



**Collegiate Agriculture Leader's  
Spring Competition  
March 14, 2008  
Holiday Inn, Visalia, CA**

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## DISCUSSION MEET

- Contest Time:** 8:45 a.m.
- Category:** Individual
- Entries:** One entry per school
- Purpose:** The Discussion Meet is a competition promoted by the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Committee. The purpose is to improve basic command of discussion skills. The Discussion Meet is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member. The four fundamentals of general discussion are cooperation, constructive criticism, problem solving and communication. The contestant's responsibility is to exchange ideas and information in an effort to solve a problem.
- Structure of Contest:** The contest moderator will conduct an orientation where the first topic will be announced. Subsequent topics will be announced following each round of discussion.
- Flow of Competition:** Generally, the discussion should follow these steps:
1. State problem or need.
  2. Explore, define, and understand problem or need.
  3. Identify causes of problem or need.
  4. Elaborate all possible alternative solutions.
  5. Evaluate and compare alternatives.
  6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution.
  7. Arrive at ways to implement the solution.
- National Discussion Meet Website:**  
<http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=young.discuss>

**Hints for Contestants:**

- The discussion should not be "conversation" or aimless talk, nor should the participant take the role of a persuasive speaker. The participant should try to cooperatively shed light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position.
- A successful participant is a productive thinker rather than an emotional persuader. Sometimes it's reasonable to change positions whenever new information and ideas are presented.
- This is not a panel symposium wherein each participant, in turn, makes a presentation, with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in cooperative problem solving, with the questions, answers and statements coming from any person at any time. The moderator plays an inactive role during the discussion.

**2008 Discussion Meet Questions/Topics (see below for topic resources):**

In light of recent decisions affecting private property, what steps should be taken to secure the rights of property owners?

- Land Value Assessment
- Zoning
- Water / Mineral Rights
- Production Practice Limitations

What role will US Agriculture play in responding to today's global issues?

- Promise and Challenge of Developing Economies
- Trade Issues
- Agriterrorism
- Climate Changes and Natural Disasters

What is the public perception of the family farm and how does that perception impact future agricultural policy discussion?

- Corporate Farms
- Lifestyle Farms
- Government Payments / Privacy
- Media
- Agritainment/ AgriTourism

In today's environment, with the increasing demand for water, how does rural America maintain a strong voice among competitors?

- Preserving Rights
- Residential vs. Rural
- Storage (reservoirs)
- Government Regulations / Laws
- Proper Usage

Scoring:

### Discussion Meet Rating Sheet

_____	Superior - 100
_____	Excellent - 80
_____	Good - 60
_____	Fair - 40
_____	Poor - 20
Total of 700 points possible.	
(1) COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE: (200 points)	
A. Listening, asking pertinent questions, airing all points of view, securing major agreement, minimizing major differences. (100 points)	
B. Courtesy to other participants, encourage discussion from other participants. (100 points)	
(2) PROBLEM SOLVING AND IMPLEMENTATION: (100 points)	
Ability and judgment in seeking answers and solutions, planning and organizational understanding, implementing action programs.	
(3) DELIVERY: (100 points)	
Voice quality, loudness, clear enunciation, communication skills, desirable sentence structure, interesting choice of words.	
(4) ANALYSIS OF TOPIC OR PROBLEM: (100 points)	
Does Competitor attempt to identify problem causes and remain on topic? Knowledge, extent and accuracy of facts.	
(5) OPENING STATEMENT: (100 points)	
Definition of problem, importance, causes, effects, relevancy of problem.	
(6) CLOSING STATEMENT: (100 points)	
Ability to summarize discussion and formulate direction for the future.	
<b>TOTAL</b>	Total score for each Competitor is to be tabulated by Judge. Any tie scores are to be broken by Judge.