**Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation**

**Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award**

**Rules for 2025 ArFB Competition**

**Preliminary Round Application**

**Purpose:**

Recognize young farmers/ranchers for their achievements in production agriculture and leadership.

**Background**

The Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) annually conducts a Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Achievement Award competition. Selection of the winning YF&R competitor is based on his/her efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. **The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of his/her gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.**

Information about the Achievement Award applicant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

**Eligibility:**

**The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of his/her gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.**

* An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
* Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual or spouse shall have reached his/her 18th birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the national competition and shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by Jan. 31, 2026.
* Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of his/her gross income coming from production agriculture. Applicant(s) must have at least three years of financial records showing that the majority of income came from production agriculture.
* Applicant(s) may only compete in one national YF&R Competition per year.
* Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
* Current employees or agents of county, state and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as an entity owned or controlled in whole or in part by another entity through, for example, ownership (including partial ownership) or positions on the board of directors.

**Agreement**

All applicants MUST agree to the following, in the event they are named a finalist or the State winner(s):

* Three state finalists are required to attend the ArFB Officers & Leaders Conference in **Rogers, AR July 16-18, 2025.**
* The state winner must complete the AFBF Achievement Award Application by **October 31, 2025**.
* The state winner must attend the AFBF Annual Convention in 2026 in Anaheim, CA **January 9-14, 2026** (expenses paid)

**Judging**

* Judging is based on the application sent to Arkansas Farm Bureau.
* A panel of three qualified judges will select the winners.

**Scoring:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Points** |
| 1. Personal Background | 10 |
| 1. Scope of Farm/Ranch | 15 |
| 1. Growth & Achievements | 25 |
| 1. Management Decisions | 15 |
| 1. Goals & Planning | 10 |
| 1. Resiliency | 10 |
| 1. Financial Success Part 1: Debt-to-Asset Ratio and Profit | 25 |
| 1. Financial Success Part 2: Analysis and Record Keeping | 15 |
| 1. Financial Success Part 3: Off-Farm Income | 10 |
| 1. Leadership Experience: Farm Bureau | 30 |
| 1. Leadership Experience: Other Ag Organizations | 10 |
| 1. Leadership Experience: Other | 10 |
| 1. Leadership Growth and Development | 10 |
| TOTAL POINTS | 195 |

**Deadline**

Applications must be submitted via JotForm by **March 15, 2025**. **All materials must be received by this date.** Details on how to submit online can be found at <https://www.arfb.com/pages/get-involved/young-farmers-ranchers/>.

**Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation**

**Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award**

**2025 Preliminary Round Application**

The data below and throughout the application applies to you and your spouse, if married.

Applicant(s)\*: A1: A2:

*\*Will be used in the program and for recognition*

Phonetic Pronunciation: A1: A2:

Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Phone:

Email:

Date of Birth: A1: A2:

I (we) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached application to be accurate and true statements. ArFB reserves the right to use my (our) photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestant(s) may also be available to Farm Bureau sponsors.

Applicant(s) Signature(s): A1: A2:

**Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation**

**Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award**.

**2025 Preliminary Round Application**.

1. **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**
2. Briefly tell us about yourself, your family, education, and personal interests. **Approximately2,000 characters**
3. Please describe your farm/ranch including how you acquired it, acres owned and rented, years in operation, crops and/or livestock. **Approximately2,000 characters**
4. **SCOPE OF YOUR FARM OR RANCH**
5. Explain the ownership structure of your farm/ranch and your vested interest. Please include all enterprises in your explanation, if applicable. **Approximately2,000 characters**
6. What percentage of the farm/ranch management decisions are you responsible for? Please break down for each enterprise, if applicable. **Approximately1,250 characters – 10 lines**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Enterprise** |  | **% Management Decisions** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Share the story of your farm growth since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. List and describe any production efficiency growth you have achieved since your first year. Consider achievements such as weaning rates, feed conversion, yields per acre, diversification of crops, herd averages, etc. **Approximately3,000 characters**

1. **MANAGEMENT DECISIONS**

What type of management strategies do you use to make your operation thrive and ensure its success now and into the future? **Approximately2,500 characters**

1. **GOALS & PLANNING**

Moving forward, what short-term and long-term goals do you have for your farm/ranch? Explain how you plan to achieve these goals. **Approximately2,500 characters**

1. **RESILIENCY**

Describe any major business challenges your farm/ranch has encountered and what you did to overcome them. (policy, financial, family, management, etc.) **Approximately** **2,000 characters**

1. **FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 1**

*NOTE: In considering financial situation, judges will consider the whole application and how the financials are connected to the history, goals and strategies of the farm/ranch. Financials are not to be evaluated independent of the other sections.*

1. Using the grid below, please show your debt-to-asset ratio, including farm/ranch/personal debts and assets for each year requested:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Total Debt**  (combined farm/ranch and personal debt) | **Total Assets**  (combined farm/ranch and personal assets) | **Debt to Asset Ratio**  (total debt divided by total assets) |
| First year (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) |  |  |  |
| 3 years ago |  |  |  |
| 2 years ago |  |  |  |
| 1 year ago |  |  |  |
| Current year projection |  |  |  |

Please indicate whether the above reflects:

* the portion of the farm/ranch you own, as indicated in 2(a).

OR

* the portion of the farm/ranch for which you make management decisions *if more than the amount you own*, as indicated in 2(b).

Use this space to clarify any discrepancies in debt to asset ratio between years, if needed: **Approximately1,000 characters**

1. **FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 2**
2. Describe the practices you use to evaluate the financial success of your farm/ranch, including ratios or analysis, record keeping systems and/or advisors used to support successful financial management. **Approximately2,000 characters**
3. Describe where you see your greatest financial strengths and weaknesses in your farm/ranch business. **Approximately2,000 characters**
4. **FINANCIAL SUCCESS: Part 3**
5. Do you have any other farm/ranch business income not otherwise shown in the financials section (such as supporting agri-businesses)? If so, how is that income used? **Approximately1,000 characters**
6. Is any off-farm income earned by you or your spouse and how is that income used? **Approximately1,000 characters**
7. What additional income, if any, from inheritances, winnings, etc. did the applicant(s) accept and how is/was it used? **Approximately1,000 characters**
8. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: FARM BUREAU (from age 18 to current)**  *Note: This applies to both applicants, if applying together.*

List Farm Bureau leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years and level of involvement (county, state, national). *Example: Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2018-2019)* **Approximately2,500 characters per section**

**County Farm Bureau**

**State/American Farm Bureau**

1. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS (from age 18 to current)** –

List other agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, adult roles in 4-H or FFA) *Example: 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2013 – present)* **Approximately2,500 characters**

**12. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: OTHER (from age 18 to current)** -

List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, civic/service clubs, church, school, scouts, coaching, etc.) *Example: Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2020)* **Approximately2,500 characters**

**13. LEADERSHIP GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Describe specific actions you have taken to better yourself as a leader or businessperson.

**Approximately** **2,500 characters**