and contestants and to start the discussion, keep it on track, and see that no one monopolizes the time.
- C. The four fundamental bases of general discussion are (1) cooperation, (2) constructive criticism, (3) problem solving, and (4) communication. With this in mind, the participants' responsibility is to exchange ideas and information in an effort to solve a problem. The discussion should not be "conversation" or aimless talk nor should the participant take the role of a persuasive speaker. The participant should attempt to cooperatively shed further light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position. A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader, who is free to state beliefs and change positions whenever new information and ideas make that a reasonable thing to do.
- D. Finally, this is not a panel symposium wherein each participant makes a presentation in his proper turn with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in problem solving using techniques of letting the participants loose on the subject and on each other, with the questions, answers and statements coming from any quarter at any time.
- E. Generally speaking, the discussion should follow these steps:
 - 1. Statement of problem or need.
 - 2. Explore, define, understand problem or need.
 - 3. Identify causes for 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.

II. PURPOSE OF THE "DISCUSSION MEET"

- A. To involve young farmers in analyzing their agricultural problems and deciding on solutions which best meet their needs.
- B. To provide an opportunity for greater participation on the part of young farmers in Farm Bureau.
- C. To help young farmers develop a greater command of basic discussion skills. They will acquire a better understanding of how people can think in groups for the sake of better understanding and solutions to problems.

- D. As a leadership training and self-improvement device, the "Discussion Meet" experience will:
1. Stimulate logical thinking and a desire for accurate information.
 2. Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking.
 3. Improve the ability to listen.
 4. Aid the participant to overcome timidity or stage fright.
 5. Assist the individual in the practice of giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner.
 6. Teach the value of compromise.
 7. Develop leaders for effective problem solving through group discussion.

III. **WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?**

- A. Must be a Tennessee Farm Bureau member between the ages of 18 and 35.
- B. Contestant must be sponsored by a County Farm Bureau or County Young Farmer and Rancher Committee/Club.
- C. The contestant must not have reached his/her 36th birthday by January 31, 2017.
- D. Members of the Tennessee Young Farmers and Ranchers State Committee are not eligible to participate during their tenure as a committee member.
- E. Any contestant who has received a fee or honorarium for public speaking is ineligible to compete.
- F. All previous state winners are ineligible.
- G. There is no limit to the number of contestants who can enter the District "Warm Up" and/or State Contest from any county.
- H. County, state, and American Farm Bureau employees are not eligible, this also includes affiliated companies.

IV. **AWARDS**

- A. Each contestant who participates in the **state contest** will be presented a certificate and a **\$200 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau on Sunday evening at the Awards Banquet, December 4, 2016 during the TFBF State Convention. All **contestants must attend** the Awards Banquet to receive any cash awards.
- B. Counties are urged to pay the expenses of their contestants to the district and state contests to encourage participation.
- C. The **National Winner** of the "Discussion Meet" will receive a choice of either a 2017 Chevrolet Silverado or GMC Sierra. This vehicle is yours to keep.

- D. The **State Winner** of the Discussion Meet will receive a **\$1,000 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau, a lawn mower from Massey Ferguson, a trip to the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in Phoenix, AZ on January 7-10, 2017 to compete with other state winners in the national contest, a trip to the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference, and trips to all TN YF&R conferences. They will also receive a plaque as the recipient of the Max E. Osborne Leadership Award that will be placed in the state office.
- E. The **second place winner** gets a **\$500 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau, a trip to the American Farm Bureau Convention, a trip to the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference, and trips to all TN YF&R conferences.
- F. The **final four** will receive a **\$500 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau.
- G. AFBF, TFBF and sponsors reserve the right to change awards in any competition.

V. **HINTS FOR CONTESTANTS**

- A. Study as much material as possible relating to the overall topic in addition to prepared material in folders. Sources: library, reliable web sources, magazines, Farm Bureau policies, county, state, and AFBF publications and conversations with those having knowledge of the subject.
- B. The Discussion Meet should be a conflict of ideas, but not of personalities. **Remember, this is a discussion, not a debate.**
- C. Be prepared to ask questions, state facts and opinions, and urge others to be specific.
- D. Be aware of the audience, but not to the exclusion of the panel. Speak loud enough to be heard by all of the audience.
- E. Participate whenever it will contribute to furthering the discussion without monopolizing.
- F. Make notes of key points as the discussion proceeds for use in summary statement.
- G. Use your one-minute time to organize your summary statement.
- H. Stand and make your closing statement to the audience -use accepted speech techniques - stay within time limit.
- I. Professional attire is recommended.

VI. **COUNTY MEET**

- A. Each county is encouraged to hold a county meet to provide your contestants as much experience as possible for the District "Warm Up" and State Contest. This would also be an excellent program for your August or September meeting.
- B. The County Young Farmers and Ranchers and County Farm Bureau should extend a personal invitation to all qualified young farmers in the county.
- C. Suggested sources of judges are:
County Board members or Women's Committee members
County Extension Agent or 4-H Advisor

High school Ag teachers
Co-op manager
Local radio or TV farm director
Newspaper farm editor
Bank-Farm Credit managers
Speech instructors
Local college staff people
Community or civic leaders

- D. It is **suggested** that counties hold a county meet, but it is **not mandatory** for participation in the District and State Contests.

VII. **DISTRICT MEET**

- A. A District "Warm Up" will be conducted during each Fall District YF&R Meeting.
B. It is not necessary to compete in a District "Warm Up" to be eligible to enter the state contest.

VIII. **STATE MEET**

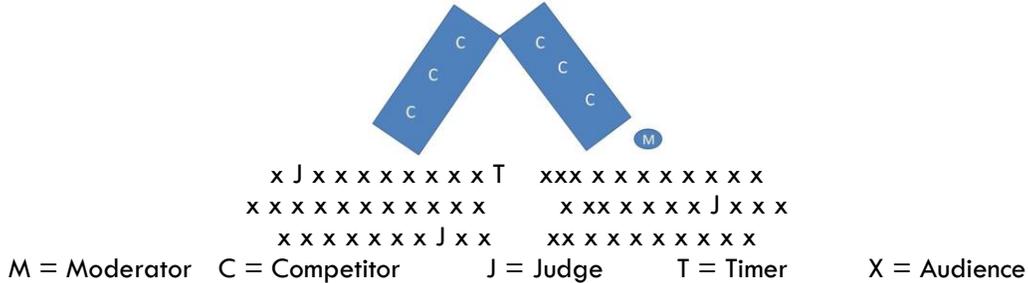
- A. The State "Discussion Meet" will be held in conjunction with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention in Franklin on December 3-6, 2016.
B. The state contest will consist of as many semifinal rounds as necessary (Sunday afternoon) and a final round (Sunday night).
C. Contestants will be placed in semifinal rounds at random.
D. The semifinal rounds may be shorter than the final round.
E. The four contestants with the highest scores will be selected from the semi-final rounds for the final round. In the event of a tie, five finalists may be selected.
F. If you plan to compete in the state contest, please complete the application in the back of this section (signed by county Farm Bureau President or Secretary) and **return to:**

Dan Strasser
Director of Special Programs
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
P.O. Box 313
Columbia, TN 38402-0313
(931) 388-7872
Fax (931) 840-8699

BY: November 15, 2016

IX. PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE "DISCUSSION MEET"

- A. The physical arrangement of the meeting room should provide for two tables at the front facing each other and the audience with moderator seated in the center of the two tables. Name cards will identify the contestants. A contestant drawing will be held just prior to the start of the meet to determine the order of seating.



The contest will include:

1. Announcement of the "Discussion Meet" rules.
2. Announcement of the topic.
3. 30 second opening statements*
4. 30 minutes of discussion.
5. One minute of silence and contestant preparation.
6. One minute closing statement*

***IN VOLUNTARY ORDER.**

X. THE "DISCUSSION MEET" ITSELF

The following is a step-by-step account of the actual procedure during the District and State Discussion Meets: (County Meet can be conducted in the same way.)

