

TEXAS FFA ASSOCIATION



Leadership Development Event Guide

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Introduction

This guide has been developed to assist Texas Agricultural Science Instructors in planning their respective district and area leadership development events.

In the past, many teachers have been entrusted with the organizing and setting up of their LDE meets. Many of the individuals who accept this role are experts in all phases of the LDE program and masters of organization. However, when districts assign new people as coordinators, it creates the possibility of throwing a volunteer into unfamiliar territory—and into a pressure situation in which there are specific performance expectations which the novice coordinator might not be equipped to meet. Others may be familiar with many event aspects, but are less familiar with some events or have never contemplated the logistical requirements to conduct a district or area meet. This guide is designed to assist teachers by giving them a time frame as to the what, whens and hows of planning a leadership development event competition to provide tools to ensure that the hours preparation invested by teachers and students to produce a quality entry is not undermined by a poorly run event.

The Texas FFA Association owes many thanks to the individuals that helped to put this guide together. Without their participation this guide would not have been possible.

TEXAS FFA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EVENT GUIDE COMMITTEE

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Chapter 1: Timelines

This topic is one that is left to the last minute. Typically, agriculture science teachers are busy nearly every waking hour of every day. It is very easy to have the attitude, “I HAVE PLENTY OF TIME”. Then you wake up one morning and say, “OH MY GOSH”, or some other flowery statement, “THE CONTEST IS ONLY TWO WEEKS AWAY”. You then try to locate judges, and hear the time worn phrase “I would like to come, BUT I am busy this year. Make sure you call me next year”. Your thoughts then turn to “It will be somebody else’s problem next year. I need you *this* year”.

The following guide is designed to give you a time reference as to when you should be considering the items you need to conduct a successful leadership development event. **This timeline is constructed for those that have November LDE’s. If your contest is in October, adjust this timeline to fit your specific schedule.**

August

1. The date and location of your contest should be confirmed at the Agriculture Science Professional Educators Conference. MAKE SURE THAT THE SITE YOU CHOOSE HAS APPROPRIATE SHOP SIZE FOR SKILLS EVENT. There is not set size for a shop. You should ask the teachers who will be competing in the skills event, how much room they will need to properly conduct their skill. Use the largest area needed from this poll to determine the size needed.
2. The event site Agriculture Science Instructor should contact the schools administration to receive approval to host your LDE contest. The event should have the approval of the administration and the date should be entered on the schools calendar. The last thing you need is to be competing with other groups for contest space. Make sure that the school you have chosen has adequate shop facilities to conduct the skill demonstration events—greenhand and chapter divisions. If the event historically draws several skills teams, you might need to run both divisions concurrently. Schools with a small shop might not be a good choice.
3. Teachers in your district should be polled as to who they would like to see judge the different events. Several names should be submitted, and the names should be prioritized. Contact the people that you can at this time, this way you can get a jump on everyone else. Remember, some of these teachers are ask to judge several contests each year. The earlier you can get your judges in place the fewer headaches you will have later.
4. Get input from your district advisors as to whom they recommend to write the FFA Quiz, and who they recommend to write the chapter conducting problems. Contact these people ASAP, and ask them to commit to supporting your event in these roles. Give them the times and dates of your contest. Once you have completed these contacts and received confirmation of their participation, it would be a good idea to make a list of these judges’ phone numbers. Many of the universities will help you by developing these materials for your contest. Sam Houston State University will write your parliamentary problems, *but you must contact them in advance*. (Contact Dr. Dwayne Pavelock, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education: 936-294-1186; e-mail: agr_dxp@shsu.edu)
5. Know how many judges you will need to conduct your contest. People that are new to setting up a contest might not realize how many are needed. Also, if possible, you might secure a couple of extra to help in case of last minute no-shows. A good rule of thumb is *three for each event*. A consensus from the teachers in your district, as to how many in each they would settle for, would be a good idea.
6. If you use university faculty or students, now is the time to contact the person(s) in charge at the university that you use and let them know the dates and parameters of your event.

Timelines (continued)

September--Two (2) Months Before Event

1. Send out a letter or e-mail to all the advisors in your district with all of the contest information. If your district has a website, it is always prudent to post all information to this site to account for lost mail or undeliverable e-mail.
 - a. Date and time
 - b. Deadline for entries **(this date should be at least 3 weeks before the event. Judges and space requirements be adjusted if needed.)**
 - c. Entry method (online, standardized forms).
 - d. Entry fee amounts, to whom checks are made payable to and where to send entry fees and forms.
 - e. Include any additional information that your particular contest has. **(Such as:deadline for rosters to verify membership)**
2. Send out a letter or e-mail to the persons that you are asking to judge your different events, thanking and reminding them of the dates and times of your contest.
3. Send out a letter or e-mail to the persons that you ask to write your quizzes and chapter conducting problems. Make sure they understand the times and dates of your event and what you want them to do, as it deals with the writing of the quizzes and problems.
 - a. Do you want true/false only? Do you want M/C and/or fill-in-the-blank to be included?
 - b. Do you want the person writing the chapter conducting problems to write either sets or just one?
4. Order Awards for Contest.
 - a. Know what your budget is and what type of awards you will need. Make sure that the vendors(s) from which you are ordering are licensed to reproduce the FFA trademarks, know when your contest is, when you need your awards and where they will need to be sent.
 - b. **IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE YOUR AWARDS DELIVERED AT LEAST TWO (2) WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT.** This way if there are mistakes, they can be corrected before the event.
 - c. If you order pins for team or individual awards, it would be good to have them delivered earlier if possible. It takes longer to get these replaced.
5. **Thoroughly familiarize yourself with and begin applying the two (2) month leadership development check sheet that is found at the end of this document.**

October--One (1) Month Before Event

1. Send out a reminder letter or e-mail to advisors on entries, at least four weeks before the event. Additionally post entries on the district website.
2. **Familiarize yourself with the one (1) month leadership development event check sheet that is found at the end of this document.**
3. Start making a list of physical items that will be needed at your contest. (I.e.. chapter conducting paraphernalia, score sheets, food items, etc.). Reference the checklist at the end of this document.
4. Make a site visit to your chosen event location (if new) to make sure rooms and shops are adequate for each contest.

