

For reference only – application must be submitted via the online award portal.

**Indiana Farm Bureau
Achievement Award Application**

For use in the 2024 Indiana Farm Bureau Contest ONLY

Purpose:

Recognize Indiana Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ag Professionals for their achievements in production agriculture and leadership.

Background:

The Indiana Farm Bureau Achievement Award application is developed from the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) National Achievement Award application. The winner of the Indiana state contest will represent the state at the AFBF convention, held annually in January.

Selection of the winning competitor is based on their efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks. The winner of the state contest will receive an all expenses paid trip to the AFBF convention, held annually in January.

Please note that the Indiana Farm Bureau Achievement Award application varies from the AFBF application. The state winner will be required to complete the AFBF application prior to the submission deadline in early December. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

Eligibility:

The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their gross income subject to farm and/or ranch risks.

- An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the law applicable to the state Farm Bureau organization. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
- Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with their county Farm Bureau. The individual or spouse/spousal-equivalent shall have reached their 18th birthday at the time they qualify for the national competition and shall not have reached their 36th birthday by the completion of the competition. Competitors qualify at the time the national application is submitted and the completion of the competition is the day awards are given out (exact date TBD – January 2025).
- Applicant(s) must be in attendance on-site at the Indiana State YF&AP awards judging day (exact date TBD, typically in late June/early July).
- Applicant(s) must be actively engaged in farming and/or ranching, with the majority of their gross income coming from production agriculture. Applicant(s) must have at least three years of financial records showing that the majority of income came from production agriculture.
- Applicant(s) may only win one YF&AP award area per year (Rising Star, Excellence in Agriculture, Achievement Award, Discussion Meet).

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- Current members of the Indiana YF&AP State Committee are not eligible to compete. Past members of the committee may compete.
- Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
- Previous state winners of the Indiana Farm Bureau Achievement Award are not eligible to compete. Previous runners-up are eligible to compete again.
- Current employees or agents of county, state and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as an entity owned or controlled in whole or in part by another entity through, for example, ownership (including partial ownership) or positions on the board of directors. Past employees and interns who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events at the state or national level since January 1, 2019, are ineligible.

Judging

- The entry form and application of each entry will be coded upon receipt by INFB. The applicant's name and county will not be revealed to the judges until judging is completed.
- A panel of three qualified judges will select the state winner and finalists. The top three competitors will be interviewed by the same three judges who reviewed the written applications.
- Interviews will be up to 20 minutes in length and are intended to clear up any "gray areas" which may arise from the written application.

Helpful entry form & application guidelines

- Do not use applicant's name, the name of his/her state or county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant's state beyond the entry form.
- The entry form and application must be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, etc.) for questions I-VI. Applicants must use "A1" and "A2" to denote each applicant for all of question VII.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms.

Acknowledgement of Eligibility:

I have read and understand the eligibility requirements for this award. To the best of my knowledge, I am eligible to compete in the award area.

Judging Guidelines, Rubric, Assets, and Basic Information

All assets required to complete this application are located on [the Achievement Award Website](#). Applicants are responsible for visiting this website and reviewing the information there, prior to completing this application.

Notice of State Award vs. AFBF Award

Indiana Farm Bureau's Achievement Award application was created using the AFBF application. Please note that the application you are about to complete is the **Indiana version only**. Should you be chosen as the state winner, you will be required to complete the AFBF National award application. The national application is much more in-depth and will require you to provide very detailed financial records

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(debt/asset ratios, income, expenses and net profit for three years verified by banker/loan officer or tax accountant and notarized) and more information about your farm/ranch. Indiana Farm Bureau staff will be available to assist you in the completion of the application. To view a previous year's AFBF application, [click here](#).

Questions

Are you applying as an individual or as a couple? (select one)

Applicant 1 (A1): _____

Applicant 2 (A2): (if applying as a couple): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone (A1): _____ Phone (A2): _____

Email (A1): _____ Email (A2): _____

Date of Birth (A1): _____ Date of Birth (A2): _____

1. Personal Background

- a. Briefly tell us about yourself, your family, education, and personal interests (maximum characters: 2,000)
- b. Please describe your farm/ranch including how you acquired it, acres owned and rented, years in operation, crops and livestock. Include any other related business enterprises and their relationship to the total farm/ranch. (maximum characters, about 3,000)
- c. Why is advocating for agriculture important? How do you advocate for agriculture? (maximum characters: 1,500)

2. Scope of your farm/ranch

- a. Explain the ownership structure of your farm/ranch and your vested interest. Explain duties and decision-making responsibilities as well as specific roles. Please include all enterprises in your explanation, if applicable. (maximum characters: 5000)

3. Growth & Achievements

- a. How has your farm/operation grown? Be sure to share where you were vs. where you are now and list successes, challenges, and highlight contributions. Describe production efficiency growth achieved since your first year of owning/managing your farm/ranch. (maximum characters: 5000)

4. Management Decisions

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- a. Please explain how your understanding of the market has led you to create strategies that make your operation thrive and ensure its success now and into the future. Discuss up to two impactful strategic or management decisions you have made on your farm/ranch, why you made them, and the changes that resulted from implementing those decisions. (maximum characters: 3500)

5. Goals and Planning

- a. Moving forward, what short-term and long-term goals do you have for your farm/ranch? Explain how you plan to achieve these goals. (maximum characters: 2500)

6. Resiliency

- a. Describe any major business challenges your farm/ranch has encountered and what you did to overcome them (i.e., policy, financial, family, management, etc.).

7. Financial Success

- a. Describe the practices you use to evaluate the financial success of your farm/ranch, including ratios or analysis, record keeping systems and/or advisors used to support successful financial management. Describe where you see your greatest financial strengths and weaknesses in your farm/ranch business. (maximum characters: about 4000)
- b. Is any off-farm income earned by your or your spouse? How is that income used? (maximum characters: 1000)

Financial Success: Part 2

- c. Please complete the “Achievement Award Financial Page” document, located on the Indiana Farm Bureau Achievement Award website under “downloadable resources” and upload the final document below.

8. Leadership Experience

(From age 18 to current. Indicate A1, A2, or Both when applicable)

List Farm Bureau leadership roles, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant, including service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years and level of involvement (county, state, national). Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2020-2021)

- a. **County Farm Bureau**
- b. **State/American Farm Bureau**
- c. **Leadership in other agricultural organizations**

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List other agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. (i.e. Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, 4-H, etc.). Please include organization, description and years of involvement. Example: A1 & A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2019 – present)

d. Other leadership experience

List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e. civic/service clubs, church, school, volunteer leadership, etc.) Please include organization, description and years of involvement. Example: A1 – Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2021)

9. Leadership Growth & Development

- a. Describe your most impactful leadership experience and any actions that you have taken to better yourself as a leader or businessperson. (maximum characters: 2500)
- b. Describe your goals for leadership growth and development. (maximum characters: 1500)