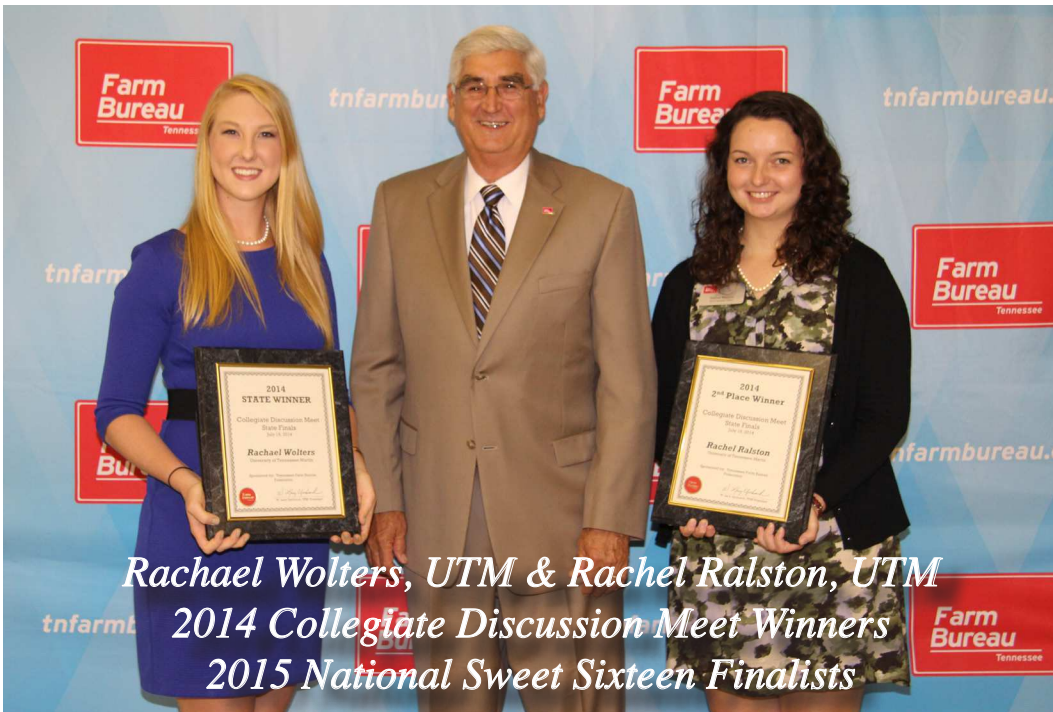


# 2015 YF&R 2016 Collegiate Discussion Meet Guide



*Doug Giles, Williamson County  
2014 Discussion Meet Winner  
2015 National Runner Up*



*Rachael Wolters, UTM & Rachel Ralston, UTM  
2014 Collegiate Discussion Meet Winners  
2015 National Sweet Sixteen Finalists*

# **2015 YF&R DISCUSSION MEET**

**Sunday, December 6, 2015  
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**

# 2015 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 36<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 31, 2016.
- 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 6, 2015 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 2016 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 Orlando, Florida on January 10-13, 2016 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**

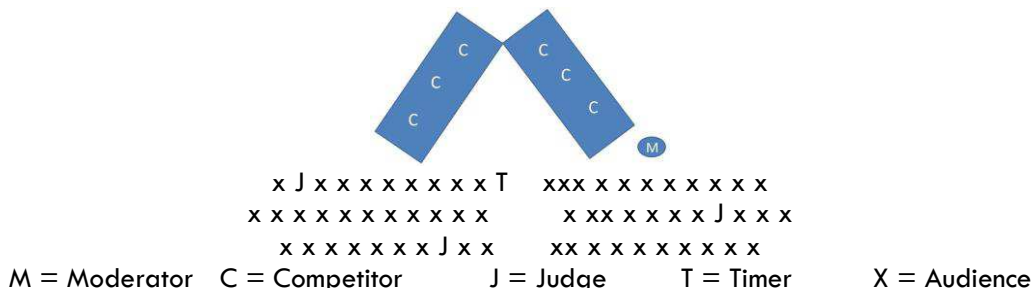
- A. The State "Discussion Meet" will be held in conjunction with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention in Franklin on December 5-8, 2015.
- B. The state contest will consist of as many semifinal rounds as necessary (Sunday afternoon) and a final round (Sunday night).
- C. Contestants 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, 2015**

**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.

## **2015 DISCUSSION MEET TOPICS**

1. How should Farm Bureau protect and encourage producers' ability to use new technology? How can Farm Bureau work with government and the public to ensure public acceptance while encouraging innovation?
2. Should we draft policy to protect livestock producers from false accusations regarding animal welfare? What could it look like?
3. How do we balance agriculture's water needs with maintaining vibrant communities? How do historical water rights influence this discussion?
4. How do we get the public to support right-to-farm laws? Should these laws be determined on the state or the federal level?
5. How can we influence state and local policy that more effectively balances the social and economic interests of farmers and ranchers versus burdensome federal regulation?