- A. All contest officials and contestants will be in the proper room at their stations at the appointed hour.
- B. The room chairman will call the meeting to order and announce the topic to be discussed and then introduce the timekeeper and moderator.
- C. The moderator will introduce the contestants and re-announce the topic to be discussed. He will call on the contestants in voluntary order to make a 30 second opening statement. **Contestants** for "Discussion Meet" **should stand** for their **opening statement**.
- D. The timekeeper will stand at 30 seconds and remain standing. Judges may subtract points at their discretion for contestants abusing the time limit.
- E. The moderator will then indicate the opportunity for open discussion, which will run for a total of 30 minutes. (25 minutes in semifinal rounds and district contests.) He will, at his discretion, give "directed discussion" by encouraging contestants to consider other aspects of the topic under consideration.
- F. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when 5 minutes of discussion remain. The moderator may close the discussion at his/her discretion if discussion is lagging.
- G. The timekeeper will indicate to moderator when a total of 30 minutes have elapsed. (25 minutes in semifinal round and district contests.)

- H. The moderator will interrupt and announce time has elapsed. The moderator will then call for a minute of quiet time allowing the contestants to consider a closing statement.
- I. The moderator will call upon the contestants in voluntary order to make a one-minute closing statement.
- J. Moderator will recognize the judges and request them to leave the room to finalize the tabulation of their score sheets. Judges will not be permitted to confer with each other prior to the completion of their tabulation.
- K. The moderator will thank the panel and ask for audience recognition of their efforts. He will then request the contestants to each discuss their personal farming programs for the benefit of the audience.
- L. The room chairman with the assistance of the timekeeper will supervise the final tabulation by the judges, and report results to the group. Judges will use a point system indicated on the score sheet to assist in selecting their winners. Each judge will be instructed to break all tie scores.
- M. The room chairman and timekeeper will rank the panel winners, based on the total scoring given by each judge; i.e., 1 point for 1st, 2 for 2nd, 3 for 3rd, 4 for 4th, and 5 for 5th. The contestants with lowest ranking scores will be judged the winners and announced to the audience.
- N. The room chairman will advise the panel winners of the next level of contest to be conducted, its location, time and next topic to be discussed.
- O. Contestants may not bring research information into any of the Discussion Meet Contest - County, District, State or National. They may have blank paper with them for the purpose of making notes during the actual meet.

**** NOTES ****

Facilitator's Roles and Responsibilities

1. Discussion Meet Chair Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Prior to orientations, determine the sequence of topics to be used for the competition.
- c) Conduct the Discussion Meet Competitor Orientation session.
 1. Make introductions.
 2. Give a brief explanation of Discussion Meet competition procedures.
 3. Distribute room assignments and locations.
 4. Allow time for questions.
 5. Announce the first round topic during orientation.
- d) Settle any and all disputes during the competition.

2. Room Chair Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Ensure all judges are present and report any changes to the moderator.
- c) Meet in the assigned room with competitors, judges, moderator and timekeeper to answer any questions they may have.
- d) Call the competition to order at the appointed time. Introduce the moderator and announce the topic to be discussed.
- e) Following the discussion, introduce and thank the judges.
- f) Escort the judges to the judges' tabulating room at the end of the competition and allow them to finish tabulating and ranking the participants. Assist with the final ranking if necessary.
- g) Ensure each competitor has been ranked in all sections of the rating sheet.
- h) Supervise tiebreakers. (see **Scoring**)

3. Moderator Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Become acquainted with the competitors.
- c) Open the competition with the following to ensure that all understand the format:
 1. Welcome the audience.
 2. Introduce the participants from left-to-right by name.
 3. Announce the topic to be discussed.
 4. Ask for the 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 the discussion at timekeeper's signal.
 7. Call for one minute of quiet time for the competitors to prepare their closing statements.
 8. Ask for the competitors to make a one-minute closing statement, in a voluntary order.
 9. Thank the competitors.
 10. Dismiss the room chair and judges for tabulation.
 11. Announce the topic for the next round (with the exception of the Final Four question).
 12. Give the competitors the opportunity to introduce themselves and share their agriculture background.
 13. Announce the time and location(s) for the next round.

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 stall, the moderator should use his/her best judgment to end the discussion when the timekeeper indicates five minutes remain in open discussion.

4. Timekeeper Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Go to your assigned competition room 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
- c) Meet with the room chair, moderator and competitors for last-minute questions.
- d) Make sure to be seated in the front row near the center.
- e) Indicate the following timing points to the moderator and competitors: Semi-finals and the Elite Eight
 - The end of each 30-second opening statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - Warning at 20 minutes of open discussion, holding the card up until all competitors have noted the warning. (Five Minutes Remaining – Yellow Card)
 - The end of 25 minutes of open discussion (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of one minute of quiet time (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of each competitor's one-minute closing statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card) Final Four
 - The end of each 30-second opening statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - Warning at 25 minutes of open discussion, holding the card up until all competitors have noted the warning. (Five Minutes Remaining – Yellow Card)
 - The end of 30 minutes of open discussion (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of one minute of quiet time (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of each competitor's one-minute closing statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card)

5. Judge Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Review the discussion topics.
- c) Review the Rating Sheet.
- d) Attend the Judge Orientation session.
- e) Go to your assigned room 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
 - Final Four judges are not permitted to attend any preceding rounds.
- f) Meet with the room chair and moderator to receive a list of competitors in your room.
- g) Remain seated until your room chair calls for you to leave the room to do the final tabulating of your score sheet.
- h) Select winners. (see **Scoring**)
- i) Judges should:
 - List competitors on your Rating Sheet from left-to-right for ease in identification.
 - Score competitors using the Rating Sheet.
 - Total the scores.
 - o There is a total of 700 possible points.
 - Determine and record competitor ranking and ensure there are no ties in raw score or rank.
 - Sign your Rating Sheet.
- j) Judges should not:
 - Sit near a fellow judge.
 - Judge by applause.
 - Confer with each other until all scores are tabulated.

2016 DISCUSSION MEET TOPICS

1. American agriculture depends on a foreign-born labor force. How would you draft a national immigration policy?
2. How can we ensure that farmers and ranchers, not government agencies, are driving the management of natural resources?
3. How can we as farmers and ranchers maintain “ownership” of our intellectual and proprietary information? (Big data, unmanned aerial vehicles, unauthorized videos)
4. The nation’s tax policy has become increasingly complicated and cumbersome. What should a balanced and beneficial tax policy look like for agriculture?
5. Today’s food companies employ many tactics to gain a marketing edge. What is the purpose of food labels? How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that consumers understand the labels and have confidence in the safety and quality of their food?

**2016 DISCUSSION MEET
INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION SHEET
(FOR STATE CONTEST)**

Contestant's Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Cell Number: () _____

Email: _____ Social Security Number _____

Sex: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth – month _____ day _____ year _____
(Must be 18 years old, and must not have reached 36th birthday by January 31, 2017)

Spouse's Name: _____

Number of Children: _____ Name(s): _____

Farm Bureau Membership Number: _____

Education/Degree: _____

**WE CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE NAMED APPLICANT HAS MET ALL THE CONTESTANT
QUALIFICATIONS AS SET OUT IN SECTION III, OF THE DISCUSSION MEET BOOKLET.**

SIGNED: _____

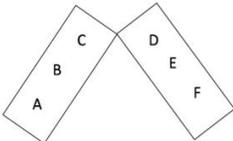
County Farm Bureau President/Secretary

Young Farmer Chairman

COUNTY

MAIL APPLICATION TO:
Dan Strasser, Director of Special Programs
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
P.O. Box 313
Columbia, TN 38402-0313
BY: November 15, 2016
Or FAX to (931) 840-8699

Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

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

Signed: _____
Room Chairman

Signed: _____
Judge

2017 COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET

**Semi-Finals
Friday, July 21, 2017
State Finals
Saturday, July 22, 2017**

**Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Columbia, Tennessee**

at the

**Young Farmers & Ranchers
Annual Conference**

**Campus Winner: \$300
Second Place: \$150
Final Four: \$100**

**State Winner: \$1,000
Second Place: \$500
Final Four: \$200**

**1st and 2nd place winners will receive a trip to the AFBF
Leadership Conference to compete nationally.**

2017 COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. General Information

II. What is the Collegiate Discussion Meet?

III. Physical Arrangements of the Collegiate Discussion Meet

IV. The Collegiate Discussion Meet Format & Procedures

V. Collegiate Discussion Meet Topics

VI. Collegiate Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. **Participating Universities -**

1. All State Universities with colleges of agriculture are eligible to participate.

B. **Time Frame -**

1. Campus competition will be conducted on college campuses during the Spring Semester (quarter).
2. State competition will be conducted during the Tennessee Farm Bureau Young Farmers Conference, July 21-22, 2017 at the Tennessee Farm Bureau Headquarters in Columbia, Tennessee.

