

Valencia County Agricultural Prepared Speech Contest Rules

For 4-H or FFA Members (Ages 9–18)

Purpose

The Agricultural Prepared Speech Contest is designed to develop communication, leadership, and public speaking skills while increasing participants' knowledge of agriculture. Contestants will prepare and deliver an original speech on an agricultural topic that educates, informs, or persuades an audience.

Eligibility:

The contest is open to active 4-H or FFA members.

Participants compete individually.

Contestants may compete in only one age division.

Speeches must be the contestant's original work and cannot be used for any previous competition at the State level or beyond.

Age Divisions

Novice Division

Junior Division

Senior Division

Age is determined as of the date of the current contest.

Speech Requirements

The speech must relate to agriculture, including but not limited to:

- Animal Science
- Veterinary Medicine
- Crop Production
- Horticulture
- Agricultural Mechanics
- Natural Resources
- Forestry
- Wildlife
- Food Science

- Agricultural Technology
- Agribusiness
- Agricultural Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Soil and Water Conservation
- Agricultural Careers
- Agricultural Policy
- Biotechnology
- Precision Agriculture

Originality

Speeches must be written by the contestant.

Proper credit must be given for quotes, statistics, and research.

Artificial intelligence may be used for research but not to write the speech.

Speech Length

Novice 3–5 minutes

Junior 4–6 minutes

Senior 6–8 minutes

Time penalties:

Up to 15 seconds under or over: No penalty

Over by 16–30 seconds: Deduct 5 points

More than 30 seconds: Disqualification

Visual Aids are NOT allowed!!

Reading directly from a manuscript is prohibited.

Attire

Contestants should wear:

- Official FFA Dress (FFA members)
- Appropriate 4-H attire

- Business casual clothing.

Judging Criteria

- CategoryPoints
- Content Accuracy 25
- Organization 15
- Delivery & Voice 20
- Eye Contact 10
- Stage Presence & Poise 10
- Knowledge of Topic 10
- Overall Effectiveness10
- Total 100

Suggested Expectations by Division

Novice Division

Focus on:

- Learning public speaking fundamentals
- Simple agricultural topics
- Clear organization
- Speaking with confidence
- Questions from judges: None

Junior Division

Focus on:

- Stronger research
- More detailed agricultural information
- Persuasive or informative presentation
- Improved delivery skills
- Questions from judges:
- One agricultural question (up to 2 minutes)

Senior Division

Focus on:

- Advanced agricultural knowledge
- Current agricultural issues
- Well-supported research
- Professional presentation
- Questions from judges:

- Up to three agricultural questions (maximum 5 minutes total)

General Rules

1. Contestants must report to the contest area 15 minutes before the contest begins.
2. Speaking order will be determined by a random draw.
3. Contestants may not hear other speeches before competing unless approved by contest officials.
4. Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off during the contest.
5. Judges' decisions are final.
6. Tie Breaker: In the event of a tie, placements will be determined by the highest score in the following order:
 - Content Accuracy
 - Delivery
 - Judge Question Score (Intermediate and Senior divisions only)
 - Overall Effectiveness