



NATIONAL
FFA ORGANIZATION

Agricultural Proficiency Awards

2017 Agricultural Proficiency Award National Finalists

Created: 08/2017

Congratulations on being selected as a National FFA Agricultural Proficiency Award finalist!

This is truly an honor that only 188 FFA members receive each year.

The information in the following packet explains what you need to do prior to and during your attendance at the 90th National FFA Convention & Expo. It is very important that you read the information and complete each of the tasks by the specified deadline.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to call Rosalie Hunsinger at 317-802-4255 during the office hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), Monday through Friday or email her at rhunsinger@ffa.org

NOTE: National FFA staff leave for the convention site to set up on Oct. 22, 2017. All questions or needs must be addressed before then.

We hope that you are excited to attend and compete at the 90th National FFA Convention & Expo, Oct. 25-28 Indianapolis.

Congratulations again on being declared a 2017 Proficiency Award National Finalist.

Sincerely,

Brett Evans
SAE Education Specialist
National FFA Organization

Rosalie Hunsinger
SAE Program Manager
National FFA Organization

Stephanie Kappus
SAE Program Manager
National FFA Organization



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2017 Proficiency Award National Finalist Orientation Packet

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All finalists are expected to adhere to the following information. Any deviation can result in disqualification.

REQUIRED FORMS AND PHOTO SUBMISSION

In order to provide your award check(s) and tell your story we need additional information from you ASAP **but no later than Sept 9, 2017.**

Each national finalist will be showcased in an audiovisual presentation during the agricultural proficiency award luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 26. In order to complete this presentation we need you to provide:

- **Official Dress Photo** - We need a current "head and shoulders" shot of you in FFA Official Dress. This needs to be a high-resolution photo of 1 megapixel or larger.
- **Application Photos** – You included six photos in your proficiency award application. We need high resolution (*1 megapixel or larger*) copies of these photos. Often the copies included in your application are of low resolution. If these are used for the presentation on the large screen they become blurry and unrecognizable. Low-resolution photos are also not usable for printing in media releases.

We need contact information for your local media to tell them about your accomplishment.

- **Media Contact Information Form** – Please provide us with the contact information for your local media so we can spread the word about your accomplishment. This form is located in your online application.

In order to provide your award checks we need:

- **Cash Claim Form** – Due to IRS tax regulations and for audit purposes we must have your social security number in order to provide your award check(s). Please download the form and mail to the address on the form **by Sept. 9, 2017**. If we do not receive this form, your award check will be delayed until you are able to provide it to us.

To upload these photos and complete the forms please:

1. Log in to your online Proficiency Award application.
2. Locate and select the "Finalist Information" menu item. This is located at the bottom of the left hand column in your application screen.
3. Follow the instructions on this screen to upload your 1 megapixel plus photos and other information requested.

MANDATORY ATTENDANCE

All finalists are required to attend the national FFA convention to participate in the national selection process and to be recognized on the convention stage. If you find you are unable to attend, please be aware of the following policy.

"All finalists not able to attend the National FFA Convention & Expo must inform the National FFA staff as soon as they are aware of not being able to attend.



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- Finalists with a personal or family situation, which will prevent them from attending the convention, must convey this specific problem to the National FFA Board of Directors in writing prior to the convention. This request must be sent no later than Oct. 14, 2017. Send your written notification via email to rhunsinger@ffa.org.
- The Board will consider each request based on their merits but will look favorably upon requests based on illness, military duty, special school situations, specific family situations, etc.
- If the Board approves the request, the finalist will be eligible to receive all recognition and awards available, including finalist and national plaques and cash awards and being named the national winner.
- Please have someone from your chapter stand-in for you on stage during the sixth general convention session.

Those finalists not attending the convention without Board approval will be eligible to receive the national finalist plaque and cash award but will be ineligible to be named a national winner." Board consideration take place Oct. 24, 2017 in Indianapolis, just prior to the convention.

CONFLICT NOTIFICATION

If you are participating in other activities besides the proficiency award judging at convention, please contact Brett Evans (bevans@ffa.org) ASAP but no later than Sept 1. We will strive to set your schedule so that you can participate in as many events as possible; however, it is not always possible as many events at convention are held simultaneously. We will advise you if that is the case, so that you can make a decision about which events you want to drop.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Everyone needs to register for the convention, including you and any guests you bring. Coordinate with your chapter FFA advisor to complete registration and to avoid duplicate registrations. The online convention registration system opens on Sept. 5, 2017 at 1 p.m. EDT and can be accessed at: <https://www.ffa.org/events/convention/planning#registration>.

CONVENTION LODGING

There are no rooms reserved especially for proficiency national finalists by the National FFA. Arrange with your state association or your local advisor, for housing during your stay in Indianapolis. For most of you, this will be for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. Complete your housing reservations as soon as possible.

