

**TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION FFA
AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS
CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT -**

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please thoroughly read the Introduction Section at the beginning of this handbook for complete rules and procedures that are relevant to all Tennessee FFA Career Development Events.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event is to provide individuals with basic communications skills necessary to take advantage of career opportunities in agricultural communications. Public communications about agricultural products, practices and policies are essential to the future of agriculture. Students who are equipped with strong communication skills and who can use a variety of media to help the public understand issues related to the agricultural industry have a bright future in the job market.

II. EVENT FORMAT

A. Team Make-up

1. The event will consist of a five-member team.
2. Eligible participants in the Tennessee FFA Agricultural Communications Career Development Event will be students who are regularly enrolled in agricultural education during the calendar year, have a planned course of study, or who are still in high school but have completed all the agricultural education offered. When selected, participants must be active members of a chartered FFA chapter and the National FFA Organization.
3. Three copies of the communications project proposal must be sent to the State office, by the deadline set on the official calendar.
4. Official FFA dress is required for this event.
5. The State FFA Agricultural Communications Career Development Event will be limited to one team per chapter.
6. All material will be student produced.
7. The event will include both a written test as well as oral communications presentation.

B. Equipment

1. Students should provide any and all equipment needed for their presentations.

C. Team Activities

Communications Project Proposal and Presentation (450 points/team)

Each team will prepare a communications project proposal for their chapter. The proposal will explain the communications activities planned to publicize an event/issue. Guidance on the event/issue is presented below. **Three copies of the communications project proposal must be sent to the State office, by the deadline set on the official calendar.** A penalty of 10% will be assessed for documents received after the published deadline. If document is not received seven days after published deadline, the team may be subject to disqualification.

1. Guidelines for Proposal

The key to producing a good communications project proposal is to select a project that is specific enough that you will be able to do a good job with it.

- a. The proposal should be a maximum of 12 double-spaced typed pages (not including

references or appendices) on 8.5 X 11 white bond paper using 1” margins and 12-point Times New Roman or Times as the font.

- b. Staple the proposal in upper-left hand corner. DO NOT bind or place in folders, special binders or covers.
- c. Follow style established in the *Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*.
- d. A cover page, which is not included in the 12 page limit, should give the title of the communications proposal, state, chapter name, team member names and date.
- e. The communications project proposal should include the following sections:
 - 1) rationale for selecting the project, including background information that helps provide judges with an understanding of the project and the situation or locale where it will be implemented.
 - 2) Objectives of the project (What is the project to accomplish?).
 - 3) Audiences to be targeted with this project.
 - 4) Key messages or themes to communicate to the audiences.
 - 5) Media (brochures, newspapers, signage, radio, etc.,) selected to accomplish the project.
 - 6) Budget to produce and place communications materials.
 - 7) Criteria upon which project will be evaluated (these criteria should result in some indication of how well the project accomplishes the stated objectives).

2. Topic for communications project proposal and presentation

The communications project proposal and presentation will be based on the same topic. The topic will be chosen by the team from a theme of possible topics provided by national FFA. The themes of topics will rotate from year to year (see table).

YEAR	PROJECT THEME	POTENTIAL TOPICS
2006 & 2010	LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Responsible production practices; environmentally-friendly lawn, landscape and gardening practices; hazardous household waste management; use of pesticides and fertilizers; soil testing by homeowners and producers.
2007	FFA RECRUITING AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	Chapter recruitment campaigns; promotion of community or school-sponsored activities; promotion of chapter educational activities; alumni recruitment.
2008	SAFETY ISSUES	Tractor safety; pesticide/fertilizer applicator safety; livestock handling safety; ag mechanics safety; hunter safety; controlling noxious plants; ATV safety.
2009	FFA COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	Building local community support; publicizing community service projects; publicizing community and educational value of SAE; FFA-sponsored community events.

3. Communications project presentation (450 points/team)

Each team will be allowed 15 minutes to present their communications project to a panel of judges. Five points will be deducted for each major fraction of a minute, over the 15 minutes allowed for the presentation. Following the presentation, judges will be allowed five minutes to ask questions. When making the presentation to the judges, the team should present based on the following:

- a. **The presentation** should follow and cover all of the items listed in section A-5 of the Guidelines for Proposal.
- b. **Include examples** of materials that were (or would be) used in the execution of the proposal (ex. brochures, newsletters, news releases, photos, graphics, videos, radio tapes, etc.)
- c. **Team members** should not rely solely on equipment. Each team member must participate in the presentation.
- d. **Teams will have a total of 10 minutes** for setting-up and tearing-down equipment. (e.g., 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to tear down)

4. Presentation rounds

The communication presentation will be conducted in one round.