**2015 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 36<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 31, 2016)

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

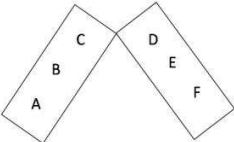
\_\_\_\_\_  
Young Farmer Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
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, 2015**  
Or FAX to (931) 840-8699

## Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

Comp A Name:	Comp B Name:	Comp C Name:	<p>In these columns, put the first and last name of the competitors According to where they are sitting using this diagram.</p> 	Comp D Name:	Comp E Name:	Comp F Name:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) <b>PROBLEM SOLVING AND IMPLEMENTATION:</b> (200 points) Ability and judgement in seeking answers and solutions, planning and organizational understanding, and the inclusion of Farm Bureau in implementing action programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <b>ANALYSIS OF TOPIC OR PROBLEM:</b> (150 points) Does contestant attempt to identify problem causes and remain on topic? Knowledge, extent and accuracy of facts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <b>COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE:</b> (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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			(4) <b>DELIVERY:</b> (100 points) Voice quality, loudness, clear enunciation, communication skills, desirable sentence structure and interesting choice of words.			
			(5) <b>OPENING STATEMENT:</b> (50 points) Definition of problem, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problem.			
			(6) <b>CLOSING STATEMENT:</b> (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><b>← TOTAL    Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge.    TOTAL →</b></p> <p><b>Total of 700 points possible</b></p>			
			<p><b>← RANK    Rank contestants: 1(highest) – 6(lowest)    RANK →</b></p>			

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Room Chairman**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Judge**

# **2016 COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET**

**Semi-Finals  
Friday, July 22, 2016  
State Finals  
Saturday, July 23, 2016**

**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**

# **2016 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 22-23, 2016 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 36<sup>th</sup> birthday by the last day of February 2016.
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 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners are ineligible to compete.
5. Previous campus winners not placing 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 22-23, 2016 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 –**

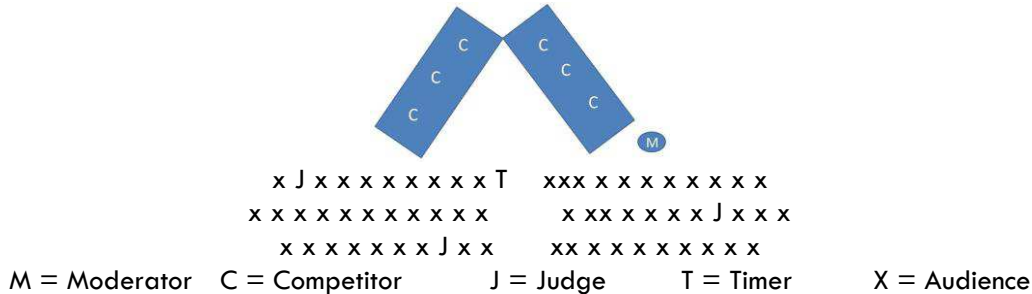
1. UTK Jim Bell – (865) 250-4236  
Kevin Hensley- (865) 719-5001
2. UTM Matt Fennel – (731) 693-2484
3. MTSU Adam Brown – (615) 477-1927
4. TTU Eddie Clark – (931) 212-9054
5. TSU Melissa Bryant – (615) 619-1009
6. APSU Melissa Bryant – (615) 619-1009
7. Additional Material – Dan Strasser – (931) 388-7872,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

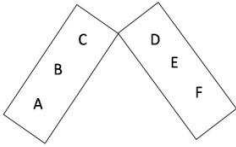
#### 5. Judge Duties

- 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.

## **2016 COLLEGIATE DISCUSSION MEET TOPICS**

1. How should Farm Bureau protect and encourage producers' ability to use new technology? How can Farm Bureau work with government and the public to ensure public acceptance while encouraging innovation?
2. Should we draft policy to protect livestock producers from false accusations regarding animal welfare? What could it look like?
3. How do we balance agriculture's water needs with maintaining vibrant communities? How do historical water rights influence this discussion?
4. How do we get the public to support right-to-farm laws? Should these laws be determined on the state or the federal level?
5. How can we influence state and local policy that more effectively balances the social and economic interests of farmers and ranchers versus burdensome federal regulation?

## 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> 			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) <b>PROBLEM SOLVING AND IMPLEMENTATION:</b> (200 points) Ability and judgement in seeking answers and solutions, planning and organizational understanding, and the inclusion of Farm Bureau in implementing action programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <b>ANALYSIS OF TOPIC OR PROBLEM:</b> (150 points) Does contestant attempt to identify problem causes and remain on topic? Knowledge, extent and accuracy of facts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <b>COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE:</b> (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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			(4) <b>DELIVERY:</b> (100 points) Voice quality, loudness, clear enunciation, communication skills, desirable sentence structure and interesting choice of words.			
			(5) <b>OPENING STATEMENT:</b> (50 points) Definition of problem, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problem.			
			(6) <b>CLOSING STATEMENT:</b> (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><b>← TOTAL</b>    Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge.    <b>TOTAL →</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total of 700 points possible.</p>			
			<p><b>← RANK</b>    Rank contestants: 1(highest) – 6(lowest)    <b>RANK →</b></p>			

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Room Chairman

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Judge



---

# TOPIC 1

---

## **How should Farm Bureau protect and encourage producers' ability to use new technology? How can Farm Bureau work with government and the public to ensure public acceptance while encouraging innovation?**

### Abstract:

There a number of new technologies that have been created and are being used in production agriculture. These new technologies are used to allow agriculturists to produce more products in a timely and efficient manner to feed our growing population. A lot of producers already use these technologies in their operations, however, others do not and it is becoming a growing concern.

### Summary:

Technology is everywhere. There is technology in our vehicles, offices, homes, work place, the grocery store, etc., but now more than ever technology is in agriculture. Technology is important and it is important that it is protected and encouraged among producers. Technology and agricultural innovation are game changers in the economy yet they also present some challenges in agriculture.

Autopilot tractors, cell phones, animal ultrasound, biotechnology, GPS, and crop sensors are just a few examples of new technologies that have been developed and are being used in production agriculture. Obviously agriculture and farming techniques have changed drastically over the years. From horse drawn farm equipment in the early 1900s to heavy duty farm equipment that we use today, agriculture is ever-changing because of technology and the demand to feed a growing population.

Most farmers realize the demand to feed a larger population in the years to come and are eager to incorporate new technology into their operations. Yet, there are some producers who still have concerns and are more apprehensive about using these new techniques. New technologies may increase productivity and therefore increase crop yields and their profit margins. Agriculture organizations, such as Farm Bureau, protect and encourage producers' ability to use new technologies by giving farmers even better solutions, broaden their awareness of new technology, and offer farmers the right incentives to use these technologies.

It is important that the agriculture community and its supporters work hard to protect innovation not only in the United States but in other countries as well. Agriculture innovation is a game changer for the economy. It has the ability to make a large, positive impact on the industry if producer's and supporters allow it. Even

though it is a vital part of our industry, it is also one of the industry's greatest challenges. In order to combat this challenge, producers must start by educating on the consumer level. The American public's disapproval of innovation starts with an uninformed consumer.

Put simply, it does not matter what type of technology is being used because it is all important in feeding the growing population. Agricultural organizations, producers, and supporters are responsible for promoting the innovation of new technologies. There are a number of laws, regulations, and policies in place to guide and monitor the use of technology so it is safe for consumers.

#### Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

##### Biotechnology:

Advancements in biotechnology are having tremendous positive impacts on agriculture. These developments are beneficial to all sectors of our society, not just agriculture. Therefore, Farm Bureau should strive to inform the public of the beneficial effects implementation of these new production practices will have on the environment and the well-being of the community.

We support increased efforts through biotechnology to increase the marketability of our products, to solve environmental concerns, to increase net farm income by decreasing input costs, and to improve product quality and acceptability.

We urge state and national political leaders to develop a positive national strategy for biotechnology research and development. Part of this strategy should include an open and frank dialogue with all interested parties. Only the continued support and encouragement of technological advancements will assure our viability in world markets. We encourage the USDA to take a lead in coordinating efforts to evaluate and move approved products and technologies to the marketplace quickly. The approval of new products should be based on safety and efficacy criteria, and not on socioeconomic criteria.

Patents should be broad enough to provide reasonable protection of development costs, but should not be so broad as to grant one developer the right to a whole class of future developments. Patents should be granted only on invented devices or processes, not on discoveries of naturally occurring genes, chemicals, or other biological systems. Companies should not sell U.S. patented seeds in countries that do not provide patent protection. This gives foreign producers a competitive advantage over U.S. farmers who must pay for development costs and abide by patent laws. Farm Bureau should work to inform farmers of their rights and obligations under U.S. patent laws regarding plant varieties and other biological material.

We favor a competitive seed industry in which producers may choose from a wide variety of tested cultivars. We encourage seed companies to continue producing and making available conventional and genetically modified seed varieties other than glyphosate resistant varieties allowing farmers to have the option to use these

as a management tool to curb weed resistance. Innovation should be encouraged and rewarded through a competitive, open market for seeds. We encourage cooperation between seed companies and public universities to effectively test and evaluate varieties. We support free access to varieties on which patents have expired. The right to plant any variety on which the patent has expired should be protected by law. Sales agreements should not seek to limit this right.

Careful study and evaluation should occur before any Technology Protection System (TPS) traits are introduced into our seed supply.

We support the research efforts in biotechnology at the University of Tennessee and anticipate the new technology that will be available to Tennessee and American agriculture. We urge the University to release the research and patents developed into the public domain, similar to the way public seed varieties have been released.

We oppose any law or regulation requiring registration of farmers who use or sell products approved for sale by the Food and Drug Administration.

We oppose mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods.

We oppose the classification of Bt corn as a chemical by EPA.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 165: Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Policy 337: Biotechnology

Policy 342: Labeling

## **Resources:**

### **12 Most Advanced Agricultural Technologies**

<http://12most.com/2012/03/12/advanced-agricultural-technologies/>

### **Comparing agriculture of the past with today**

<http://animalsmart.org/animals-and-the-environment/comparing-agriculture-of-the-past-with-today>

### **Using Modern Agricultural Technology to Increase Production, Food Security, and Profitability**

<http://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/using-modern-agricultural-technology-increase-production-food-security-and-profitability>

### **Helping U.S. Farmers Increase Production and Protect the Land**

[http://e360.yale.edu/feature/helping\\_us\\_farmers\\_increase\\_production\\_and\\_protect\\_the\\_land/2549/](http://e360.yale.edu/feature/helping_us_farmers_increase_production_and_protect_the_land/2549/)

### **Agricultural Innovation as an Economic Game Changer (video)**

<http://www.aspenideas.org/session/agricultural-innovation-economic-game-changer?qclid=CKL5gbyO4sUCFdcSgQod93UAcw>

