



2012-2015

CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT HANDBOOK

**TEXAS FFA ASSOCIATION
614 EAST 12TH STREET
AUSTIN, TX 78701**



Section 25.5 General CDE Rules

1. Each participant must be a bona fide dues-paying FFA member in good standing with the local chapter, state association and the national organization, be listed on the state roster, AND be under the age of 21 at the time of the national FFA event. All entries shall be verified upon entry to state event. Substitutes must be submitted to event providers to be verified by the Texas FFA Association.
2. Each participant must be enrolled in an agriculture, food and natural resources course at the time of the event or have completed an agriculture, food and natural resources course during the current academic year. Enrollment will be verified in case of a protest regarding eligibility. All national qualifying teams will verify enrollment prior to certification for national competition.
3. A member who has participated previously in a career development event at the national level shall NOT be eligible for the same event (excluding tractor technician and range). A student who has previously participated on a state-winning team shall not be eligible for future competition in that CDE in a state contest or in a contest that leads to qualification for the state competition in that event. **See specific rules for each contest.**
4. If a student who is ineligible for any reason, including, but not limited to academic failure, FFA membership, courses enrollment or participation on a national or state winning team, the student's score shall be nullified and the team's score shall be recalculated. If the event is a team activity or includes a team activity, the team with the ineligible team member shall be disqualified. If it is determined that a teacher or other school representative has knowingly entered an ineligible student, the provisions of general rule 21 shall be applied.
5. Area coordinators will certify all teams eligible to participate in the state events.
6. A chapter may enter one team in each event at the appropriate level: area for elimination events and state for events for which there is not a qualifying event. **In case of exceptions, contest rules will take precedence over the general rules.**
7. Team members must be from the same chapter. If a four-member team is entered, in events where allowed, the three highest individual scores are used to calculate the team score, with the exception of Food Science in which scores from all four members will be used. However, all four members are eligible for individual awards. The fourth member of a team placing first shall not be eligible for the same event in future years. Two-member teams are not eligible for team recognition or qualification for state competition. Teams that have more active participants than are allowed in a given event shall be disqualified once it is verified by event officials that the additional members are from the chapter in question. Event providers may opt to create a separate group rotation for alternates and tabulate at-large alternate scores.

8. Each event will be limited to a minimum of five teams or a maximum of 15 percent or major fraction thereof of the number of fully eligible teams (see TX FFA policy handbook 25.5(f)) participating with exception of the following:
 - (1) Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems - limited to three teams from each area;
 - (2) Tractor Technician - limited to two teams from each area.

With the exception of Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems, teams with the same team score for the last qualifying state berth shall be certified for state competition by the area coordinators. In CDE's in which an area has not reached its maximum number for qualification, teams from other areas may be certified for state competitions. At large qualifiers will be based upon total number of non-qualifying teams in an area compared to the places that are available to reach the number that an event provider has determined to be a maximum capacity for the facility.

9. There is no limit on the number of teams from each area that may participate in the following events: agricultural communications, agricultural sales, agronomy, cotton, environmental and natural resources, food science, forage evaluation, home site evaluation, marketing plan and range plant identification.
10. Students may use their notes made during the event for all events in which questions will be asked concerning the classes. No notes may be used in the written exams.
11. Scoring and tabulating are completed as quickly as possible in order that results can be announced and awards presented to winning teams. Announced results will not be official until 5:00 p.m. the second working day following the event. Incorrect results will be corrected and the verified state winner will represent Texas in national competition. Individual scores by team members will be made available on the day of the event and/or posted on judgincard.com. Awards will be presented as results are announced. Plaques and banners will be ordered based on the previous year's participation numbers. Ten teams will receive plaques or banners in events in which participation exceeds ten entries. In other events, the number of awards shall be the number of teams entered, with additional awards ordered as needed and mailed if necessary. Official FFA jackets are required for pictures to be published in the Texas FFA News Online.
12. The State CDE chairman shall appoint scoring monitors for each event and provide a list of monitors to the event site general superintendent. Scoring monitors shall examine scores and determine if any wide-spread aberration exists. Scores shall not be announced until verified by a scoring monitor.
13. Dress code for CDE participation is official FFA dress (for events requiring official dress) or closed-toed shoes, full length pants or slacks, collared shirts with sleeves. The only logos permissible on shirts are clothing brand, school or organizational

logos. (Clothing brands logos may not promote alcohol, tobacco or any other brand not consistent with the ideals and principals of the Texas FFA). Shirt collars must be full, folded collars. Capri-type pants shall be deemed to be shorts, not pants or slacks. Contestants not in dress code compliance shall be given an opportunity to remedy the non-compliant apparel. Contestants found in the contest in violation of the dress code shall be disqualified. A teacher committee appointed by the state CDE committee chair shall enforce dress code standards.

