NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

Career & Leadership Development Events

2018 National FFA Extemporaneous Speaking Event Topics

Agricultural literacy and advocacy

1. With technology providing faster means of gathering information, such as smartphones, and computers; how can we preserve the value of book literacy comparable to simply searching an electronic device for information?
2. It has been said that by the next decade, videos will out perform all other means of social media posts on all social media platforms. With this being the trend, in what creative ways can agriculture be at the forefront of advocacy through these means?
3. With children being further removed from the farm, how can the agriculture community have more of a profound impact to the students at a young age to broaden their knowledge of our industry?
4. Is it more valuable to host a farm tour for consumers or legislators/government officials? Please explain.
5. What do you think is the most effective way to engage and educate consumers about where their food comes from?
6. Why is agricultural literacy so important?
7. What communication or educational format do you think consumers respond to the most and why?
8. If you could correct one common misconception about agriculture which one would you choose? Why would you choose that? Do you think it would help politically? Economically? Socially?
9. What does it mean for someone to be agriculturally literate? How would you measure that?
10. How does agriculture help the general public to be more accepting and understand centuries old practices?

Current agriculture issues:

1. With immigration being such an important issue in the agriculture industry, how do you get legislation on immigration to move forward?
2. With the current state of our trade issues, how would you best prepare your operation for turbulent times of uncertainty in our commodity markets?
3. Mental health issues and opioid abuse have become major issues facing the agriculture community. How should the industry address the issue?

4. Sometimes new policies with broad agricultural support can have unintended or unforeseen negative consequences. How can we ensure that policies are carefully crafted to minimize the number of negative or unintended consequences?
5. Why should farmers care about trade?
6. Will farms see immigrant labor from another global region in the near future? Why or why not?
7. Many dairy farmers across the country are struggling with the low milk prices. What are some cost-effective ways a small dairy farmers could implement technology into their program?
8. As more technology is developed to improve the efficiencies of agricultural operations, what are some of the challenges facing both large and small producers, and how are they different?
9. High speed internet is something many rural Americans do not have access to. Explain how this disadvantage hinders the advancement of technology on their operations.

Advancing agriculture through agriculture science:

1. What new innovations are we going to need to deal with respect to weed resistance in the future?
2. What are the benefits to soil sampling fields in grids, versus in the aggregate?
3. What are ways farmers can use precision agriculture to help in conservation?
4. What are some ways farmers can help educate the public about the safety of GMO crops?
5. What would be some of the pros and cons of a completely autonomous farm?
6. In the past few years, the idea of driverless tractors has come into farming practices. In what ways will this benefit the ag community, and in other respects negatively impact our industry?
7. With respect to drones, and their ability to detect crop environments, what other uses could drones be used for to advance agriculture?
8. What challenges do you foresee the agriculture community will face in the coming decade? In what ways will agriculture be a large part of the solution rather than the problem?
9. Is in vitro meat good or bad for the industry? What do you think in vitro meats will mean for the future of livestock producers?

Current technology uses and applications in agriculture:

1. With farmers growing ever older, and there being a lack of skilled farm labor, how can technology fill the role?
2. What is one technology that you see used everyday that hasn't been adopted by agriculture, and that you believe could benefit the ag community?

3. What is one problem that you have seen solved recently in agriculture due to the advancement of technology?
4. How can smaller farmers use technology to remain competitive in a global market that is increasingly sophisticated?
5. Farmers are collecting more data than they have ever before. However, many farmers are reluctant to share any information. Should a farmer be required to share certain data with other entities that desire such information? Why or why not?
6. It can be concluded that all agriculture commodity groups have improved from the increase use of technology. Over the next decade, which commodity groups do you feel have the chance to benefit the most from new technology?
7. In what areas of agriculture do you see technology replacing hard to get skilled laborers in the near future? What are some tasks that you think machines or robots can be developed for?
8. Who should regulate the use of drones? Should a landowner, or agricultural producer have the right to allow, or not allow drones to be flown over their land by other citizens and regulatory agencies?
9. What do you think the most controversial new technology facing agriculture is today and in the near future?
10. How do you think technological advancements have affected the agricultural economy over the past ten years? What effects do you see over the next ten years?
11. How do you think technological advancements have affected the agricultural economy over the past ten years? What effects do you see over the next ten years?
12. How could members of the FFA and other young agriculturalists help the older generations with technology. If you could design a program to do this, what would it look like?

Agrimarketing and international agriculture

1. With the increased "trade wars" recently with other countries, how do you feel this will affect U.S. agriculture in both the short and long term?
2. As the labeling of food products continues to evolve, would a more unified voluntary labeling system benefit all types of farmers and ranchers?
3. What is the difference between a bilateral and multilateral trade agreement? How do they impact agricultural trade?
4. What is the Market Facilitation Program? What is the program's intended purpose?
5. The U.S. economy has a trade deficit, does the U.S. agriculture industry have a trade deficit?
6. What is the impact of exports to the U.S. ethanol industry?
7. How can different types of agriculture successfully market without cannibalizing other agricultural industries?
8. What measures can be taken to ensure equality and accuracy in food labeling?

9. How can farmers and ranchers better analyze marketing trends to create new viable markets to sell their products?
10. In a cutthroat world, how can U.S. agriculture maintain a leg up on farmers and ranchers from other countries?
11. Why is trade important to agriculture and what trade agreements have been most vital to U.S. agriculture?

Food and Fiber systems

1. What technology and management options are available to manage weed herbicide tolerance? How can we preserve chemistry effectiveness in the future?
2. How should we label drinks made from nuts, such as the commonly known "almond milk"? Explain the importance of food labeling regulations.
3. Big data for big solutions or big headaches? What will be the result of big data in agriculture?
4. How should farms manage the current economic crisis?
5. With new plant-based meat alternatives how can meat producers stay viable?
6. What can farmers and ranchers do to ensure that the animal welfare on their farm is at acceptable standards?
7. What can farmers do to ensure that genetic technology in livestock avoid inaccurate public scrutiny like GMOs have received with plants?
8. With immigration such a hot topic in our society, many farms and ranches are turning to mechanization as a solution. Is this good or bad, and why?
9. What currently lesser known agricultural product has the qualities necessary to grow in popularity over the next five years and why?
10. Each step in the food supply chain, (producers, processors, wholesalers and retailers, etc.) must make a profit. How can farmers earn a higher percent of every dollar consumers spend on food?
11. Explain the differences between a "Family Farm", a "Mega Farm" and a "Factory Farm".
12. Should companies that grow "cultured" meat be regulated by the FDA, USDA or both? Why or why not?
13. Do animals have rights*?* Why or why not?