



# **Agricultural Communications CDE**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event is to provide individuals with communication skills necessary to pursue career opportunities.

Representing agriculturalists across the world, these individuals possess the skills to effectively communicate agricultural messages to the public, both involved and not involved in agriculture. Because a large percentage of the population lacks agricultural understanding, it is important for agricultural communicators to provide timely, accurate information on current issues and events.

## **Superintendent**

The superintendent for this event is Mr. Nelson Powell, Senior Relationship Manager, Rabo AgriFinance, 310 Bratton Drive, Suite A, Garner, NC 27529. Phone: 855-818-6555.

Comments and questions may also be directed to Mrs. Carmen Bracey, State FFA Coordinator, NCSU, Campus Box 7654, Raleigh, NC 27695-7654. Phone: 919.513.0216 Fax: 919.513.3201

Email: [carmen\\_bracey@ncsu.edu](mailto:carmen_bracey@ncsu.edu)

## **Eligibility**

This event is open to all FFA chapters and FFA members in good standing. FFA members may not participate in a Career Development Event that leads to a state level event after July 1, following their high school/early college graduation. Previous state winners are ineligible. Members that have participated in a previous national event in this area are ineligible. This event will be held during the North Carolina State FFA Convention.

No alternates are allowed in state events. Any alternate found participating in a state event will result in team disqualification.

The use or possession of cellular phones or any other mobile electronic communication device is prohibited during any state-level career development event. Any violation of this rule by any team member will result in total team disqualification.

Any member found cheating in any state-level career development event will result in total team disqualification for that event.

At the North Carolina FFA State Convention, participation in more than one FFA CDE event is permitted as long as events are not being held concurrently and no special provisions are required to facilitate participation with the exception that parliamentary procedure and public speaking and parliamentary procedure and Creed speaking which are held concurrently will allow dual participation and special provisions for flighting.



Teams will consist of four members.

Official FFA dress consist of: Black slacks and black socks or black skirt and black nylons, white collared blouse or white collared shirt, official FFA tie or official FFA scarf, black dress shoes with closed heel and toe, and an official FFA jacket zipped to the top.

The North Carolina FFA Association strives to promote a positive image at all Official FFA Events. The dress code policy was established to address the issue of appropriate attire at all Official FFA Events. Members should adhere to this policy for all events. A ten percent reduction will be applied to all individual scores from a chapter if a participant from that chapter violates the dress code during that career event.

The North Carolina FFA Association, in keeping with the FFA mission and purposes, does not permit the use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or Juuls at any FFA facility or at any FFA activity.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, North Carolina FFA will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Please direct accommodation requests through the CDE/LDE Accommodation Request [Form](#). If the accommodation can be made for all and/or doesn't provide an unfair advantage, then every effort will be made to provide the accommodation. Requests can be accommodated more effectively if notice is provided at least 10 days before the event.

## **Middle School Participation**

Middle school students and teams may participate in any Career Development Event or Leadership Development Event. The top three middle school participants will be recognized. Middle school participants should designate during registration.

## **Event Format**

### Part I: Communications Project Proposal and Presentation - 200 Points

Teams will play the role of communications consultants and will develop a media plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a client with a communications need and a budget. The scenario will be chosen by National FFA in January of that year. Guidance on the event is presented below. At the state career development event, the team will make an oral presentation of the proposal.

A media plan is a written document that describes the following:

- Objectives – What the group wants to accomplish with the media plan
- Target Audience – Description of whom the client is trying to reach, including demographic data
- Strategic plan and tactics – Ways in which the objectives can be accomplished
- Timeline – When the objectives will be accomplished
- Evaluation – How the results will be measured
- Budget – How much the plan will cost



### Media Plan Guidelines

- The media plan should be a maximum of 15 pages using 8.5" x 11" white bond paper
- Double spaced with 1" margins
- 12 point Times New Roman
- Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)
- Staple the proposal in upper left-hand corner, **DO NOT** bind or place in folders, special binders, or covers

The media plan should include the following sections:

- Cover Page
  - Must include the title of the media plan, CDE name, chapter, team members and date
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary (1-page max.) – Brief description of the contents of the media plan
- Introduction and Overview (2-page max.)
  - Introduction – A brief background of the issue/topic and a statement of the problem establishing the need for this media plan
  - Overview – A brief preview of what is contained in the plan
- Audience (2-page max.)
- Strategic Plan (6 pages max.)
  - Include your objective, key message or themes
- Timeline (1-page max.)
- Evaluation (1-page max.)
- Budget (1-page max.)
- Conclusion (1-page max.)
- References
  - Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)

Media Plans are to be submitted to the State office before 5pm on June 1, prior to the State FFA Convention.

The Project Theme is released by National FFA and can be found on the CDE [page](#).

### Part II: Presentation - 125 points

The communications project proposal and presentation will be based on the same topic.