C. **Eligibility -**

1. Participant must be between the ages of 18 and 35 and shall not have reached their 36th birthday by the last day of February 2017.
2. Participant must be an undergraduate college student at the time the participant qualifies for the national competition.
3. Each campus will select a contestant through campus competition to participate in the State Contest.
4. Previous state winners and 2nd place winners are ineligible to compete.
5. Previous campus winners not placing 1st or 2nd in the state competition are eligible to compete.

D. **Campus Competition -**

1. Tennessee Farm Bureau Field Representatives will assist each campus coordinator in conducting contest, judging, etc.
2. Each meet will consist of 4, but no more than 5 competitors in as many semi-final rounds as are necessary depending upon participation.
3. The Final Meet will consist of no more than 4 contestants.
4. Each Meet will consist of opening and closing statements by each contestant followed by 25 minutes of open discussion on 1 of the 5 topics.
5. Complete details of the competition are included in this material.

E. **Recognition & Awards -**

1. Campus awards are as follows:
 1. Campus Winner - \$300 cash award from Tennessee Farm Bureau
 2. Second Place - \$150 cash award from Tennessee Farm Bureau
 3. Final Four - \$100 cash award from Tennessee Farm Bureau
2. State Awards are as follows:
 - a. All finalists and second place winners from each campus will have expenses paid to the Tennessee Farm Bureau Young Farmers Conference, July 21-22, 2017 in Columbia, Tennessee. The State Contest will be conducted during this conference with the campus winner and second place winner from each campus.
 - b. The State Winner will receive a **\$1,000 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau, a trip to AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference for National Competition, and trips to all TN YF&R Conferences.
 - c. The Second Place Winner will receive a **\$500 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau, a trip to AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference for National Competition, and trips to all TN YF&R Conferences.
 - d. The Final Four will each receive a **\$200 cash award** from Tennessee Farm Bureau.
 - e. All **contestants must attend** the Awards Banquet on Saturday night to receive any cash awards.

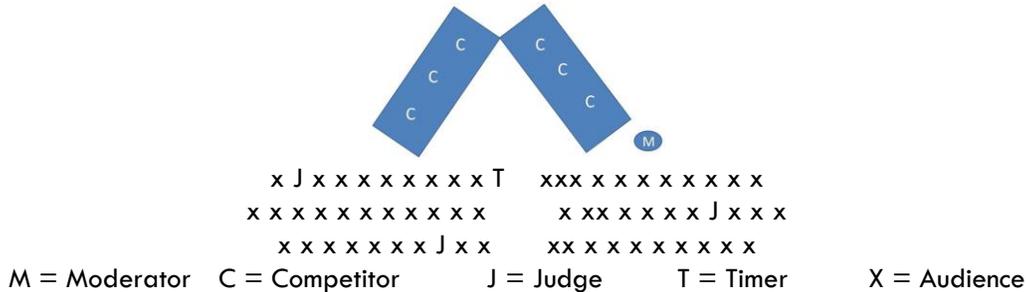
- F. **Farm Bureau Staff Assistance –**
1. UTK Jim Bell – (865) 250-4236
Kevin Hensley- (865) 719-5001
 2. UTM Matt Fennel – (731) 693-2484
 3. MTSU Adam Brown – (615) 477-1927
 4. TTU Eddie Clark – (931) 212-9054
 5. TSU Melissa Bryant – (615) 619-1009
 6. APSU Melissa Bryant – (615) 619-1009
 7. Additional Material – Dan Strasser – (931) 388-7872, ext. 2216

II. **WHAT IS THE COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET**

- A. The contest itself involves a moderator and from 4 to 5 contestants. The moderator's responsibility is to introduce the topic and contestants and to start the discussion, keep it on track, and see that no one monopolizes the time.
- B. The four fundamental bases of general discussion are (1) cooperation, (2) constructive criticism, (3) problem solving, and (4) communication. With this in mind, the participants' responsibility is to exchange ideas and information in an effort to solve a problem. The discussion should not be "conversation" or aimless talk nor should the participant take the role of a persuasive speaker. The participant should attempt to cooperatively shed further light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position. A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader, who is free to state beliefs and change positions whenever new information and ideas make that a reasonable thing to do.
- C. Finally, this is not a panel symposium wherein each participant makes a presentation in his proper turn with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in problem solving using techniques of letting the participants loose on the subject and on each other, with the questions, answers and statements coming from any quarter at any time.
- D. The Collegiate Discussion Meet is intended to be a conflict of ideas not personalities. Constructive criticism and sharing solutions is the goal, however; don't be afraid to state an opinion contrary to the other contestants. This is not a pure debate with a pro & con agenda; it is a discussion meet where cooperative discussion and solutions to problems are the goal.
- E. Generally speaking, the discussion should follow these steps:
1. Statement of problem or need.
 2. Explore, define, understand problem or need.
 3. Identify causes for problem or need.
 4. Discover all possible alternative solutions.
 5. Evaluate and compare alternatives.
 6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution.
 7. Indicate ways to implement (course of action).

III. **PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE "COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET"**

- A. The physical arrangement of the meeting room should provide for two tables at the front facing each other and the audience with moderator seated in the center of the two tables. Name cards will identify the contestants. A contestant drawing will be held just prior to the start of the meet to determine the order of seating.



- B. **The Contest will include:**
1. Announcement of the “Collegiate Discussion Meet” rules.
 2. Announcement of the topic.
 3. 30 second opening statements*
 4. 25 minutes of discussion.
 5. One minute of silence and contestant preparation.
 6. One minute closing statement*
- *IN VOLUNTARY ORDER.**

IV. **THE COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET FORMAT & PROCEDURES**

The following is a step-by-step account of the actual procedure during a meet.

- A. All contest officials and contestants will be in the proper room at their stations at the appointed hour.
- B. The room chairman will call the meeting to order and announce the topic to be discussed and then introduce the timekeeper and moderator.
- C. The moderator will introduce the contestants and re-announce the topic to be discussed. He will call on the contestants in voluntary order to make a 30 second opening statement. Contestants **should stand** for their opening statement.
- D. The timekeeper will stand at 30 seconds and remain standing. Judges may subtract points at their discretion for contestants abusing the time limit.
- E. The moderator will then indicate the opportunity for open discussion, which will run for a total of 25 minutes.
- F. The timekeeper will indicate to the moderator when 15 minutes have elapsed and the moderator will interrupt discussion to announce the remaining time and may close the discussion at his discretion if discussion is lagging.
- G. The timekeeper will indicate to moderator when a total of 25 minutes have elapsed.
- H. The moderator will call for a minute of quiet time allowing the contestants to consider a closing statement.