OFFICIAL DRESS

Finalists are to be in FFA Official Dress at all proficiency award related functions.

- An official FFA jacket zipped to the top.
- Black slacks and black socks/nylons 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.

Note: Official garb of recognized religions may be worn with Official Dress.

If you do not have a clean, neat appearing FFA jacket, a new one can be ordered through Shopffa.org. Be sure to mention that you are a proficiency award national finalist and give the latest possible date you need the jacket. Order ASAP, jackets can take as much as six weeks to arrive from the time of order.



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PROFICIENCY AWARD PHOTOGRAPHY SESSION

All finalists will have their picture taken with the proficiency award sponsor. It is important that you be present promptly at the assigned time and location for your award photo session (*see schedule*). You will be seated at a table with the other finalists in your proficiency award area and with the sponsor of your area. Please take the opportunity to express your appreciation to your sponsor for their support and share the positive experiences and things you have learned through your SAE and your FFA experiences. They are genuinely interested in you and want to know their funding is benefiting you. Take this opportunity to find out about the sponsor(s) and the organizations they represent. These photographs, along with a news release, will be sent electronically to the various news media you designate.

PROFICIENCY AWARD FINALISTS & JUDGES LUNCHEON

All national finalists are invited to attend the Proficiency Award Finalists & Judges Luncheon. There is no charge for the finalist. Parents, advisors and guests who wish to attend may add this event to their convention registration, cost is \$30 per person. There are no paper tickets. Those registered for the luncheon will have this event on their convention registration name badge. Convention registration opens Sept. 5, complete registration instructions will be provided. Again, we encourage you to check with your FFA advisor before registering for luncheon seats to ensure there is no duplication.

PROFICIENCY AWARD FINALIST INTERVIEWS

All four finalists will be interviewed by a panel of judges to select the national winner in each proficiency award area. The judging process will take place on Thursday, Oct 26. (*See schedule*). **Finalists must be available for interviews during this time and may not leave the area until dismissed by the Proficiency Award Room Host or National FFA SAE Education Specialist.** The judges will have already received a copy of your proficiency award application and will be using the current proficiency award scoring rubric to determine their scores. There is no score for skill at interviewing or presentation. The scores are based on your application. The purpose of the interview is to enable the judges to ask clarifying questions about your application and your related SAE project. To be prepared for the interview you should review the information you entered into your application and be prepared to explain all parts of your SAE related to your proficiency area. **Bring a copy of your SAE records with you to the interview for your own reference.**

To start the interview all national finalists will be escorted into the judging room as a group. Each finalist will be given two minutes to introduce themselves and briefly describe their SAE project related to the award area. Please remember to only describe the parts of your SAE that that qualify in the specific proficiency award area. The finalists will then be led out of the room as a group. Each finalist will then be individually led into the judging room for a 15 min maximum question and answer session with the judges. **No presentation** is given or allowed during any part of the interview process. No props, charts, posters or presentation materials of any kind are allowed for any portion of the interview. The only thing allowed into the room with you is a copy of your SAE records. Finalists should be prepared to answer clarifying questions from the judges pertaining to their written application and may use their SAE record books to refer to when answering these questions.

NOTE: If a judge asks to see your SAE records, it is your decision whether you show them or not. Only provide your SAE records if asked by a judge.

PROFICIENCY AWARD RESULTS ANNOUNCED – SIXTH GENERAL CONVENTION SESSION

The proficiency award national winners will be announced live on stage during the sixth general convention session on Friday, Oct. 27 in the Bankers Life Fieldhouse. All four finalists and their advisor(s) will appear on stage to receive their national finalist plaques and checks. The national winner will be announced and presented his/her winner plaque. Before the session starts, please be seated in the special seating section reserved for the proficiency award finalists. Each proficiency national finalist will have one seat reserved for an advisor next to him/her and an adjacent area for additional advisors. Contact Courtesy Corp in the arena upon arrival if you need assistance finding your seats. Final seating information will be provided during the Proficiency Award Finalist Orientation Meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 25 (*see schedule*). Please remember if you are approved to not attend



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the convention, a representative of your chapter is needed to stand on stage in your place (*preferably of the same gender*).

As the national winners leave the stage they will be lead to the News Room for interviews. These interviews will be made available to the media you designate back home. Due to limited space, only the national winners will be allowed in the News Room, no parents or advisors.