D. Individual Activities

1. Tests

a. Editing exercise

(25 points/individual; 125 points/team)

Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each team member will complete an editing exercise. They will be given a printed document that contains 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members will be required to use correct proofreader’s marks (see Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual). Style, grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes will be included. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

b. Communications quiz

(25 points/individual; 125 points/team)

Each team member will complete a quiz that covers basic elements important to the skill areas of journalistic writing and broadcasting, public relations writing and graphic design. Five questions will be written for each segment, which includes broadcast, public relations, news, visuals and ethics of communication. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

III. SCORING

Participants shall be ranked in numerical order on the basis of the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judge’s ranking of each participant then shall be added, and the winner will be that participant whose total ranking is the lowest. Other placings will be determined in the same manner (low point method of selection). Weighted rank scoring will be implemented to maintain point value emphasis between individual and team events.

COMMUNICATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

Rationale.....75
 Objectives of Project.....75
 Target Audiences to Address.....60
 Key Messages.....45
 Media Selection60
 Budget.....30
 Evaluation Criteria45
 Grammar, Punctuation,
 Spelling, Style.....60
PROPOSAL TOTAL 450

COMMUNICATION PROJECT PRESENTATION

Professionalism30
 Appearance (official dress), poise and posture, attitude/confidence,
 demeanor, ethical concerns
 Knowledge of Subject45
 Power of Expression/Verbal Skills.....90
 Directness, sincerity, emphasis verbal communication with judges,
 grammar and voice quality, pitch, articulation, pronunciation, force)
 Presentation Skills75
 Effectiveness of visual aids, use of visual aids, stage presence and
 organization of presentation following a logical order
 and flow
 Questions and Answers150
 ability to answer questions on the presentations which are asked by
 indicating originality, familiarity with subject and ability to think
 quickly
 Supporting Evidence30
 examples that document the materials used to develop the project
 Creativity and innovation.....30
 Presentation Total450

TESTS

Communications Quiz125
 (25 points per team member)
 Editing Exercise125
 (25 points per team member)
 Test Total250

TOTAL TEAM SCORE POSSIBLE

Communication Project Proposal.....450
 Project Presentation.....450
 Test Scores250
 Total Possible 1150

IV. TIEBREAKERS

- A. Team tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:
1. Proposal score
 2. Presentation rank
 3. Quiz score
 4. Editing exercise score

V. AWARDS

Top two teams will be recognized on stage at the State FFA Convention. The winner will represent Tennessee at the National FFA Convention.

VI. REFERENCES

This list of references is not intended to be inclusive. Other sources may be utilized and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation.

Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

Microsoft ® Office computer program

Bivins, T. *Public Relations Writings: The Essentials of Style and Format*, 4th edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-844-20351-3

Calver, P. (editor). *The Communicator's Handbook*.. 4th edition. Maupin House, Gainesville, FL 32607
<http://www.maupinhouse.com>

Harrower, T. *Newspaper Designer's Handbook, 5th edition*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. ISBN 0-07-249291-0

Kalbfeld, B. *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-07-136388-2

Agriculture Communications in the Classroom; Shannon Hartenstein, advised by Tracy A.

Rutherford, Ph.D. *Agricultural Communications and Journalism*, Kansas State University on behalf of the National FFA Organization Copyright 2002, National FFA Organization. This guide can be found on the Local Program Success Resource CD-ROM or at

http://www.ffa.org/dcd/National_FFA_Programs/Career_Development_Events/Ag_Communications/

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT

Name: _____

Chapter: _____

Team No.: _____

Communication Project Proposal Scorecard

	Possible Score	Team Score
Rationale	75	
Objectives of project	75	
Target audiences to address	60	
Key Messages	45	
Media Selection	60	
Budget	30	
Evaluation	45	
Grammar, punctuation, spelling, style	60	
Total Possible:	450	

Deduction for materials received after postmark deadline
10% or 45 points maximum

Team Score:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT

Name: _____

Chapter: _____

Team No.: _____

Communication Project Presentation Scorecard

	Possible Score	Team Score
Professionalism Appearance, poise posture, attitude/confidence, demeanor, ethical concerns	30	
Knowledge of Subject	45	
Power of Expression/Verbal Skills Directness, sincerity, emphasis, grammar, voice (quality, pitch, articulation, pronunciation, force)	90	
Presentation Skills Effectiveness of visual aids. Use of visual aids, stage presence and organization; presentation follows a logical order and flow.	75	
Questions and Answers Ability to answer judges' questions on the presentation. Responses indicate originality, familiarity with subject and ability to think quickly.	150	
Supporting Evidence Examples that document the materials used to develop the project	30	
Creativity and Innovation	30	
Gross Total Possible:	450	
Less 15 points per each major fraction of a minute over the 15 minute time limit		()
	Team Score:	

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT

Name: _____

Chapter: _____

Team No.: _____

Team Scorecard

	Possible Score	Team Score
Communications Project Proposal	450	
Communications Project Presentation	450	
Test Scores Communications Quiz – 100 pts. (25pts/member) Editing Exercise – 100 pts. (25pts/member)	250	
Total Possible:	1150	

Team Score: