

Speech Contest Rules

Age Divisions

Novice Division -- Students in grades 3, 4 and 5. Time Limit: 2-4 minutes.
Novice speakers may only compete in the AFR/OFU category.

Junior Division -- Students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Time Limit: 4-6 minutes.
Junior speakers may only compete in the AFR/OFU and AgriScience categories.

Intermediate Division -- Students in grades 9 and 10. Time Limit: 6-8 minutes.

Senior Division -- Students in grades 11 and 12. Time Limit: 6-8 minutes.

Speaking Categories

AFR/OFU • Participants may speak on the history or current activities of AFR/OFU Cooperative, and its fight to support agriculture and rural families through legislation, cooperation and educational opportunities.

AGRISCIENCE • Participants may choose any issue such as agronomic or horticultural science, biotechnology, genetics, engineering, farm safety, food production, mechanical engineering, use of technology such as satellites or any animal, plant science, and any science related topic, etc.

NATURAL RESOURCES • Participants may choose any issue such as natural resources conservation, water, air, forestry, aquaculture, energy, environment, horticulture, wildlife, soil, etc.

AGRIBUSINESS • Participants may choose any issue dealing with any topic such as cooperatives, value-added products, sales, service, traditional/non-traditional entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, commodities, advertising, economic development, etc.

AG POLICY • Participants may speak on laws, regulations or legislation for any agricultural issue. Participants may also choose any topic that deals with consumer awareness, literacy and advocacy programs, social media, food security, trade, tariffs, climate change, animal rights/animal welfare, etc.

Rules and Procedures

1. **Contestants will be disqualified if their speech fails to clearly mention American Farmers and Ranchers and Oklahoma Farmers Union. Either the acronym “AFR/OFU” or the full name “American Farmers and Rancher/ Oklahoma Farmers Union” is required. The full name must be included in all speeches.**
2. At all district contests, ALL students will enter the speaking room prior to the first speaker beginning his/her speech and will depart the speaking room following the last speaker’s delivery of speech. No exceptions unless prior arrangements have been made with the AFR/OFU Youth Coordinator before the contest begins. This provides an opportunity for speakers to learn from each other and reflects a real world environment when public speaking. Any contestant causing a distraction during another contestant’s speech will be disqualified.
3. Participants shall enter within their district as depicted on the accompanying map. Transfers out of districts are not allowed. The districts align with the five Oklahoma FFA Areas.
4. Contestants shall enter in only one division and category.
5. Speeches will be judged by a panel of judges individually scoring each speaker. Each judge will rank all contestants in order, highest score to lowest score. Collectively, judges will add ranking scores to select the category winner - lowest total ranking points wins the category. However, any contestant receiving a first place vote from two judges automatically wins. Scoring and potential points will include, but not be limited to, the following: stage presence, delivery, content and general effect.
6. At the discretion of the judges, the use of notes may be allowed, but could adversely affect scoring. Electronic devices, charts and props are prohibited.
7. There is no maximum limit to the number of contestants from one school or chapter.
8. First and second place district contest winners advance to the state contest. Third place winners will be alternates to the state contest.
9. Copies of speeches are not required at district contests, but state contest qualifiers must submit three copies of their speech to their category judges at the state contest, prior to speaking. This manuscript must be double-spaced and include a bibliography page. Failure to do so will be cause for disqualification. The judges will retain one copy of the manuscript that will be kept on file at the AFR Home Office.
10. **SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS** - Each speaker advancing to the state contest will be asked to present the pre-printed information card he/she received at their respective district contest at registration of the state contest. This card will have all of the student’s needed information to complete the scholarship award process in a timely manner. This card will be included with the letter that each advancing speaker will receive along with their award at their district contest. If the student does not present this card at registration, the student will not be allowed to speak in the State Finals Contest.
11. Contestants will be required to answer speech-related questions at the state finals. The maximum five minute question period will consist of one pre-determined question originating from the AFR Home Office, followed by questions determined by the panel of judges.
12. At the state contest, students will enter the room individually and speak before the three judges. No one else is allowed in the room at any time.
13. Once a participant has won a category at state, they will no longer be allowed to participate in the same category while still in that division. They are still eligible to speak in any of the other categories within the division.

Time Limits

Novice Division speeches are required to be a minimum of two minutes and a maximum of four minutes in length. Junior Division speeches are required to be a minimum of four minutes and maximum of six minutes in length. Intermediate and Senior Division speeches are required to be a minimum of six minutes and a maximum of eight minutes in length. Students who fail to meet this criteria will be penalized at the judge's discretion.

Awards and Recognition

The first three participants placing in each category and division at district contests will receive an award. Top two in each category and division will advance to the State Speech Contest on Saturday, December 4 at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. The first three participants placing in each category and division at the state contest will receive awards and scholarships in the amounts listed below.

Cash scholarships will be awarded to the State Winners in the following manner:

	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Junior</u>	<u>Intermediate</u>	<u>Senior</u>
1st:	\$100	\$150	\$200	\$300
2nd:	\$75	\$100	\$150	\$250
3rd:	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$200

For more information please contact: Tailor Atkinson, AFR Youth Coordinator at 405-218-5566

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