



TENNESSEE FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

October 1, 2019

**TO: County YF&R Chairmen & Secretaries
County Farm Bureau Secretaries**

RE: DISCUSSION MEET CONTEST

Dear Friends:

The Tennessee Farm Bureau has sponsored the Young Farmers and Ranchers Discussion Meet for several years. Detailed information about the "Discussion Meet" on the county, district, state, and national level are included in Section IV of the YF&R Reference Handbook which is posted on the YF&R Website. We also have a Discussion Meet **Information Guide** with background information on all five topics which is available and can be emailed to you. Attached is a list of the 2019 Discussion Meet topics.

We encourage you to work with your Farm Bureau Board of Directors in sponsoring a County "Discussion Meet" and/or select participants from your county to enter the State Contest. The State Contest will be held during the TFBBF State Convention in Franklin at the Cool Springs Embassy Suites on **Saturday and Sunday, December 7-8, 2019.**

Participants in the Discussion Meet are **not limited** to counties with active YF&R groups. There is no limit to the number of participants that may enter the State Contest from a county. Also, remember that **previous state winners are ineligible** to compete. **Participants are required to be Farm Bureau members, and the county Farm Bureau president must sign the application.**

We are pleased to announce that this year's **state winner** will receive a John Deere Ztrak Mower from TriGreen Equipment and \$1,500 cash award from Tennessee Farm Bureau. In addition, the State Discussion Meet winner will win trips to the AFBF National Convention in Austin, TX on January 17-22, 2020, AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference on March 13-17, 2020 in Louisville, KY, and all Tennessee YF&R Conferences. **Each qualified contestant** will receive a \$200 cash award from TFBBF. The **final four** will each receive a \$500 cash award from TFBBF. The **second-place winner** will receive an additional \$750 cash award from TFBBF, trips to the AFBF National Convention, AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference, and all Tennessee YF&R Conferences. The National Discussion Meet winner will receive a **2020 truck** to keep. **All contestants must be present at the YF&R Dinner** to receive cash awards. The Young Farmer State Recognition and Awards will be presented at The Farm Bureau Leadership Recognition Program at the Marriott Hotel beginning at 7:00 p.m. **All state winners must be present at the Recognition Program to receive cash awards.**

Your entry form **must be postmarked or received in our office no later than November 15, 2019** to be in the state contest and to receive the \$200 cash award. An application is posted on the Farm Bureau Website at www.tnyfr.org.

If you have any questions, please let us know.

2019 DISCUSSION MEET TOPICS

1. How can Farm Bureau build upon collaborative relationships such as Farm Town Strong to combat nationwide crises such as opioid dependence/addiction and mental health issues?
2. Products like cell-based food products have demonstrated the food system is rapidly changing. How can future food technologies and related products be beneficially integrated into modern agricultural production without hampering the success of traditional products and the farmers and ranchers who grow them?
3. The customer is always right. How do farmers and ranchers think and respond, through the lens of consumer priorities and marketing trends, to build common values and confidence in modern production methods to build consumer acceptance?
4. With abundant productivity, farmers are in need of new markets, including outside traditional food and feed channels. How do we develop, invest and commercialize to innovate new uses of agricultural products and by-products to benefit all of agriculture?
5. The 21st-century agricultural economy is threatened by labor shortages. Without a clear solution for accessing foreign guest workers as a component of immigration reform coming from Congress, what are some creative and legal ways for agriculture to address the labor needs of a modern production system?