- I. The moderator will interrupt and announce time has elapsed. The moderator will call upon the contestants in voluntary order to make a one-minute closing statement.
- J. Moderator will recognize the judges and request them to leave the room to finalize the tabulation of their score sheets. Judges will not be permitted to confer with each other prior to the completion of their tabulation.
- K. The moderator will thank the panel and ask for audience recognition of their efforts. He will then request the contestants to each introduce themselves and discuss their farm background for the benefit of the audience.
- L. The room chairman with the assistance of the timekeeper will supervise the final tabulation by the judges, and report results to the group. Judges will use a point system indicated on the score sheet to assist in selecting their winners. Each judge will be instructed to break all ties.
- M. The room chairman and timekeeper will rank the panel winners, based on the total scoring given by each judge; i.e., 1 point for 1st, 2 for 2nd, 3 for 3rd, 4 for 4th, and 5 for 5th. The contestants with lowest ranking scores will be judged the winners and announced to the audience.
- N. The room chairman will advise the panel winners of the next level of the contest to be conducted, its location, time and next topic to be discussed.
- O. Contestants may not take any research information to the stand with them. They may have blank paper with them for the purpose of making notes during the actual meet.

****NOTES****

Facilitator's Roles and Responsibilities

1. Collegiate Discussion Meet Chair Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Prior to orientations, determine the sequence of topics to be used for the competition.
- c) Conduct the Collegiate Discussion Meet Competitor Orientation session.
 1. Make introductions.
 2. Give a brief explanation of Collegiate Discussion Meet competition procedures.
 3. Distribute room assignments and locations.
 4. Allow time for questions.
 5. Announce the first round topic during orientation.
- d) Settle any and all disputes during the competition.

2. Room Chair Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Ensure all judges are present and report any changes to the moderator.
- c) Meet in the assigned room with competitors, judges, moderator and timekeeper to answer any questions they may have.
- d) Call the competition to order at the appointed time. Introduce the moderator and announce the topic to be discussed.
- e) Following the discussion, introduce and thank the judges.
- f) Escort the judges to the judges' tabulating room at the end of the competition and allow them to finish tabulating and ranking the participants. Assist with the final ranking if necessary.
- g) Ensure each competitor has been ranked in all sections of the rating sheet.
- h) Supervise tiebreakers. (see **Scoring**)

3. Moderator Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Become acquainted with the competitors.
- c) Open the competition with the following to ensure that all understand the format:
 1. Welcome the audience.
 2. Introduce the participants from left-to-right by name.
 3. Announce the topic to be discussed.
 4. Ask for the 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 the discussion at timekeeper's signal.
 7. Call for one minute of quiet time for the competitors to prepare their closing statements.
 8. Ask for the competitors to make a one-minute closing statement, in a voluntary order.
 9. Thank the competitors.
 10. Dismiss the room chair and judges for tabulation.
 11. Announce the topic for the next round (with the exception of the Final Four question).
 12. Give the competitors the opportunity to introduce themselves and share their education and background, any personal agricultural background and future aspirations.
 13. Announce the time and location(s) for the next round.

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 stall, the moderator should use his/her best judgment to end the discussion when the timekeeper indicates five minutes remain in open discussion.

4. Timekeeper Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Go to your assigned competition room 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
- c) Meet with the room chair, moderator and competitors for last-minute questions.
- d) Make sure to be seated in the front row near the center.
- e) Indicate the following timing points to the moderator and competitors:
 - The end of each 30-second opening statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - Warning at 15 minutes of open discussion, holding the card up until all competitors have noted the warning. (Five Minutes Remaining – Yellow Card)
 - The end of 20 minutes of open discussion (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of one minute of quiet time (Time Elapsed – Red Card)
 - The end of each competitor's one-minute closing statement (Time Elapsed – Red Card)

5. Judge Duties

- a) Familiarize yourself with the YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet Manual.
- b) Review the discussion topics.
- c) Review the Rating Sheet.
- d) Attend the Judge Orientation session.
- e) Go to your assigned room 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time.
 - Final Four judges are not permitted to attend any preceding rounds.
- f) Meet with the room chair and moderator to receive a list of competitors in your room.
- g) Remain seated until your room chair calls for you to leave the room to do the final tabulating of your score sheet.
- h) Select winners. (see **Scoring**)
- i) Judges should:
 - List competitors on your Rating Sheet from left-to-right for ease in identification.
 - Score competitors using the Rating Sheet.
 - Total the scores.
 - o There is a total of 700 possible points.
 - Determine and record competitor ranking and ensure there are no ties in raw score or rank.
 - Sign your Rating Sheet.
- j) Judges should not:
 - Sit near a fellow judge.
 - Judge by applause.
 - Confer with each other until all scores are tabulated.

2017 COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET TOPICS

1. American agriculture depends on a foreign-born labor force. How would you draft a national immigration policy?

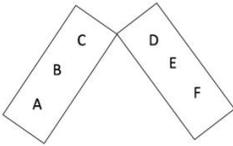
2. How can we ensure that farmers and ranchers, not government agencies, are driving the management of natural resources?

3. How can we as farmers and ranchers maintain “ownership” of our intellectual and proprietary information? (Big data, unmanned aerial vehicles, unauthorized videos)

4. The nation’s tax policy has become increasingly complicated and cumbersome. What should a balanced and beneficial tax policy look like for agriculture?

6. Today’s food companies employ many tactics to gain a marketing edge. What is the purpose of food labels? How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that consumers understand the labels and have confidence in the safety and quality of their food?

Collegiate Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

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

Signed: _____

Room Chairman

Signed: _____

Judge

TOPIC 1

American agriculture depends on a foreign-born labor force. How would you draft a national immigration policy?

Abstract:

There are a number of points to consider when developing an immigration policy. One of these is what to do with the illegal immigrants already in America. Others may include birthright citizenship, building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico, increasing the number of employees in the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, work permits, visas, and many more. The agriculture industry depends on a foreign-born labor force, so it is important to consider this when developing an immigration policy.

Summary:

The most recent National Agricultural Workers Survey revealed 78% of the U.S. agriculture workforce is foreign-born, the majority coming from Mexico. This includes workers who are working on farms with an H-2A visa, undocumented workers or workers with some other visa. With foreign-born labor making up such a large percentage of the agriculture workforce, agriculture needs to be considered when forming a new immigration policy.

The agriculture industry is known for its hard manual labor. Some believe many unemployed Americans would rather not work at all than to work on a farm. Several farmers have crops going unharvested due to lack of labor. This is why many farmers have had to reach out and hire foreign-born workers. Farmers can do this by applying for an H-2A certification, which gives them access to foreign-born workers for a timeframe of a few months ranging up to a year. Though this system is meant to be helpful, there are components many would like to see addressed. Farmers agree H-2A has a good base concept with the idea of helping farmers find legal help, but they have also voiced some concerns they would like to see fixed. Some have complained about the process of applying for help and actually receiving workers in a timely manner saying it is almost impossible. Others have expressed concern dealing with the expense of the application process then paying the workers is almost too much for an average farmer to afford, especially when you take into account housing, feeding and other expenses farmers run into once they receive the workers. It is not uncommon for farmers to lose crops while waiting to be approved and actually receiving help. Some show concern for the foreign-born workers as well. Many of them have to leave their families while they work, and if they find a farm they really like to work for they have to leave and the chances of them being assigned back to that same farm is very slim.

Another issue to consider in a new policy includes finding a better way for foreign-born employees to have permanent residence in the United States. Farmers are having a difficult time finding good, hard workers in the agriculture industry and once they find one they would like to keep them. Some believe the current system

of becoming a legal immigrant is extraneous and often too difficult to accomplish before their H-2A visa runs out. Farmers are not saying they want all illegal immigrants to have the right to stay in America, but they would like to see the system changed in a way that makes it easier for their employees to stay legally in our country.

Navigating the issue of undocumented foreign-born workers currently in the country is also a concern. There is a significant percentage of farm labor that is undocumented. Some presidential candidates suggest removing them immediately. A concern is it may cause a significant impact on our country's agriculture production therefore affecting our economy. If all undocumented farm workers were immediately removed, we would have crops go unharvested, cows not getting milked and much more. Economists predict we would then see the price of agriculture products increase due to lack of supply. Alternative options proposed by other candidates include giving them a time period to go through the correct steps in order to become documented.