### **The Greatest Challenge Facing Agriculture over the Next 5 Years**

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/diversity/papers/2015/MelissaWoolpert.pdf>

### **What challenges does agriculture face today?**

<http://www.greenfacts.org/en/agriculture-iaastd/index.htm#1>

### **Biotech Grassroots Tool Kit**

<http://www.fb.org/assets/files/issues/biotech/GroosrootsToolKit-AllBenefitsIncludedVer2.pdf>

### **Water Conservation in Irrigated Agriculture: Trends and Challenges in the Face of Emerging Demands**

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884158/eib99.pdf>

### **Fact Sheet – Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)**

[https://www.faa.gov/news/fact\\_sheets/news\\_story.cfm?newsId=14153](https://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsId=14153)

### **Drones in Agriculture**

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/sites/default/files/images/Drones%20in%20Agriculture%20Final%20PD.pdf>

### **Do GM Crops Increase Yield?**

<http://www.monsanto.com/newsviews/pages/do-gm-crops-increase-yield.aspx>

### **Sound Science and Access to Biotechnology**

<http://www.fb.org/issues/docs/biotech15.pdf>

**Labeling Requirements for Plants and Seed**

<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/109/Bill/SB0551.pdf>

**Genetically Engineered Food Labeling Act**

<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/109/Bill/HJR0218.pdf>

**Science- Based Data Used**

<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/109/Bill/SB0696.pdf>

**Unmanned Aircraft Bill**

<http://www.tn.gov/sos/acts/108/pub/pc0876.pdf>

**ACTION ALERT -- BIOTECH: Bill Introduced With Benefits for Farmers and Consumers**

<http://cqrcengage.com/afb/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=87736>

---

# TOPIC 2

---

## **Should we draft policy to protect livestock producers from false accusations regarding animal welfare? What could it look like?**

### Abstract:

Farm animal welfare has been a major topic of conversation in the livestock industry as long as the industry has been around. Today, animal rights and welfare activist groups have been created around the United States and world. Farmers around the country are now being faced with false accusations of inhumane management. Laws have been implemented in few states to prevent covert investigation of farms but have not passed in others. The question is, are there better ways to formulate policy and legislation to protect farmers from being falsely accused of cruelty to their livestock? What would legislation of this sort look like?

### Summary:

Animal rights activist organizations have begun finding alleged cases of animal cruelty against farm animals across the country. This led to many debates of how the animals people eat are treated during production. Some people began to stop eating meat and even quit eating animal products altogether. Extreme activists advocate against the use of livestock for exhibition, slaughter, and production of any animal products as a whole.

One of the ways animal rights groups have brought animal abuse cases to light is by way of undercover investigations of farms using video. Videographers spend time gathering video proof of animal abuse and undergo an investigation before they present their findings to court. They feel that recording these videos undercover is the most effective way the abusers will be caught in the act.

On the other hand, farmers believe that while these are successful in capturing cases of alleged abuse, these videos can also have the ability to falsely portray farmers of animal abuse. Farmers believe such activity is trespassing on private property and should be considered illegal.

In an attempt to prevent the undercover videoing of farm operations, some farmers and legislators have introduced legislation that prevents anyone from placing undercover cameras on farms. These have also been called producer protection or "ag-gag" laws, and discussion surrounding these kinds of laws has created lots of controversy. This kind of legislation has passed in a few states, including North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Kansas, Iowa, and Missouri. In Tennessee, lawmakers passed a law called the Livestock Protection Act, which would require that these videos be turned into the authorities within 48 hours of being recorded.

The governor vetoed the bill passed by the General Assembly. Animal rights and welfare activists groups are highly opposed these laws because they believe it protects the farmers from cruelty accusations. These laws have been introduced in legislatures in other states and did not pass. In order to protect farmers from false claims of cruelty and balance public sentiment with the way animals are treated, lawmakers must find a common ground between the farmers' needs and the rights and welfare supporters' needs.

### Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

#### Animal Welfare:

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.

We commend all members of the Farm Animal Care Coalition of Tennessee (FACCT) for uniting to defend and promote animal agriculture. FACCT collectively represents the animal agriculture industry with a factual, proactive voice and serves as a resource regarding humane animal care and well-being issues and best management practices. We encourage state government and local governments to recognize and utilize FACCT as a credible and reliable resource regarding farm animal care.

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. Complaints related to livestock cruelty statute violations should be the responsibility of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. A centralized system would allow staff to review complaints and assign a priority code according to the severity of the alleged violation and forward the complaint to the appropriate regional office for investigation. All records concerning individuals accused of alleged livestock abuse should remain confidential unless disclosed pursuant to a valid subpoena or court order. Knowingly making false reports of alleged livestock abuse should be a crime and subject to TDA fines.

Whereas, all veterinarians may not have chosen a large animal or farm animal discipline or have livestock production experience; we oppose efforts by veterinary groups to support animal rights agendas. Veterinary professionals should support scientific based standards for treatment and care of livestock.

An aggressive, comprehensive, educational program presenting the facts of livestock and poultry production is needed for school children. Curriculum guides heavily oriented toward vegetarianism should not be used in the classroom. We are opposed to the concept of animal rights and oppose the expenditure of public funds to promote the concept of animal rights in or out of the classroom. All classroom materials should be monitored for accuracy and misleading presentations be removed.