14. Individual contestants are responsible for providing accurate scoring information on each scan sheet including team number. Contest officials will not correct, enter or change scan sheet marks or errors. Individual scores will not be tabulated without the correct team number.
15. Neither team advisors nor team members of a state qualifying team are to visit the State CDE site for an event for which they have qualified. This prohibition begins on the day following area events hosted on that site. Violation will result in disqualification. Competing onsite as a bona fide 4-H member does not constitute violation of this rule.
16. Any communication, verbal or nonverbal, between participants during an event will be sufficient cause to eliminate the team. Possession of cell phones, pagers, programmable calculators or any other electronic devices which provide unfair advantage in the event shall not be permitted. Violators shall be disqualified.
17. Students may not bring pictures, printed material, or any items that have not been issued or authorized. Where non-programmable calculators are permitted (see individual events), the memory must be clear before entering the event location. The event superintendent will provide blank paper if it is necessary. Violation of these rules will result in team disqualification. Team members may bring a clean folder, scan sheet and/or a copy of the scan sheet for recording their placing's; in addition to the authorized materials from the Texas FFA that are posted on the individual rules pages for each respective event. A teacher committee will be responsible for ensuring compliance to this rule.
18. The section leaders will call for scan sheets. Once scan sheets are submitted to a section leader, they will not be returned to the student.
19. During any event, students are not permitted to leave the event area unless accompanied by an event official. Event materials are not to be taken from the site.
20. Teachers should notify contest officials concerning students with physical disabilities at the time of entry. Requests for special consideration will be determined on a case by case basis. Assistance will be provided by a contest official and shall not constitute an advantage for that student or a disadvantage for other contestants. Additional time cannot be provided for completion of events.

21. If any cause for disqualification is considered a willful act of defiance and the act has the approval of the teacher, the school the student represents will be barred from participation in state events until reinstated by the state executive board. Any advisor found guilty of willfully entering ineligible members in any FFA event will have the school where he/she serves barred from participation until reinstated by the state executive board.
22. Teachers are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, and students should adhere to the highest standards of sportsmanship and integrity. Faculty member/ contest superintendents may ask teachers to leave a contest area if the code of professionalism is broken. Students who violate the tenets of sportsmanship during an event may be removed by a facility event superintendent or the general contest superintendent.
23. General and contest superintendents, assistants, and section leaders will exercise every effort to enforce all contest rules. Event superintendents shall notify the general superintendent for that event site of all disqualifications and the circumstances surrounding incidents meriting disqualification. The state FFA office shall be notified of all such disqualifications.
24. Appeals concerning interpretation and enforcement of rules shall be handled directly by the event site general superintendent. Appeals regarding area or district standing in an event shall be addressed by the corresponding executive committee. Appeals regarding qualification for state competitions shall be submitted in writing to the area executive committee no later than 5:00 p.m. on the first working day following the event. Teachers may appeal area rulings to the state executive board. All such appeals must be submitted to the state executive director by 5:00 p.m. on the first working day following the area decision. Should an area executive committee fail to act on an appeal in a timely manner, such appeal may be made to the state executive director. Persons whose judgment may be influenced by vested interest or a pre-existing relationship that may impair their ability to be fair and impartial must excuse themselves from all deliberations concerning appeals.
25. ENTRY FEE: The entry fee is \$50 per team; except Agricultural Mechanics which is \$80 per team. All registration is electronic via <http://www.judgingcard.com>. Entry fees must be paid in accordance to state FFA policies regarding payment of entries and payment policies of the events entry management provider. No refund can be made for teams which do not participate. Entries not made on judgingcard.com on or before the deadline established by the event providers risk disqualification or may be charged a late fee. If the event qualification dates do not allow for compliance to established timelines, providers shall accept these entries and waive late fees. Teachers must notify providers of such circumstances.

