



Discussion Meet and Collegiate Discussion Meet Best Practices – 2026

- **Training calls.** All competitors are encouraged to watch the training calls hosted by the AFBF YF&R committee in the fall. The calls cover the questions and an overview of the competition. Each call has two or more subject-matter experts. Often the speakers provide additional resources for use in preparation. To obtain a link to the call recordings, reach out to your state coordinator or email yfr@fb.org.
- **Utilize government research.** Search government agency websites and databases for strong statistics and data to use in your discussions. This information is reliable and well-researched.
- **Utilize credible, non-government research.** Search for a resource that is free from bias, backed up with peer-reviewed evidence and written by a trustworthy author or organization. Look for primary sources that include first-hand evidence giving you direct access to your research topic.
- **Learn from the best.** Reach out to former Discussion Meet and Collegiate Discussion Meet participants. Even though the discussion questions change each year, former competitors can provide valuable insight and tips on the nature of the contest. Also, reach out to YF&R staff and committee members who have familiarity with the competition to get clarification.
- **Pros and cons.** Review each question and create discussion points from both sides of the issue. This will not only give you greater understanding of how an issue developed, but it will also prepare you to discuss potential obstacles when working to find a solution.
- **Diversify written sources.** Besides the internet, gather resources and information from the library, newspapers, magazines, Farm Bureau policies and other agriculture publications.
- **Real talk.** Engage in conversations with your local county Farm Bureau members, state staff and agriculture industry employees to gather information and examples. Seek conversations with those who are not familiar with the issue to gain their perspective. Explaining the topic helps provide practice articulating what you know. As you speak, address all angles to gather additional points and as many ideas as possible.
- **Farm Bureau history and policy.** Take time to review county, state and American Farm Bureau history and policy on the topic. Contact your state Farm Bureau for the state Policy Book and AFBF Policy Book. What are our standing policies with the questions? Do you agree or disagree with those? Is there opportunity for policy to be rewritten/added?
- **Expert opinion.** If you don't have a personal experiences with the content of the question, find a credible source who does and get their opinion. Be prepared to cite and properly establish your source as an expert in their field.

General Resources and Websites

Farm Bureau:

- [American Farm Bureau Federation](#)
 - o [Issue Backgrounders](#)
 - o [Farm Bureau Advocacy Action Center](#)
- [American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture](#)

Government:

- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)
 - o [National Institute of Food and Agriculture \(NIFA\)](#)
- [U.S. Department of Labor](#)
- [U.S. Department of Transportation](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency - Agriculture](#)
- [National Association of State Departments of Agriculture](#)
- [Selected Federal Agencies with a Role in Food Safety](#)
- [Cooperative Extension Services](#)
- [Center for Disease Control](#)
- [GovTrack.us](#)
- [Farmers.gov](#)

Media:

- [Farm Journal Media](#)
- [AgDaily](#)

Other:

- [Animal Agriculture Alliance](#)
- [National Agriculture in the Classroom](#)