We urge USDA and TDA to endorse farmers' efforts to educate the public regarding best management practices in livestock care for the production of safe food for the consumer.

We support the exemption of agritourism animal displays from licensing under the federal Animal Welfare Act.

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.

We urge energy suppliers to respect the needs of livestock and poultry producers during times of emergency and shortage.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 301: Animal Care

Policy 307: Livestock and Poultry Health



## **Resources:**

### **Animal Legal Defense Fund – 2012 U.S. Animal Protection Laws Rankings**

<http://aldf.org/press-room/press-releases/2012-u-s-animal-protection-laws-rankings/>

### **Beef producers, Consumers Must Find Common Ground on Production Ethics**

<http://beefmagazine.com/blog/beef-producers-consumers-must-find-common-ground-production-ethics>

### **The Animal Welfare Act: Background and Selected Animal Welfare Legislation**

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/crs/RS22493.pdf>

### **Sherman: HSUS's Legal Shenanigans**

<http://www.cattlenetwork.com/community/berman-hsus%E2%80%99s-legal-shenanigans>

### **Alumbaugh: Walmart's New Animal Welfare Position**

[http://www.cattlenetwork.com/news/alumbaugh-walmart%E2%80%99s-new-animal-welfare-position?ss=advice and tips,cow/calf producer](http://www.cattlenetwork.com/news/alumbaugh-walmart%E2%80%99s-new-animal-welfare-position?ss=advice%20and%20tips,cow/calf%20producer)

### **Animal Welfare Fact Sheet**

[http://www.beef.org/uDocs/Animal%20welfare%20fact%20sheet%20FINAL\\_4%2026%2006.pdf](http://www.beef.org/uDocs/Animal%20welfare%20fact%20sheet%20FINAL_4%2026%2006.pdf)

### **State of Tennessee Office of the Attorney General – Opinion No. 13-39**

<http://attorneygeneral.tn.gov/op/2013/op13-39.pdf>

### **Official Statement from the Tennessee Farm Bureau Regarding the Veto by the Governor of the Livestock Protection Act Legislation**

<http://tnfarmbureau.org/content/official-statement-tennessee-farm-bureau-regarding-veto-governor-livestock-protection-act>

### **Drones in Agriculture Policy Development 2013**

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/sites/default/files/images/Drones%20in%20Agriculture%20Final%20PD.pdf>

### **Livestock Protection Act Policy Development 2013**

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/sites/default/files/images/Livestock%20Protection%20Act%20PD.pdf>

### **Haslam Releases Statement on HB 1191/SB 1248**

<https://news.tn.gov/node/10688>

**TRIB Total Media – Proposed Farm Filming Ban Ignites Rights Debate in Pennsylvania**

<http://triblive.com/state/pennsylvania/3931174-74/bill-animal-farmers>

**Utah State Legislature Agricultural Operation Interference**

<http://le.utah.gov/~2012/bills/hbillint/hb0187.pdf>

---

# TOPIC 3

---

## **How do we balance agriculture's water needs with maintaining vibrant communities?**

### **How do historical water rights influence this discussion?**

#### Abstract:

Agriculture is a major user of water resources. Water is needed in agriculture to irrigate crops, feed livestock, and perform other farm activities. Water is needed to help meet the growing world food demand, and is vital to human survival. So is agriculture. We must find a way to balance agriculture's water needs with the needs of other parts of society.

#### Summary:

In times of drought there is a low water supply. Drought has been seen all over the world, including here in the United States. Recently, the state of California has experienced severe drought condition. There is outcry for the legislative bodies to regulate the water usage of farms. There is also outcry from agriculturalists who say they cannot meet food demands without water. This leaves the legislative body balancing the wants and needs of those in agriculture with those who are not. Those in agriculture can have a huge impact on this balancing act with legislators. Farmers can self-monitor and conserve water. There are some states who have started voluntary self-monitoring programs on irrigated farms. These programs have helped agriculture establish a baseline.

One such program can be found in Mississippi. According to one study done in that state, "(w)e can produce equivalent yields with half the water". This is a major breakthrough for water conservation in agriculture. This could help legislators in their balancing acts for water rights.

As many farmers know, "Water conflicts on larger scales, and not just in smaller localized settings, are becoming more prevalent even in the more water-rich east, as they always have been in the dry west" (Tennessee Water Laws and Regulations). The history of water rights and disputes is long and vast. There have been many disputes over water. These disputes have been fought all over the United States. These disputes include disputes over; the Rio Grande River, the Tennessee River, the Mississippi River and other major waterways in the country. The disputes have occurred between families, counties, states, and even countries. The history of water disputes has shaped the ownership of water in the United States and the world. Now agriculture may need to gear up to fight it's battle.

## Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy (Partial):

### Water:

Water is one of Tennessee's most valuable natural resources. In the future, many decisions will be made to protect this resource.

We support the English doctrine of riparian water rights to surface and groundwater. We support the right of farmers to irrigate from streams and wells. Actions by state government to regulate water usage should recognize that crop irrigation and livestock watering is critical to maintain a stable food supply. Availability of water for human consumption, sanitation and production agriculture should supersede all other uses. Farmers should not be charged fees or required to receive permits for surface or groundwater withdrawals for purposes of maintaining a water budget in a basin or watershed. Any efforts to quantify water usage for agricultural purposes should be on a voluntary basis without mandatory reporting to state agencies. Farm Bureau should stay current on water issues and be involved in the decision making process.

