



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FAIR ASSOCIATION**

Agricultural Prepared Public Speaking & Discussion Meet Contests

CONTEST DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024

ENTRY FEE: \$20 FOR EACH CONTEST

CONTEST LOCATION: UNITUS MEDICARE EXHIBIT BUILDING

PUBLIC SPEAKING REGISTRATION: 9:00 AM – 9:45 AM

PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST BEGINS: 10:00 AM

DISCUSSION MEET REGISTRATION: 1:00 PM – 1:45 PM

DISCUSSION MEET CONTEST BEGINS: 2:00 PM

Contest Coordinators: Mason & Shannon Parish

The Montgomery County Fair Association Agricultural Prepared Public Speaking and Discussion Meet contests are subject to the Montgomery County Fair General Rules and to the Special Rules of this contest. Where Special Rules conflict with other rules, Special Rules prevail. Contestants must reside in Montgomery County, Texas, and/or attend a Montgomery County School.

Any dispute or issue with the contest or the rules laid out below will be presented to the Contest Coordinator(s), who will consult with members of the Montgomery County Agricultural Public Speaking and Discussion Meet committee. Their decision(s) will be final.

Special Rules for the Agricultural Public Speaking and Discussion Meet Contests

- 1. Entry Fee:** Contestants will be charged an entry fee of \$20 made payable to the Montgomery County Fair.
- 2.** Entries **MUST** be submitted prior to the start of the contest following the directions provided on the entry form.
- 3. Eligibility:** This contest is open to youth within the age divisions below and should be enrolled in and attending a public or private elementary or secondary school in

Montgomery County (including home school). Contestants must be academically eligible.

4. **Divisions** are as follows based on the participant's grade level on the day of the event:
 - **Junior Division:** 3rd – 8th grade
 - **Senior Division:** 9th – 12th grade
5. **Entry Limitation:** Contestants may compete in both the Prepared Public Speaking and the Discussion Meet contests; however, contestants are limited to one (1) individual entry/speech. The speech must be the result of the student's effort and ability. For the Discussion Meet, the student must rely on their own knowledge and not a set of resources. Team entries are **not** allowed. There is no limit to the number of entries a chapter or club may submit.
6. **Presentation Schedule Conflict:** Students with conflicts due to participation in other Montgomery County events held on the same day of the contest should notify the Contest Coordinator during project set-up to arrange a presentation time. Once the contest begins, it is the responsibility of each contestant to notify the Contest Coordinator should a conflict arise with their assigned presentation time.
7. **Public Viewing:**
 - a. If there are enough students to hold a preliminary round, only contest officials, judges, and participants are allowed to observe the preliminary rounds.
 - b. In the final round for senior discussion meet, members of the public will be allowed in the judging area and seated in a designated location. The public is not allowed to ask questions or comment.
 - c. The 1st place senior prepared public speaker is expected to deliver their speech for the public during the awards ceremony.
8. **Awards:**
 - a. An awards ceremony will follow the events. Winners are encouraged to be present to receive awards. Winners will also be announced and showcased following the event.
 - b. The following prizes will be awarded in each division for both contests:

Place	Award
1st Place	Buckle; Cash prize
2nd Place	Buckle; Cash prize
3rd Place	Cash prize
4th Place	Cash prize (discussion meet only)
 - c. **Tie Breaker:** In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined based on the number of low ranks. If a tie still exists, the tie will be broken on rankings of the question responses (Prepared Public Speaking) or the open discussion ranking (Discussion Meet).

9. **Eligibility of Previous Winners:** Winners of the Prepared Public Speaking and Discussion Meet contests are eligible to participate in subsequent years, but they must present a new speech topic or angle.
10. **Preparation Resources:** Participants are encouraged to use their Extension agents, agricultural educators, debate teachers, agricultural and natural resources professionals, Montgomery County Farm Bureau representatives, and/or other professionals as resources to help prepare for the contest. All work and research must be led by the student, but they are encouraged to network and learn from people working in the topic area related to their topic.
11. **Dress Attire:** Contestants should wear presentable attire. Business attire or Official 4-H or FFA attire is recommended.