America cannot afford to loose up to 80% of its agriculture workforce, so it is crucial that the necessary steps are taken to create an immigration policy with the agriculture industry in mind.

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

Immigration:

We appreciate the desire of people throughout the world to migrate to the United States of America. Our nation and our economy cannot absorb, without disruption, all the people of the world who would like to come here. America should not accept the criminals of other nations. Amnesty should not be granted to illegal aliens. Nor should amnesty or citizenship be granted for legal or illegal workers in the U.S. based upon hours of employment.

The first priority of immigration policy and enforcement must be to protect the national security of the United States. The flow of illegal immigrants into the United States must be stopped.

The second priority of immigration policy must be to find ways to encourage illegal immigrants to return to their home country, but have a system in place where they can legally return, if they qualify, to fill U.S. jobs for which we do not have a willing, sufficient labor force.

We oppose sanctions on employers as long as the employer makes a reasonable attempt to hire only legal workers. We support a reasonable guest worker program. Employers should not be forced to conduct unreasonable investigations of potential employees or maintain excessive employee records or documents.

The wage rate for H-2A employees is too high and continues to increase. Farmers pay housing, transportation, utilities, and worker's compensation, which are becoming more expensive, when actually, the price of crops vary with market forces.

The adverse effect wage rate (AEWR) should be frozen or even reduced until a more reasonable formula is developed. The rate should be more in accordance with either the prevailing wage or minimum wage.

Working hour arrangements for “seasonal immigrant” and H-2A workers should be decided between the employer and the worker. Seasonal work hours should not be mandated by the Department of Labor. Agricultural work must go on as nature dictates, sometimes even on holidays.

The survey process conducted by the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, is not portraying a fair pay for the skill level required for a particular agricultural job.

Farmers are subject to many unreasonable labor and housing regulations of which no other segment of society is subject. Farmers who employ migrant and seasonal workers should be held to no higher level of accountability than any other industry.

We oppose government legal funding for non-citizen workers against American farmers. We urge UT Extension to partner with local adult education programs in developing training to assist farmers with communication skills needed when employing non-English speaking workers. Recognizing good communication among people is necessary for a unified country and economic success of those people, we urge the U.S. Congress to pass a law establishing English as the official national language.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 135: Farm Labor
Policy 136: General Labor
Policy 137: Immigration

Resources

I am Immigration- Get the Facts

<http://www.iamimmigration.org/index.html#/get-facts>

American Farm Bureau Immigration

<http://www.fb.org/issues/immigration/>

Hiring Foreign Workers

<https://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/hiring.cfm>

Farm Labor

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-labor/background.aspx>

What is E-Verify?

<https://www.uscis.gov/e-verify/what-e-verify>

Temporary (Nonimmigrant) Workers

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-nonimmigrant-workers>

Employment Authorization Document

<https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/employment-authorization-document>

Taxation of Nonresident Aliens

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxation-of-nonresident-aliens>

Prescription for a Sovereign America

<https://www.bencarson.com/issues/immigration/>

Cruz Immigration Plan

<https://www.tedcruz.org/cruz-immigration-plan/>

Immigration Reform That Will Make America Great Again

<https://www.donaldjtrump.com/positions/immigration-reform>

Immigration Reform

<https://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/immigration-reform/>

TOPIC 2

How can we ensure that farmers and ranchers, not government agencies, are driving the management of natural resources?

Abstract:

Conservation of the environment and the species that live within it is a hot topic among both farmers and the general public. Disagreements on how endangered species and land should be managed is a battle farmers are constantly facing. This differentiating opinion causes strife among environmental agencies and government actions which attempt to micromanage the land farmers use to provide food and fiber for consumers.

Summary:

The environmental battle the agriculture industry faces has many fronts. Two essential natural resources used in the agriculture industry are water and land. Water is used to irrigate crops and hydrate livestock, while land is used for crop production and grazing livestock. Government agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regulate these resources. Policies like the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule and the Endangered Species Act have altered how farmers can live off and produce goods on their own land.

Currently, 440 federal agencies have the authority to propose and enforce regulations in a specific area of expertise. Two types of federal agencies exist: agencies within the executive branch or those which are independent regulatory commissions. Agencies within the executive branch, like the Department of Agriculture and EPA have administrators who are appointed by the President. Under Article I, Congress holds the authority "to make all laws." Congress often delegates this right to federal agencies; the agencies are directed and supervised by Congress. Throughout the rule making process, federal agencies align their specific priorities with research to ensure their mission as an agency is accomplished. The Administrative Procedure Act (APA) established that agencies must publish their provisions through the Federal Register. Once the proposed rule is ready, it will be reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), published and made open to the public for at least 60 days for comments. Under the Congressional Review Act, Congress must review the final rule before it can take effect. If adopted, the rule is enforced by the respective regulatory agency.

Recently, EPA pushed for the adoption of the WOTUS rule. This rule changes how navigable waters are defined in the United States and broadens EPA's control over standing water, even on privately owned farmlands. These "waters" which EPA will gain control over can range from natural lakes, ponds and rivers to small tributaries and even ditches. EPA defines a tributary as "a bed, bank or land that contains an ordinary high watermark (OHWM)." This broad definition puts farmers in a tight spot, especially if there is a small area in their fields where water stands

after a long rain – this area of land too is subject to EPA regulation. WOTUS grants EPA employees access to the materials they need in order to determine what waters are considered navigable; this technology however, will in no way be made public knowledge and will in turn limit farmers who could make production changes before EPA charges them with a federal offense. Permits will be required for farmers to continue using the land and the waterways EPA will regulate under its new ruling.

Most farmers realize the importance of conserving and properly managing waterways on their farms. Farmers use technology like genetically modified crops, precision agriculture, GPS and crop sensors to ensure they are applying pesticides and herbicides to the crops in an accurate and efficient manner. These precautions farmers take help to reduce runoff into waterways. Farmers also have a waste management system in place in order to limit the runoff from their livestock operations.

In addition to the regulation of water, the government under BLM heavily regulates land. Created in 1812, the Office of Land Management (OLM) was founded to regulate and protect the land and its natural inhabitants. Later in 1946, Grazing Services merged with OLM to become what is now known as BLM. In the Western United States, BLM monitors grazing by leasing farmers permits to graze their livestock on federal lands. The twelve western states where most BLM land is found includes: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Currently BLM regulates 640 million acres of federal lands; the United States Government owns 47% of land in the West.

Under the Federal Land Management and Protection Act of 1976, BLM manages public land for multiple uses, including: recreation, historical and cultural resources, energy development and conservation. In western states where BLM regulates most of the land, farmers are required to purchase permits in order to graze any livestock on the public lands. Some of these lands are protected due to the dwelling of endangered species, which are protected by the Endangered Species Act, while other land is federally protected for conservation purposes.

Conserving the environment is vital to the success and future of the agriculture industry. Currently, federal regulatory agencies have the ability to create and edit rules and regulations as well as enforce them. This ability can be hindered when dealing with agriculture, especially if the agency leaders are far removed from the industry itself. Since regulatory agency officials are not elected like Congress, it is hard to ensure that their actions reflect the desires of the people. This also limits communication between the agency responsible for the regulation and those who are directly impacted.

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

Government Regulations:

Excessive government regulations strangle the productive capacity of our nation and waste our resources. Government agencies often make rules and regulations by administrative decree. Unfortunately, regulations by different agencies of government frequently conflict. All rules published in the Federal Register should undergo Congressional review and approval before final implementation. Too often elected representatives relinquish their decision making responsibilities to regulators or designated boards.

The Legislature should more closely monitor the actions of boards and regulators to determine if the intent of the legislature is being accomplished.

Regulations proposed by any agency should show both the cost and the benefits of the regulations to our economy. Regulations among government agencies must be developed jointly to prevent contradictory requirements.

As regulatory agencies become more involved in controlling agricultural production practices, Farm Bureau should insist on a fair representation of agricultural production and land ownership. We encourage better communication among regulators and producers.