Tennessee farmers have increased their use of irrigation on a wide range of commodities. Irrigation is a major benefit to the agricultural economy and is a critical component in our ability to produce food and fiber. We believe the Tennessee Farm Bureau should identify potential issues that may affect irrigation and find long term solutions to protect and enhance our ability to use irrigation.

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.

We applaud Tennessee's farmers for the steps they have taken to improve the quality of our water resources. We encourage each farmer to do as much as can be reasonably done to reduce any negative impacts farming operations might have on our water resources. The percentage of the Recordation Tax dedicated to the Agricultural Resources Conservation Fund should be doubled without increasing the total tax.

We support the agriculture and forestry exemption in Tennessee's Water Quality Act. Voluntary use of Best Management Practices is the most cost-effective method of abating nonpoint source pollution from agricultural and forestry operations. Unlike most point source pollution, nonpoint source pollution events

are highly dependent on uncontrollable and unpredictable weather events. This drastically increases the cost and decreases the effectiveness of direct regulation of nonpoint sources as compared to point source regulations. We oppose placing Total Maximum Daily Load Allocations (TMDL) on nonpoint source discharges.

Plant nutrient run-off has historically been considered nonpoint source pollution. Regulatory agencies and environmental groups are now placing emphasis on nutrient loadings in water from nitrogen and phosphorus run-off. Every commodity produced in Tennessee would suffer financially under restrictions on the use and management of plant nutrients. Tennessee producers are vulnerable because very little scientific data exists regarding what levels cause stream impairment, agriculture's contribution to nutrient loadings, and what methods are available to reduce nutrient run-off. We oppose numeric nutrient standards in Tennessee's water quality criteria. We oppose agricultural nutrients being considered point sources of pollution.

Public policies concerning the protection and management of water can and should be based on the best data obtainable. New technologies such as microbial source tracking are proving wildlife, human activity and domestic pets are the major contributors to water pollution in watersheds once thought impaired by agriculture. We support the funding of more studies such as the Beaver Creek Project conducted in Fayette, Haywood, Tipton and Shelby counties.

Farm Bureau encourages the Tennessee Division of Water Resources to undertake a timely and thorough water quality inventory on all navigable waters and reservoirs in the State. This study should be carried out by a nonbiased, scientifically qualified organization of highest reputation such as the USGS or National Academy of Sciences. Money provided by Section 319 of the Clean Water Act should be used on a highest priority basis for this purpose, if available.

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.

Data from the U.S. Geological Survey and other sources show that the greatest threats to Tennessee's groundwater are faulty septic tank waste disposal systems and wellheads that are insufficiently protected against entry of pollutants into the aquifer. Stringent abandonment mandates of wellheads no longer in use should only be required if contamination or potential contamination of groundwater is proven. We support funding to the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture to find and demonstrate solutions to these problems.

We oppose suspension or reduction of allowable application rates for pesticides for the purpose of protecting groundwater unless nonbiased scientific studies indicate the particular pesticide in question can leach through the subsoil in significant quantities. Such actions could aggravate surface water pollution problems by making conservation tillage or no-till farming difficult or impossible. When such label changes are necessary, they should be made only for those regions where a problem exists or is imminently likely to occur.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 236: Environmental management Systems

Policy 237: National Conservation and Environmental Policy

Policy 548: Water Use

## **Resources:**

### **Water usage facts:**

<http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/water/conservation/consumption-and-usage/agricultural-water-needs-and-sources-water-supply>

### **Why Agriculture needs to change its water usage:**

<http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2013/11/05/why-relationship-between-water-and-agriculture-needs-change>

### **Water Standards for Agriculture:**

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/fsma/learn-about-the-issues/agricultural-water/>

### **Farmers in California:**

<http://articles.latimes.com/2014/mar/09/local/la-me-cap-drought-20140310>

### **Water fight impact on Agricultural relationships:**

<http://westernfarmpress.com/blog/fight-water-fracturing-agricultural-alliances>

### **Agriculture in California:**

<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2015/04/29/does-californias-agriculture-industry-need-more-water-restrictions-due-to-the-drought/>

### **More on the water problem in Agriculture:**

<http://westernfarmpress.com/blog/whiskey-drinking-agriculture-water-fighting>

### **The Economics of the California Water Shortage:**

<http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2015/03/the-california-water-shortage-again.html>

### **California's Mandatory Water Restrictions: The Impact on Agriculture:**

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrygulke/2015/04/02/californias-mandatory-water-restrictions-impact-on-agriculture/>

### **Delta growers asked to sign up irrigation wells for voluntary metering program (Video also):**

<http://deltafarmpress.com/management/delta-growers-asked-sign-irrigation-wells-voluntary-metering-program>

### **Mississippi PHAUCET Program:**

<http://www.mafg.net/Files/Improving%20Furrow%20Irrigation%20With%20Help%20Of%20Phaucet%20Computer%20ProgramGfgYXE.pdf>