The team will present its communications plan to a panel of judges. When making the presentation to the judges, the team should present based on the following:

- The presentation should follow and cover all of the items listed in the guidelines for the plan.
- Include examples of materials prepared during the execution of the plan (ex. Brochures, newsletters, news releases, photos, graphics, videos, radio tapes, etc.)
- Team members should not rely solely on equipment. Each team member must participate in the presentation.
- **Time Limit:** A maximum time limit for the presentation will be 15 minutes with a warning provided by the judges at 10 minutes. A penalty of a one-point deduction from the presentation score per minute over the maximum allowance of 15 minutes shall be taken. 5 minutes will be provided for questions; 5 minutes for setup; and 5 minutes for take-down.

### Part III: Communications Quiz - 100 points

Team members will individually complete a 25-question multiple choice quiz (1 point per question). The test questions will focus on general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry. Questions will come from the bolded reference to this guide (excluding sports guide lines). Team members may not use a style guide or dictionary.

### **Scoring**

<i>Media Plan</i>	200
<i>Media Plan Presentation</i>	180
<i>Communications Quiz</i>	100

### **Procedure for Determining the State Event Winner when Scores are Tied**

In the event a tie score exists, apply the following methods in sequential order until the tie is broken:

1. Compare the media plan scores.
2. Compare the presentation scores.

### **State Awards**

The following awards will be presented annually at the state FFA convention provided sponsorship is available:

State Winning Team  
*First place team plaque and travel award*

Second Place Team  
*Second place team plaque*

Third Place Team  
*Third place team plaque*



## **National Career Development Event Participation**

State winning teams advancing to the national career development event will be automatically registered for the national event. It is the responsibility of the FFA Chapter Advisor to complete all necessary national certification and waiver forms and return them to the state FFA Coordinator by the assigned due date.

State winning CDE teams that choose not to participate at the national level should contact the state office by Sept. 1 prior to national convention. Teams that fail to inform the state office prior to Sept. 1 will be ineligible to participate in that same CDE for the next year (chapters may appeal to the State FFA Board of Directors). Teams that do not compete at the National Convention will be required to pay back the travel award.

## **References**

Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

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

Strunk and White (1979). *The Elements of Style*, Allyn & Bacon.

Ability to use word processing and spreadsheet software

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

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

Telg, R. and T. Irani. *Agricultural Communication in Action: A Hands-On Approach*, 1st edition. Cengage/Delmar Publishing, ISBN 1111317143 (Available in October 2011)

National FFA CDE Page – Past CDE Material

[FFA.org/resources/cde/questions-and-answers](http://FFA.org/resources/cde/questions-and-answers)



## Agricultural Communications

Student Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Team No: \_\_\_\_\_

### Media Plan Proposal Scorecard

	Possible Score	Team Score
<b>Plan Includes all Requirements</b> Cover page, titles and names on cover page, table of contents, does not exceed page limit, double spaced, one inch margins, page numbers, required headings (-1 point per missing item)	10	
<b>Proposal is Relevant to Scenario</b> Entire narrative focuses on addressing client's specific public communication needs	10	
<b>Executive Summary</b> Adequately explains the plan without reading the entire document	10	
<b>Introduction</b> Provide adequate background of the issue	15	
<b>Description of Audience</b> Clearly describes (including demographics) who is targeted by the media plan	15	
<b>Detailed Strategic Plan</b> Clearly states objectives, explains how objectives will be met; explains why chosen mediums are appropriate to meet objectives; describes how plan will be executed	30	
<b>Timeline</b> Explains duration of plan and timing of media tactics	10	
<b>Method of Evaluation</b> Proposes methods to determine if the objectives were met	15	
<b>Budget</b> Explains all costs associated with implementing the media plan	20	
<b>Conclusion</b>	10	
<b>Appendices (3 required)</b>	30	
<b>Quality of Writing</b> Grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure	25	
<b>Total Points</b>	200	



## Agricultural Communications

Student Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Team No: \_\_\_\_\_

### Communication Project Presentation Scorecard

	Possible Score	Team Score
<b>Professionalism</b> Appearance, poise, posture, attitude/confidence, demeanor, ethical concerns, dress	10	
<b>Knowledge of subject</b>	15	
<b>Power of expression</b> Directness, sincerity, emphasis	10	
<b>Verbal Skills</b> Grammar, voice (quality, pitch, articulation, pronunciation, force)	40	
<b>Questions and Answers</b> Ability to answer question on the presentations which are asked by the judges indicating originality, familiarity with subject and ability to think quickly	50	
<b>Supporting Evidence</b> Examples that document the materials used to develop the project	10	
<b>Creativity and Innovation</b>	15	
<b>Total Score</b>	180	
<b>Time Limit Deductions</b>		
	<b>Team Score</b>	