Regulations depriving citizens of their constitutional rights must provide appropriate compensation.

The cost of regulations placed on production agriculture for the benefits of society should be reimbursed to producers. As opposed to most other businesses, producers cannot readily pass on to consumers the cost of these regulations.

Water (Partial):

The regulatory reach of “waters of the state” is greater than “waters of the United States.” Truly navigable waters should be protected in order to ensure water quality. However, the definition of “waters” in Tennessee law needs to provide a regulatory exception for surface waters which are not “navigable waters” as defined in the federal Clean Water Act. This would provide consistency between state and federal law and assure that Tennessee will not lose its primacy or delegation under the Clean Water Act. It also would eliminate much of the guesswork and permitting that property owners currently must go through. Jurisdictional waters by the Federal government should be constrained to navigable waterways. Expansion of regulatory authority by the state or federal agencies without approval by the appropriate lawmakers should be strictly prohibited and swiftly enforced by the judicial branch.

Groundwater quality should be protected by regulation if, and only if, adequate monitoring shows the necessity of such regulation. We recommend utilities with pumping stations for raw sewage have a holding pond capable of holding 24 hours of output in case of a pump failure. This should be accomplished to keep raw sewage out of our drinking water.

State and federal agencies should respond to farmers and provide the same swift attention to contamination of groundwater used in agricultural production as to contamination of groundwater for human use.

Endangered Species Act:

We recognize the intent of the Endangered Species Act, but we do not believe protection of these species should always receive priority.

Congress must assess whether the highest priority for the public's interest is the protection of certain endangered species or the continued efficient production of food, fiber or the protection of human life.

The Endangered Species Act does not confirm the accuracy of research reports when determining if a species is threatened, endangered or extinct (i.e., the spotted owl). If government accepts the responsibility of protecting endangered species, it must also show impacted citizens its facts are current and accurate. If populations of species become extinct, show no progress toward recovery within five years or grow to be no longer endangered, government restrictions of agricultural or other activities in the area should cease.

Landowners whose farming activities are affected because their land is considered habitat for an endangered species should be compensated for loss of livestock or any additional cost incurred by farmers as a direct result of the reintroduction of a species (i.e., birthing pens).

Public hearings with a minimum of a nine-months public notice should be held before any species is listed as endangered or threatened. We request a public hearing before any new species are introduced or reintroduced into an area.

Listing decisions should consider populations of the species in other countries. A species that is thriving in another country should not be listed in the United States.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 110: Regulatory Review and Reform
Policy 510: General Management (of Federal Lands)
Policy 511: Livestock Grazing
Policy 537: Private Property Rights
Policy 547: Water Quality
Policy 549: Waterways
Policy 566: Endangered and Threatened Species

Resources:

Obama Plans New Rule to Limit Water Pollution

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/23/us/politics/obama-set-to-strengthen-federal-role-in-clean-water-regulation.html?_r=2

AFBF Ditch The Rule Campaign

<http://ditchtherule.fb.org>

AFBF Fact or Fiction

<http://ditchtherule.fb.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/FACT-or-FICTION.pdf>

Beyond the Fencerows: Tide beginning to turn on EPA

http://fbnews.fb.org/FBNews/Viewpoint/Beyond_the_Fencerows_Tide_beginning_to_turn_on_EPA.aspx

TFBF WOTUS Analysis

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/wotus>

Chesapeake Bay and EPA Disagreement

http://www.fb.org/newsroom/news_article/432/

AFBF Clean Water Act Policy Analysis

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/watersofus16.pdf>

EPA Clean Water Rule

<https://www.epa.gov/cleanwaterrule>

EPA Ditch the Myth Campaign

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-07/documents/ditch_the_myth_wotus.pdf

AFBF Endangered Species Act Policy Analysis

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/esa16.pdf>

Agriculture's Role in Protecting Endangered Species

<http://westernfarmpress.com/management/agriculture-plays-vital-role-protecting-endangered-species>

Endangered Species Act and Pesticide Use

<http://191hmt1pr08amfg62276etw2.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Endangered-Species-Act-White-Paper.pdf>
<http://www.blm.gov/flpma/FLPMA.pdf>

Bureau of Land Management

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/About_BLM.html

Regulations and Rulemaking

<http://www.reginfo.gov/public/jsp/Utilities/faq.jsp>

Congressional Review Act

https://www.senate.gov/CRSReports/crs-publish.cfm?pid=%270E%2C*P%5C_%3D%22P%20%20%0A

TOPIC 3

How can we as farmers and ranchers maintain “ownership” of our intellectual and proprietary information? (Big data, unmanned aerial vehicles, unauthorized videos)

Abstract:

Agriculture is an ever-changing industry that is adopting new technology all the time. New technology can be either helpful or harmful to farmers and ranchers. It brings about more data that needs to be protected as well as new ways for farmers' privacy to be threatened. Much difficulty comes from protecting intellectual data and the increasing threat of unauthorized media capturing information on private property. Farmers have every right to be concerned for their privacy.

Summary:

Many modern farming practices rely on the most up-to-date technology. Big data is one example of how today's farmer is making technological advancements. As a farmer harvests his or her crop, yield monitors keep track of data which is eventually imported to a cloud. Similar data exists for planting and fertilizing. Farmers want to make certain the private data coming from their individual farm does not fall into the wrong hands. Big data is just one example of information farmers may want to keep private. Farmers are concerned with who may have access to the data from their farm, where it goes, if they have to pay to access it, and what could happen if the wrong person is given access.

While it is fairly easy to protect property that is tangible, intellectual property becomes much more difficult to keep private and regulate. When it comes to data, farmers may be able to classify it as a trade secret to protect their valuable information. All but two states have adopted the Uniform Trade Secret Act, which says information can be considered a trade secret. This act can be used to protect data that has value because it has not been disclosed.

With new technology comes new ways technology can be used against farmers. For instance, unauthorized videos taken on farmers' property can be used against them by those who oppose farming practices as “cruel” or “inhumane” even if that is not the case. We have all seen videos online that have been taken out of context and play on the emotions of people who are uninformed. Such videos can be extremely harmful to a farmer.

The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), also referred to as drones, is also raising questions for those in the agriculture community. A common question is whether or not the airspace above your property is actually yours. Farmers may not want others to have the legal ability to fly UAVs above their land. The use of UAVs is highly regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration. Tennessee law regulates UAV use and surveillance on or over private properties.

It allows the use of UAVs with consent of a person who legally operates private property and is operating within FAA guidelines. The law specifies other instances which it is lawful to capture an image or other information with an unmanned aircraft, including scholarly research, mapping, for public protection or wellbeing, and military operations. Farm Bureau supported the 2014 legislation because of the technology's expected relevance in agriculture and because it extends private property rights to the unregulated airspace above ground (0-400 ft.).

Agriculture is in the midst of a new age, one that brings into play different types of technology which can make sweeping improvements to the way food is produced. As with most advancements, parameters need to be placed around their use and adoption. Just as technological advancements have an unquantifiable upside in agriculture, they can also be dangerous if certain new questions they present are not addressed.

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

Property Rights (Partial):

Any erosion of private property rights weakens all other rights guaranteed to individuals by the Constitution. We oppose any legislation allowing access to or through private property without permission of the property owner or authorized agent. New technology expands the boundaries of property rights infringement. State and federal laws should evolve with these technological advancements to maintain the traditional concepts of private property rights. All state and federal regulations encroaching on the rights of private property owners should be reviewed and altered. The Presidential Executive Order 12630 regarding the protection of private property rights should be made law.

Law and Order (Partial):

Laws protecting private and public property rights must be strictly enforced.

Gun Control (Partial):

Private property rights are a bedrock principle to our freedom and prosperity. We are strong advocates of well-defined and enforced private property rights. No law should erode or allow landowners rights to fade to the background.