Agricultural Prepared Public Speaking Contest Rules

1. **Statement of Originality:** Each contestant must submit a signed statement of originality on the entry form in advance of the Agricultural Prepared Public Speaking Contest.
2. **Contest Format:** The event will be conducted using the following format:
 - a. **Rounds:** If there are more than 20 entries, a preliminary round and a final round will be held.
 - b. Preliminary judging will occur in groups. Contestants will be assigned to a judging group. Contestants **MUST** compete in their assigned groups. Changes may only be approved by the Contest Superintendents, Committee Members, or Show Management. The top-scoring speeches will advance to the final round, with the number of finalists determined by the Contest Superintendents and at the discretion of the preliminary round judges. The finalists in the Junior and Senior divisions will compete for the overall winner in their respective divisions.
 - c. Contestants will randomly draw to determine the speaking order for the final round. Final round contestants will be evaluated and ranked by a panel of judges without regard to the topic area.
 - d. **Time:** Each speech shall be timed:
 - i. Junior division:
 1. Speeches must be between 4–6 minutes
 - ii. Senior division:
 1. Speeches must be between 6–8 minutes
 - iii. Time deductions will apply as follows:
 1. Under the minimum time requirement—one point per ten seconds.
 - a. Juniors will not receive point deductions for speeches below the minimum if their speech is longer than two minutes.
 2. Over the maximum—one point per ten seconds.

3. Contestants will be given a discrete, one-minute remaining warning.
 - e. **Question/Answer Period:** Up to 5 minutes of question-and-answer periods will follow each speech. At the end of 5 minutes, time will be called, and all questioning will end. If time is called during the student's answer to the last question, the contestant may complete the answer.
 - f. **Props:** The use of props (i.e., pets, signs, electronics, objects, etc.) are prohibited. A violation of this rule will result in contestant disqualification.
3. **Judging Criteria:** Judging criteria will be informed by guidelines established by the National FFA Organization and Texas 4-H.
4. **Presentation Area:** The contest will be held in the Exhibit Building on the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. If necessary to move the contest, contestants will be notified using the contact information provided on the contestant entry form.
5. **Prepared Public Speaking Topic Areas:** Contestants will not be judged by the topic (i.e., agriscience technology, agricultural policy, etc.). Instead, contestants will be evaluated and ranked by their display of knowledge of their topic, speaking mechanics, and ability to answer questions. The top contestants will advance to the final round.
 - a. **Speech Topic Areas:** Each contestant must select a speech topic from the designated topic areas. Contestants may write their own spin on the topics, but they must fit the topic areas.

Topic Areas:

- **Agriscience Technology:** Any current or future subject that relates to topics such as biotechnology, biogenetics, bioengineering, mechanical engineering, new agritechnology applications, global positioning and other satellite technology, or other agricultural innovations.
- **Agribusiness or Agrimarketing:** Any current and future subject that deals with topics such as cooperatives, sales, service, entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, commodities, hedging, advertising, etc.
- **Agricultural Advocacy, Education, Leadership or Communication:** This subject should either advocate for agriculture, discuss methods of advocacy/education, communicate agricultural information to the public, or highlight leadership opportunities in agriculture.
- **Agricultural Heritage:** Any current or future subject that deals with topics such as Texas or Montgomery County agricultural history or culture.
- **Agricultural Policy:** Any current or future subject that deals with topics such as domestic farm issues or policies, legal issues, international trade, international competition, agricultural aid, or global food and fiber needs.
- **Economic Development:** Any current or future subject that relates to growing the economy of the agricultural industry or improving the livelihood of agriculturists in the community.

- **Environment and Natural Resources:** Any current or future subject that deals with topics such as soil, water, air, water quality, wildlife, forestry, aquaculture, conservation, recreation, energy, or other environmental issues.
- **Plant or Animal Science:** Any current or future subject that relates to any aspect(s) of livestock or specialty animal industries, animal science issues, local crops, agronomic sciences, horticulture, or potential future commodities for the area.
- **Sustainable Bioeconomy:** Studies related to the production of renewable biological resources and the use of normally wasted byproducts as value-added products.

Discussion Meet Contest Rules

1. **Documentation:** No documentation is needed prior to the competition.
2. **Discussion Meet Contest Format:**
 - The contestants will discuss pre-selected topics using four bases for the general discussion: cooperation, constructive criticism, problem-solving, and communication.
 - The competition will consist of a preliminary round and final round for the top four competitors. The top four competitors based on judges' scores in the preliminary rounds will move on to the final round to determine the overall winner.
 - Each round will begin with a 30-second opening statement and end with a one-minute closing statement by each contestant.
 - During the preliminary rounds:
 - Senior contestants will have 15 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time to prepare a closing statement.
 - Junior contestants will have 10 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time to prepare a closing statement.
 - During the final round:
 - Senior contestants will have 20 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time to prepare a closing statement. The senior final round will be open to the public.
 - Junior contestants will have 15 minutes of open discussion, followed by one minute of quiet time to prepare a closing statement. The junior final round will be closed to the public and open only to the contestants, timekeeper, and judges.
3. **Props:** The use of props (i.e., pets, signs, electronics, objects, etc.) are prohibited. A violation of this rule will result in contestant disqualification.