### **Mississippi Voluntary Metering Program:**

[https://www.specmeters.com/assets/1/7/20140131\\_Declining\\_aquifer\\_focusing\\_more\\_attention\\_on\\_irrigation\\_water\\_savings\\_Delta\\_Farm\\_Press\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](https://www.specmeters.com/assets/1/7/20140131_Declining_aquifer_focusing_more_attention_on_irrigation_water_savings_Delta_Farm_Press_Jan_2014.pdf)

**Water and Conflict:**

<http://pacinst.org/issues/water-and-conflict/>

**Water Wars:**

[http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe50s/water\\_10.html](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe50s/water_10.html)

**Water War History:**

<http://www.waterwar.org/history.html>

**Water wars: US states fight over Rio Grande River (Video):**

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-22171883>

**Great Lakes Water Wars (Video):**

<http://www.greatlakeswaterwars.com/>

**Winnepesaukee Water Wars and the 1859 Fight for NH Property Rights:**

<http://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/winnepesaukee-water-wars-fighting-nh-property-rights/>

**Water wars in Detroit:**

<http://www.metrotimes.com/detroit/water-wars/Content?oid=2174925>

**Tennessee Water Laws and Regulations:**

<http://www.tba.org/news/tennessee-water-laws-and-regulations>

**Riparian Rights in Tennessee:**

<http://www.tnlds.com/2013/11/01/riparian-rights-tennessee/>

**State Water Withdrawal Regulations:**

<http://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/state-water-withdrawal-regulations.aspx>

**Water problems in Austin, TX:**

<http://workmanfortexas.com/fighting-for-water-for-central-texas/>

**TN Farm Bureau PD Paper on Water Rights:**

<http://www.tnfarmbureau.org/sites/default/files/images/Irrigation%20PD%20paper%202013.pdf>

**U.S. Supreme Court Rejects Mississippi Water Suit against Memphis:**

<http://masglp.olemiss.edu/Water%20Log/WL29/29.4memphis.htm>

**Water wars: Tennessee, Georgia locked in battle over waterway access:**

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/water-wars-tennessee-georgia-locked-in-battle-over-waterway-access/>



---

# TOPIC 4

---

## **How do we get the public to support right-to-farm laws? Should these laws be determined at the state or the federal level?**

### Abstract:

Right-to-farm laws are a series of statutes helping to protect agricultural operations from nuisance suits in a court of law. These nuisance claims are generally focused on farm odor, slow moving farm machinery, farm chemical spraying, etc. Over the years there have been growing nuisance claims filed against farms. Lawmakers, sympathetic to the issue, believe it is necessary to provide protection for farmers put in these situations. The first right-to-farm laws were passed in the 1970s, and since amendments have been added.

### Summary:

All fifty states mandate and maintain their own set of right-to-farm statutes that clearly define the boundaries between acceptable farming practices and what should be considered nuisance. The issue is getting people to support and comply with the law and whether these laws should be made at the federal or state level.

Some states have passed referendums, placing the language in their state's constitution. Tennessee's constitution does not recognize a right-to-farm law but the laws still apply in the Tennessee Code Annotated. Tennessee's law is similar to that of other states in that it provides a barrier between the general public and the farmer regarding nuisance claims. Tennessee's law defines farm operations as "a condition or activity that occurs on a farm in connection with the commercial production of farm products and nursery stock, and includes, but is not limited to: market produce at roadside stands or farm markets; noise; odors; dust; fumes; operation of machinery and irrigation pumps; ground and aerial seeding and spraying; the application of chemical fertilizers; conditioners, insecticides, pesticides, and herbicides; the employment and use of labor; marketing of farm products thereof; and any other form of agriculture as defined".

Farmers need laws to protect their farms, but some citizens believe the laws are unfair to them because they "tilt to the farmer". Balancing the wants and needs of the public and the farm community is a challenge that needs to be discussed.

### Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Policy:

### Right-To-Farm:

We support Tennessee's Right-To-Farm Act that limits nuisance lawsuits against established farm operations. We believe the Right-To-Farm Act applies to all

activities related to the production and marketing of farm products and the recreational and educational activities on land used to produce farm products.

People moving into farm areas often complain and even sue over odors, dust, noise and one's personal perception of unsightliness. Farmers must act responsibly to help reduce the likelihood their operations might cause a nuisance situation. The Right to Farm Law allows farmers to continue to farm without the constant fear of nuisance suits from neighbors.

The burden of proof should be on the complaining party to prove a farm is a nuisance rather than requiring the farmer to prove it is not.

Any producer successful in a nuisance lawsuit should receive court and legal costs to be paid by the plaintiff.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 539: Right-to-farm

**Resources:**

**Right-To-Farm Laws: History and Future**

<https://www.farmfoundation.org/news/articlefiles/129-hipp.pdf>

**National AgLaw Center Research Publication States' Right to Farm Statutes  
State of Tennessee**

**Right-to-Farm Statutes and Corporate Farming Laws**

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/state-compilations/right-to-farm/>

**Senate Bill 1014**

<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/108/Bill/SB1614.pdf>

**Keep Missouri Farming**

<https://www.mofb.org/KeepMissouriFarming.aspx>

**The Right to Farm Amendment-A perspective by attorney Brent Haden**

<http://mofarmerscare.com/the-right-to-farm-amendment-a-perspective-by-attorney-brent-haden/>

**Right to Farm Act Protects Small-Scale Farmers**

<http://www.motheearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/sustainable-farming/right-to-farm-act-zmgz13aszsto.aspx>