Animal Welfare (Partial):

Modern livestock production techniques supply generous amounts of high quality food for consumers. These same practices have also instituted the highest degree of animal care in the history of livestock production. No other element of society, including any animal rights group, has more compassion or concern for livestock than does the farmer. However, we do not believe in the humanizing of animals. Man and animals do not exist with the same basic rights. There are theological, scientific and philosophical arguments for why man cares for animals so they may serve him. Man has a moral obligation to avoid cruelty in dealing with animals in all situations. All farmers and animal owners should follow the best practical animal

care practices. Farmers are responsible in their treatment and care of livestock. We support the Tennessee animal cruelty law and aggravated animal cruelty law as written and the enforcement of these statutes. Animal rights organizations should not be given authority to establish standards for the raising, handling, feeding, housing or transporting of livestock and poultry. Making accurate decisions regarding claims of animal cruelty is often a very difficult determination. Breaking into a farm, animal research facility or any other agricultural facility to steal animals, vandalize, or disrupt the activities of the facility is a crime. Those guilty should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 308 Animal ID
Policy 536 Private Property
Policy 537 Proprietary Data

Resources:

Economic Issues in Agricultural Data Webinar

<https://vimeo.com/157750276>

Legal Issues in Ag Data Webinar

<http://go.umd.edu/LegalAgData>

How Big Data is Going to Help Feed 9 Billion People by 2050

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/how-big-data-is-going-to-help-feed-9-billion-people-by-2050/>

What is Big Data? How 8 Companies are Approaching it

<https://agfundernews.com/what-is-ag-big-data5041.html>

What are the key issues for UAV use in agriculture?

<http://deltafarmpress.com/equipment/what-are-key-issues-uav-use-agriculture>

Unmanned Aircraft Systems

<https://www.faa.gov/uas/>

Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems

<http://www.auvsi.org/home>

Drones in Agriculture

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Drones-in-Agricultue-Final-PD.pdf>

Privacy Versus Right to Know

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Privacy-versus-right-to-know.pdf>

Ag-Gag Legislation by State (opposition)

<http://www.aspca.org/animal-protection/public-policy/ag-gag-legislation-state>

Livestock Protection Policy Act

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Drones-in-Agricultue-Final-PD.pdf>

TOPIC 4

The nation's tax policy has become increasingly complicated and cumbersome. What should a balanced and beneficial tax policy look like for agriculture?

Abstract:

Federal tax policy impacts the well-being of farmers and the sustainability of farming operations. Farmers need reliability with a consistent and understandable tax policy that can be administered and complied with efficiently.

Summary:

Agriculture is our most important industry, but it's an industry that operates under a whirlwind of uncertainty. With volatile commodity markets, fluctuating input prices, unpredictable weather, and invasive pests, being a farmer presents obstacles under the best circumstances. Therefore, farmers desperately need a tax policy that recognizes this uncertainty and accounts for the challenges producers' experience.

The tax code is an influencer when making operating decisions. Rural households have lower incomes and are more likely to live in poverty, and the tax code plays a role in determining eligibility for Federal program payments. In 2010, the average adjusted gross income (AGI) reported by farm sole proprietors was nearly 50% higher than the average for all taxpayers. Consequently, rural households are more likely to be affected by limits on itemized deductions than by changes to tax credits targeting low-income taxpayers. Those operating larger farming operations are more likely to be sensitive to business investment-related tax provisions while smaller operations generally mirror other above-average income households. Farmers' need reduced rates low enough to account for any deductions/credits lost.

Another concern of farmers is how the tax system addresses estate and land management. It is common for farmers to pass on their business to their heirs. Through Congressional action, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has the ability to complete this action. Over the years, provisions have been made to reduce the estate tax liability by including a rule which allows farm assets to be valued at their farm-use value rather than a higher market value. However, there still is concern in regards to exemption, inflation and portability between spouses. Full-unlimited stepped-up basis at death is included in the system, but the option of unlimited current use valuation for estate tax purposes remains missing.

Many of the assets farmers obtain are eligible for capital gains taxes. For instance, raising cattle for breeding purposes is considered a gain property for tax purposes. In 2010, about 38% of U.S. farms reported income in the form of capital gains to be nearly three times the share for all other taxpayers. To add to the burden, the

average amount of capital gain reported by farmers was also more than double the average capital gain of other taxpayers. Lawmakers must consider this when discussing proposed reform in order to protect farmers from having a large sum of their income being withdrawn as result of their investments.

Cost recovery is important for farmers to consider because of how precarious agriculture is today. Farmers generally expense production supplies and preparation costs immediately because of the high input costs farming presents. A tool farmers prefer to utilize for this is cash accounting. It provides farmers with the flexibility they need to optimize cash flow, plan for purchases and manage taxes. It is an easy method for farmers to keep track of when income is received and when expenses are paid. Reform needs to account for these factors and ensure farmers have the ability to continue deducting expenses when incurred and maintain the cash basis of accounting for income tax purposes.

Farmers have many tasks they and their families must complete in order to generate profit. The tax compliance burden farmers must go through yearly is inefficient, inequitable and inhibits full production potential. Legislation needs to reduce complexity and perhaps make the process more efficient for farmers. Moving forward, it is important for farmers to receive this tax reform because of the substantial impact it has on production, management and investment decisions on the farm.

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

Federal Income Tax:

Due to the importance of agriculture and small businesses to our economy, our tax structure should include income averaging, investment tax credits, rapid depreciation of buildings and equipment, and special treatment of long-term capital gains.

We applaud Congress for allowing states such as Tennessee that do not have a state income tax, to give individuals the option to deduct sales taxes paid from their federal income tax. This provision expired after 2013. It should be extended and made permanent.

Tax reform must not be used as a tool to increase taxes. We oppose all efforts to raise tax rates. Our taxing system must provide farmers with the tools to manage through the volatilities of unpredictable weather and markets. The cash accounting method is used by most farmers because it allows for a simplified record keeping system and provides the flexibility to manage their tax burden by reporting income when products are actually sold and expenses when paid. The use of cash accounting should continue to be allowed for all farmers. We encourage farmers to thoroughly study new tax proposals, including the Fair Tax, and encourage Farm Bureau staff to thoroughly investigate and educate our membership on these proposals.

State and Local Taxes (Partial):

The Tennessee Legislature has a responsibility to adequately fund education, law enforcement and other primary roles of state government. For these services, all citizens should be responsible for paying some direct taxes to support government. The tax system funding these programs should be structured to ensure it contributes to maximum efficiency and economy in government. True tax reform should be revenue neutral. Increased funding for state government should be a separate legislative action that clearly indicates the changing spending priorities.

Estate Tax:

Estate taxation stifles the desire to save through asset accumulation. It erodes the incentive for new entry of capital into the economy. Increased exemptions and exclusions in the federal estate tax laws have brought much needed relief to farm families. Before these changes, estate taxes were a heavy financial burden. Congress established a permanent estate tax exemption. The top rate is 40% with an exemption amount of \$5 million per individual (indexed for inflation after 2011).

We oppose any efforts to lower exemptions in estate or inheritance taxes. We support permanent repeal of the federal estate tax. Until a permanent repeal of the federal estate tax is achieved, agricultural lands should be allowed to pass to farming heirs completely exempt from estate taxes and the exemption should be increased to \$10 million and indexed to inflation.

Stepped-up basis is particularly important as farmland is transferred from one generation to the next. We are pleased this law does not have a limitation on the stepped-up basis on inherited assets.

Capital gains tax applied on the appreciated value of inherited property has been suggested as one means of easing the federal deficit. This new tax would cause financial hardship for farm families and would hasten the breakup of viable farms into smaller, unproductive parcels.