26. Institutional providers will be responsible for selecting qualified personnel for conducting each event.

CDE TEAM CHART

Event	Team Members	Area Qualifying Event	National Qualifying Event?
Agronomy	3-4	No	Yes
Ag Communications	3	No	
Agricultural Mechanics	3-4	Yes – Max 3 teams per area	Yes
Agricultural Sales	3-4	No	Yes
Cotton	3-4	No	No
Dairy Cattle Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Entomology	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	No
Environmental & Natural Res.	3-4	No	Yes
Farm Business Management	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Floriculture	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Food Science & Technology	4	No	Yes
Forage Evaluation	3-4	No	No
Forestry*	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Home Site Evaluation	3-4	No	Yes
Horse Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Land Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Livestock Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Marketing Plan	3	No	Yes
Meats Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Milk Quality and Products	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Nursery/Landscape	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Poultry Evaluation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Range & Pasture Plant ID	3-4	No	No
Range	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Tractor Technician	3	Yes – Max 2 teams per area	No
Vet Tech.	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Wool	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	Yes
Wildlife & Recreation	3-4	Yes – min of 5 per area or max 15% of eligible teams	No

*Forestry can qualify through area qualifier OR through the Soil and Water Conservation District

27. Texas FFA Association Inclement Weather Policy:

Inclement Weather

For state events, the state executive director shall work proactively with providers to assess potential weather and road hazards which could create travel risks for students and teachers. Should inclement weather pose a potential travel risk for groups from any part of the state, the executive director shall consult the state executive board and appropriate experts (such as but not limited to National Weather Service forecasters) to assess potential hazards and consider options for amending event start times or participation schedules to facilitate safer travels, event postponement or cancellation. The Texas FFA Association shall make student safety the top priority in all such decisions.

If possible, the executive director or his or her designee shall notify teachers via e-mail and/or the emergency text messaging system of any impending event decisions regarding inclement weather.

District and area associations are to work with their respective executive committees in assessing weather-related travel risks. The state executive director shall work with area event coordinators in adjusting state entry and material submission deadlines for area events postponed due to inclement weather.

Lightning Safety

Lightning may be the most frequently encountered severe storm hazard endangering physically active people each year. Millions of lightning flashes strike the ground annually in the United States, causing nearly 100 deaths and 400 injuries. Three quarters of all lightning casualties occur between May and September, and nearly four fifths occur between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm, which coincides with the hours for most career development events held in field conditions.

Providers should postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity. Student safety must be the first priority. If the provider deems it necessary to collect and hold scan sheets, students must be moved to a safe location before such collections are conducted.

Recommendations for Lightning Safety: Inclement Weather

For state events, the state executive director shall work proactively with providers to assess potential weather and road hazards which could create travel risks for students and teachers. Should inclement weather pose a potential travel risk for groups from any part of the state, the executive director shall consult the state executive board and appropriate experts (such as but not limited to National Weather Service forecasters) to assess potential hazards and consider options for amending event start times or participation schedules to facilitate safer travels, event postponement or cancellation. The Texas FFA Association shall make student safety the top priority in all such decisions.

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Recommendations for Lightning Safety

1. Establish a chain of command that identifies who is to make the call to remove individuals from the field.
2. Name a designated weather watcher (A person who actively looks for the signs of threatening weather and notifies the chain of command if severe weather becomes dangerous). Lightning meters are recommended but not required. Most athletic departments own these meters.
3. Have a means of monitoring local weather forecasts and warnings.
4. Designate a safe shelter for each venue that can accommodate the anticipated number of contestants. See examples below.
5. Use the Flash-to-Bang count to determine when to go to safety. By the time the flash-to-bang count approaches thirty seconds all individuals should be already inside a safe structure. See method of determining Flash-to-Bang count below.
6. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.

7. Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, or light poles.
8. Assume that lightning safe position (crouched on the ground weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear "crackling" noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.
9. Observe the following basic first aid procedures in managing victims of a lightning strike:

Activate local EMS

- Lightning victims do not "carry a charge" and are safe to touch.
 - If necessary, move the victim with care to a safer location.
 - Evaluate airway, breathing, and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
 - Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures, and/or burns.
1. All individuals have the right to leave a career development event site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.

Definitions

Safe Shelter:

1. A safe location is any substantial, frequently inhabited building. The building should have four solid walls (not a dug out), electrical and telephone wiring, as well as plumbing, all of which aid in grounding a structure.
2. The secondary choice for a safer location from the lightning hazard is a fully enclosed vehicle, including a school bus, with a metal roof and the windows completely closed. It is important to not touch any part of the metal framework of the vehicle while inside it during ongoing thunderstorms.
3. It is not safe to shower, bathe, or talk on landline phones while inside of a safe shelter during thunderstorms (cell phones are considered safe).

Flash-to-Bang:

To use the flash-to-bang method, begin counting when sighting a lightning flash. Counting is stopped when the associated bang (thunder) is heard. Divide this count by five to determine the distance to the lightning flash (in miles). For example, a flash-to-bang count of thirty seconds equates to a distance of six miles. Lightning has struck from as far away as 10 miles from the storm center.

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