**New Right to Farm Act Sitting GAAMP now in effect**

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new\\_right\\_to\\_farm\\_act\\_siting\\_gaamp\\_now\\_in\\_effect](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_right_to_farm_act_siting_gaamp_now_in_effect)

**Is 'Right to Farm' Amendment for Indiana a 'Right to Harm'?**

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2015/02/13/right-farm-amendment-indiana-aright-harm/23357877/>

---

# TOPIC 5

---

## **How can we influence state and local policy that more effectively balances the social and economic interests of farmers and ranchers versus burdensome federal regulation?**

### Abstract:

The social and economic interests of farmers and those of other groups may sometimes conflict. Legislatures must determine how to balance these interests enough to keep everyone safe and satisfied. There may be ways farmers can help make these legislators decisions easier while keeping constituents happy.

### Summary:

The legislative body of government has the authority to make policies that regulate farms in what they do. Throughout history there have been conflicts and disputes about policies that legislatures have levied. State and local governments do not always agree with policies the federal government puts in place.

Agriculturalists have found ways to curb potentially crippling decisions lawmakers can make. These include farmers self-monitoring themselves on certain issues. For example, the food industry has been using resources responsibly for many years. “The food industry has made highly visible pledges to curtail children's food marketing, sell fewer unhealthy products in schools, and label foods in responsible ways” (self-regulating food industry). This allows the food industry to operate without some burdensome regulations from legislatures.

Many states have implemented pollinator protection programs. “...(F)armers and beekeepers are working together to protect the state’s pollinators from accidental exposure to pesticides used on crops” (Mississippi’s State Pollinator Protection Program). This program keeps legislatures from bringing down regulations that may bring burden upon farmers and others in the agriculture industry.

There are other voluntary state programs where farmers have joined as a type of self-monitoring. One such program can be found in Mississippi. The state has set up a self-monitoring program for water. This allows farmers to voluntarily sign up to monitor their water usage. This help keeps legislators from having to regulate the farmers with burdensome laws and sets a baseline usage for water debates.

## 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.

### Honeybees and Beekeeping:

Honeybees pollinate most grain and fruit crops. The presence of Varroa and Tracheal mites in the United States represents a serious threat to honeybees.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture must monitor the movement and control and eradicate the Varroa and Tracheal mite. More aggressive action is necessary. All interested parties must protect the interest of all Tennessee farmers.

A disease known as Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) is killing off entire honeybee colonies across the country. When the disease hits, worker bees from a beehive or Western honeybee colony abruptly disappear. CCD was originally found in Western honeybee colonies in North America in late 2006. The cause (or causes) of the syndrome is not yet well understood.

It's critical that we provide research grant money to immediately address honeybee colony health. Research funding is needed to determine the cause and treatment of the syndrome. Honey producers not only harvest pure honey for human consumption, they provide an invaluable service to help sustain many agricultural crops that rely on pollination.

We recognize the ecological and economic importance of pollinators and the necessity to utilize crop protection products to protect against loss of crop yield. We support the coexistence of crops and pollinators and urge that any pollinator risk assessment required for registration or regulation of crop protection products be based on field relevant scientific data. We support a state led, voluntary cooperative pollinator stewardship program that emphasizes increased stakeholder communication and education.

American Farm Bureau Federation Policy Numbers:

Policy 110: Regulatory Review and Reform

Policy 112: States' Rights

Policy 156: Litigation

Policy 203: Honey and Agriculture

## **Resources:**

### **Can Federal Action Improve Efficiency in the Market for Farm Loans?**

[http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/564351/aib72401\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/564351/aib72401_1_.pdf)

### **AN INTRODUCTION TO AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES AND THE FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND LEGAL CONCERNS THAT IMPACT THEM:**

[http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publishing/rpte\\_ereport/2010/5/tesmith.authcheckdam.pdf](http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publishing/rpte_ereport/2010/5/tesmith.authcheckdam.pdf)

### **Proposed federal rules would limit kids' work on farms:**

<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/economy/story/2012-01-24/regulations-kids-farm-work/52778304/1>

### **The Political Economy of Agricultural Biotechnology Policies:**

<http://www.agbioforum.org/v12n1/v12n1a04-graff.htm>

### **Publications that concern Ag policy:**

<http://www.agpolicy.org/publications.html>

### **Self-Regulating Food Industry:**

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2804645/>

### **Mississippi's State Pollinator Program**

[http://msucares.com/news/print/agnews/an14/20140203\\_bees.html](http://msucares.com/news/print/agnews/an14/20140203_bees.html)

### **Mississippi Voluntary Metering Program:**

[https://www.specmeters.com/assets/1/7/20140131\\_-\\_Declining\\_aquifer\\_focusing\\_more\\_attention\\_on\\_irrigation\\_water\\_savings\\_-\\_Delta\\_Farm\\_Press,\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](https://www.specmeters.com/assets/1/7/20140131_-_Declining_aquifer_focusing_more_attention_on_irrigation_water_savings_-_Delta_Farm_Press,_Jan_2014.pdf)

### **Mississippi RISER Program:**

<http://www.printfriendly.com/print?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mississippi-crops.com%2F2014%2F02%2F12%2Fthe-mississippi-state-university-riser-program-efficient-methods-for-furrow-irrigation%2F>