THANK YOU TO SPONSORS

Without the financial support of business and industry, the opportunity to have the many rewarding experiences that you have had with your involvement in the agricultural proficiency award program would not have been possible. Please show your appreciation for their investment in the membership of the FFA by sending the sponsor(s) of your award area a note of thanks. A few thoughtful minutes by you goes a long way to ensuring that FFA members in the future will have the same challenging and rewarding experiences. A link to your sponsors contact information is available in the "Finalist Information" section of your electronic application on the Proficiency Awards webpage on FFA.org at: <https://www.ffa.org/participate/awards/proficiencies>

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

If you have special needs which need accommodation for any of the proficiency award activities, please read the "Information Regarding the National FFA Organization's Policy and Procedure for Requesting Special Needs Accommodations for Competitive Programs" by [clicking here](#). If you wish to apply, please download and complete the "Request for Special Needs Accommodation for National FFA Competitive Events and Programs" by [clicking here](#) and send it to Mr. Jim Armbruster at jarmbruster@ffa.org or 317-802-4334 by Aug. 15.

KEEP US INFORMED

The sponsors who finance the proficiency award program appreciate receiving publicity on their involvement with FFA. With this in mind, we would appreciate receiving copies of newspaper articles or web links to articles covering your recognition in the agricultural proficiency award program. Please send to:

Mrs. Rosalie Hunsinger, SAE Program Manager
National FFA Organization
6060 FFA Drive
P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960
rhunsinger@ffa.org
Phone: 317-802-4255

We use these articles when reporting to our sponsors to encourage further sponsorships. Without these sponsors, we would not be able to conduct the national competitions. Please encourage your newspaper to include the name of the sponsors.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions concerning these activities, please do not hesitate to call. You may contact Ms. Rosalie Hunsinger 317-802-4255 or Mr. Brett Evans 317-802-4233. Please try to make all inquiries before Oct 20.



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2017 – Proficiency Award National Finalist Checklist

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Use this checklist to ensure you meet the deadlines and necessary preparation for the national proficiency award judging. Details for each item are in the Proficiency Award National Finalist Orientation Packet.

- _____ 1. **Convention Lodging** – Secure lodging for convention ASAP.

- _____ 2. **Conflict Notice** – Notify Brett Evans at bevans@ffa.org of any scheduling conflicts. All notifications due by Sept. 1.

- _____ 3. **Convention Registration** – opens Sept. 5, 1 p.m.

- _____ 4. **Media Information and AV Presentation** - Due Sept. 9
Official Dress Photo
Application Photos
Cash Claim form
If you have any difficulty completing these tasks, contact Ms. Rosalie Hunsinger at 317-802-4255 or rhunsinger@ffa.org

- _____ 5. **Official Dress** – Confirm you have all Official Dress clothing items including FFA Jacket

- _____ 6. **Interview Preparation** – Review your proficiency award application and SAE records. Prepare copies to bring with you to convention if desired.



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2017 Proficiency Award National Finalist Events Schedule

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The following schedule details times and locations for national finalist proficiency award judging events. Please bring a copy of this schedule with you to convention.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 25, 2017

- 6:30 p.m. **Proficiency Award National Finalist Reception** - Westin Hotel - Pre-Function Grand Foyer outside of the Grand Ballroom IV on the second level (*50 S. Capitol, Indianapolis*) Refreshments will be served. Finalists, their advisor(s) and parents are welcome. Mingle with the other finalists. (*Business Casual or Official Dress*)
- 7 p.m. **Proficiency Award Finalist Orientation** - Westin Hotel, Grand Ballroom IV on the 2nd level (*50 S. Capitol*) take the escalator up from the lobby and follow the signs. Final instructions and question and answer session for the proficiency judging activities. (*Business Casual or Official Dress*)

THURSDAY, OCT. 26, 2017

- 10- 11 a.m. **Photography Session** - Westin Hotel - Grand Ballroom IV and V (*50 South Capitol Avenue, Indianapolis*). Photos with sponsor(s). (*Official Dress*)
- Noon - 1:30 p.m. **Proficiency Award Finalists & Judges Luncheon** - Marriott Hotel -Marriott Ballroom (I-X) on the 2nd floor (*350 W. Maryland, Indianapolis*). Complimentary for finalists. Parents, advisors and guests are \$30 each through convention registration only. Ticket sales not available at luncheon. (*Official Dress*)
- 1:30 - 4 p.m. **Proficiency Award Finalist Interviews** - Each proficiency area has its own judging room in the Indianapolis Convention Center, Marriott Hotel or Westin Hotel. Specific rooms will be listed in the luncheon program. Finalists and judges will be escorted to judging rooms by Proficiency Award Rooms Hosts. **Finalists must be available for interviews during this time and may not leave the area until dismissed by the Room Host or National FFA Staff.** (*Official Dress*)

FRIDAY, OCT. 27, 2017

- 2:45 p.m. **Proficiency award winners announced, 6th General Session** - The session starts at 3 p.m. in Bankers Life Fieldhouse (*125 S. Pennsylvania St.*). Winners will be announced live on stage during the convention session. (*Official Dress*)
- Media Interviews** - winners will be led from the stage to the newsroom for interviews. National winners only, no advisors or parents.

PLEASE BRING THIS SCHEDULE WITH YOU