American Farm Bureau Policy Numbers:

Policy 438: Tax Reform

Policy 439: Taxation

Resources:

Farm Bureau details tax reform priorities for Senate Finance Committee

<http://fbnews.fb.org/Templates/Article.aspx?id=40265>

Agriculture and Tax Reform

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/taxes-reform16.pdf>

Publication 225: Farmer's Tax Guide

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf>

Agriculture, the Tax Code, and Potential Tax Reform

<http://www.choicesmagazine.org/choices-magazine/theme-articles/transitions-in-agriculture/agriculture-the-tax-code-and-potential-tax-reform>

Federal Income Tax Reform and the Potential Effects on Farm Households

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2013-february/federal-income-tax-reform-and-the-potential-effects-on-farm-households.aspx#.V3KFL-vnfww>

The Potential Impact of Tax Reform on Farm Businesses and Rural Households

http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/997007/eib107_summary.pdf

How Would Fundamental Tax Reform Affect Farmers?

http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/479413/aib751-01_1_.pdf

Federal Tax Issues

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/federal-tax-issues.aspx>

Farm and Rural Tax Policy

http://www.usda.gov/documents/FARM_AND_RURAL_TAX_POLICY.pdf

TOPIC 5

Today's food companies employ many tactics to gain a marketing edge. What is the purpose of food labels? How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that consumers understand the labels and have confidence in the safety and quality of their food?

Abstract:

Consumers deserve to have confidence their food is safe and wholesome. Food labels began with the intent to provide accurate, but basic information to guide consumers in making food choices. However, the labels have transformed into a misleading marketing tool against consumers and have in turn, hurt the credibility of farmers in providing safe and high-quality food ingredients.

Summary:

In 1913, nutrition facts began appearing on food products to fulfill one purpose: to protect the consumer. The labels, much simpler then, required all food manufacturers to list the ingredients on the package. In 1990, this labeling concept was expanded and the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990 was adopted, requiring food manufacturers to provide all nutrient information on food packages. Today, as result of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, people refer to labels instead to make decisions about healthy eating.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), within the Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees most of the government's food and safety regulatory system. FDA is responsible for regulating all domestic and imported food products except for most meat and poultry derived from the major animal species. FSIS regulates the safety, wholeness and proper labeling of most domestic and imported meat and poultry.

Within the food industry, the issue of labeling is challenging, divisive and confusing. Labeling of food products does not appear significant at first glance, but involves much more than putting fine print on packages. It impacts our economy. Recently, the issue became worse due to attempts to pass state and local laws requiring labels on food with ingredients engineered with biotechnology, regardless of the actual science behind the food product. In 2014, the state of Vermont enacted a law which requires mandatory labeling on food products containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Lawmakers believed Vermont residents were concerned about the increased use of certain herbicides and seed trespass. However, according to many studies including one from the National Academies of Science, GMOs are safe for human consumption and have not caused increases in health issues. They are designed to increase resistance against diseases and insects while decreasing the need for herbicides and pesticides. In

addition to being safe to eat, GMOs are drought resistant and greatly improve water usage efficiency.

Although the law only regulates food sold in the state of Vermont, it creates a problem nationwide. This labeling will force food companies to reformulate their labels and shipping logistics, which will increase the cost of production all the way back to the farmer. Manufacturers cannot label products for only one state without driving up costs significantly for consumers; therefore, several companies are being forced to revise labels on all of their packages nationwide. The cost to producers will be substantial because thousands of products will have to be re-labeled. The worry for producers and consumers is that Vermont will not be the only state to pass such laws.

The difference in voluntary and mandatory labeling laws is significant. Voluntary is simply an outlet for marketing to consumers. Mandatory labeling, on the other hand, requires labels on all food products containing GM ingredients. This could mean which ingredient is genetically modified or what percentage of that particular ingredient is in the product. This might be easily identifiable to consumers, but the problem is the lack of understanding in regards to the term genetically modified. These products are already in the market place for consumers who prefer non-GMO therefore mandatory labeling is not needed.

To preempt the Vermont law, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act has been introduced in the U.S. House and Senate and would prevent individual states from passing legislation requiring mandatory labeling of GMO products. This bill ensures the FDA has the authority to determine under what conditions a food may carry a GM label, establishes national standards relating to GMO labeling, and preempts any state or local labeling requirements. This bill passed in the House but did not receive enough votes in the Senate to go through in 2015.

The compromise legislation Congress is considering would require all food manufacturers to disclose any genetically modified ingredients in their products. However, companies could place a label on the package or they could offer a digital QR code consumers can scan to receive ingredient information. Smaller companies will have the option of including a phone number or URL on the package for consumers to access. The bill does not require labeling for animals raised on GM feed and also excludes foods served in restaurants. Pro-labeling groups believe QR codes will be too easily ignored while opponents of labeling argue this issue is erroneous, given the ample science showing the safety of GM foods.

American consumers deserve to know where their food comes from and to have confidence in the safety and science behind all food production. They also deserve to know America's farmers are committed to contributing to a safe, affordable food supply for consumers. Labeling mandates take away this needed confidence and create consumer confusion.

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

The United States food supply is the safest, highest quality, most abundant and most affordable in the world. Farmers recognize a safe food supply is important to the integrity of the agricultural industry but most importantly to the well-being and health of the consumer.

Integrity in food labeling is a vital element in maintaining food safety. Food labeling requirements should remain a function of the federal government. We oppose separate state level labeling requirements of foods sold through interstate commerce. We support consumer friendly, science based labeling of agricultural products providing consumers with useful information concerning the ingredients, nutritional value and country of origin. Labels should not be required to contain information on production practices not affecting nutrition or safety of the product.

Agricultural products produced using approved biotechnology such as GMO, GE, etc. should not be required to designate individual inputs or specific technologies on the product label. We oppose misleading labeling statements such as “bST Free Milk” implying food produced using certain production practices is superior and safer than food using other approved production practices.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 337: Biotechnology
Policy 339: Food Quality and Safety
Policy 342: Labeling

Resources:

Food Safety and Labeling

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/foodsafety16.pdf>

Vermont's GMO labeling law may become the norm

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/vermonts-gmo-labeling-law-may-become-the-norm/article/2588527>

Academies of Science finds GMOs not harmful to human health

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2016/05/17/gmos-safe-academies-of-science-report-genetically-modified-food/84458872/>

Vermont's GMO Labeling Law: A Farmers Perspective

<http://www.biotech-now.org/food-and-agriculture/2016/03/vermonts-gmo-labeling-law-a-farmers-perspective>

Sound Science and Access to Biotechnology

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/biotech16.pdf>

What is the Purpose of Nutrition Labels?

<http://healthyeating.sfgate.com/purpose-nutrition-labels-6432.html>

Congress to Consider GMO Labeling Bill

http://www.foodbusinessnews.net/articles/news_home/Regulatory_News/2014/04/Congress_to_consider_GMO_label.aspx?ID=%7B9A02302E-4FB2-4E65-8CF9-06E940CC0592%7D&cck=1

Mandatory GMO Labeling: Pros and Cons

<https://www.tracegains.com/blog/mandatory-gmo-labeling-pros-and-cons>

Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act Sets National Standards for Biotech Labeling

<http://www.fb.org/newsroom/focus/197/>

Senate sends GMO labeling bill to the House

<http://www.agri-pulse.com/Video-Washington-Week-in-Review-July-8-2016-Senate-sends-GMO-labeling-bill-to-the-House-07082016.asp>

The controversial GMO labeling bill that just passed the Senate, explained

<http://www.vox.com/2016/7/7/12111346/gmo-labeling-bill-congress>



JANUARY 6-11, 2017

AFBF ANNUAL CONVENTION & IDEAg TRADE SHOW

98th AFBF Annual Convention • January 6 – 11, 2017 • Phoenix, AZ

Tennessee's 1st and 2nd place Discussion Meet winners and their spouses will receive a trip to the AFBF Convention, including Tennessee Farm Bureau's tours. We will be departing on January 6th and returning on January 14th.



Friday, February 10 - 14, 2017

Tennessee's 1st and 2nd place winners in the collegiate discussion meet will receive a trip to the Fusion Conference in Pittsburg, departing on February 10th and returning on February 14th.

The YF&R Fusion Conference is a learning and networking opportunity for Farm Bureau's young farmers and ranchers to increase their knowledge about leadership development skills, agricultural issues and network with other young farmers and ranchers. The collegiate discussion meet is conducted during this meeting.