Timelines (continued)

November—Two (2) Weeks Before Event

1. If you are providing food for the teachers and/or students, make sure you know what you will need to order and how much. Also, if you need to order your food in advance, this would be a good time to do so, that way it will be ready when you are.
2. Start talking with the schools administrator or agriculture science teacher, to make sure that you have enough rooms available. Get a map of the school that you will be using to help you with the physical placing of the contest rooms.
3. Start planning where you will have the contestants stay before they compete and after.
4. Send out an e-mail or letter asking the advisor of the district officer team, if they have a part in the awards ceremony, to make sure that the district officers know when to be there and what they are to do. If there is a formal awards program, provide a suggested agenda. The president may need to have prepared remarks for a welcome and other officers may need to prepare other speaking parts.
5. Send and post online out a final schedule to each advisor letting them know:
 - a. When they are to compete.
 - b. Where event headquarters is and where each event will be held—performance and prep rooms.
 - c. Where to park.
6. **MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE A RULE THAT ALLOWS FOR DROPS.** If a team drops out at the last minute, make sure that all advisors know that they should plan to move up. Making judges wait for an extended period of time between teams is not very considerate of your judges. Remember they are gratuitously giving their time to come judge your contest.
7. Make sure that you have arranged for all of the paraphernalia that you will need.
 - a. Station Markers (two sets)
 - b. Gavel (two)
 - c. Portable screens, or rooms that have screens on a wall that will accommodate the LDE's that require them.
 - d. Podiums for chapter conducting rooms
 - e. Flags
 - f. Scanners for grading quizzes if deemed necessary
 - g. Scan sheets appropriate for your scanners (check this!)
 - h. Pencils

***Two days before the contest:**

Make sure that your event site rooms have been cleared with the teacher that uses them, and that there will be PROPER and adequate seating and tables for the contestants and judges. Advise the teachers whose rooms you are using to clear any valuables or breakable things from the room. FFA contestants are normally very respectful of property, but having these things out of the room or put away alleviates any potential accidents or questions.

Chapter 2: Deadlines

There are several deadlines that you need to consider to have a smoothly operated event.

1. ENTRY DEADLINE AND FEES

This is a must! Without a deadline for your entries you open the possibility of last-minute entries, which can undermine your participation schedule, and create problems with your judges' schedules and your overall schedule. The district should have some policy which discourages late entries (such as double entry fees) or prohibits them.

Your district should also have a rule in place which requires chapters to pay for all entries made whether they bring them or not. This discourages schools from entering everything and bringing only one or two, which creates chaos in your scheduling and undermines the financial standing of the event.

2. JUDGES DEADLINE

It is recommended that you have your judge list final at least two months before your event. This will allow you to have time to secure judges if the first people you call decline. You need to make contact with your judges two weeks before your contest. This will ensure that they are still committed, and if you need to replace a judge, you have time to locate the replacement.

3. MISCELLANEOUS DEADLINES

- a. Two (2) weeks before your event, you need to make 100% sure that you have food for the judges and students, if you are committed to providing meals or snacks. Make sure that who is bringing this understands what to bring, when to have it in place, and for how many they should plan.
- b. If you are using a service or parents to provide the food, a good rule of thumb is to add at least 10% to the total anticipated number.
- c. Roster Deadlines. Some districts require that each competing team turn in an up-to-date roster to verify membership.

Chapter 3: Facility Requirements

- 1. Two (2) Shops that are large enough to handle any size skill that a chapter brings.**
 - a. Before you select your event site, ask the teachers in your district how much space that they need to properly conduct their skill.
 - b. A good rule of thumb is to have **AT LEAST** the amount of space that is needed for the schools that will be competing in the skills event to adequately perform their skills.
- 2. Eight (8) open classrooms**

What is meant by “open classrooms?” These are rooms that have an open design. Do **not** use rooms that have permanent desks or counters. Use classrooms in which desks or tables can be moved.
- 3. You will need one large room, such as an auditorium or library to conduct your quiz event.** Ideally, this room should have enough area to allow for adequate student spacing.
- 4. Headquarters:** One room should be designated as the central meeting place for judges and event volunteers. Judges should know to bring results to this room.
- 5. Environmental Conditions:**
 - a. In making room assignments, take into consideration possible noise and perhaps visual distractions outside windows. Having constant pedestrian traffic in and around contest rooms must be avoided. The utmost care must be taken to ensure that these students have an ideal performance environment, free of noise and distractions which can undermine months of preparation.
 - b. Protecting the integrity of the event should be considered as well. If there is considerable event-related traffic, something that is overheard in a hallway can give a team a competitive advantage and compromise the event.

Chapter 4: Selecting Judges and Judges Information

1. When selecting your judges, make sure that you put a lot of thought into this process. By selecting the right people to judge your events, you will eliminate many problems.
2. Select judges who have had experience training the event you are asking them to judge. Also try to select people who have had success training a team for the contest that you are asking them to judge.
3. Current teachers are the best choice, but retired teachers or teachers who have moved into private business or administration will work as well.
4. Make sure that your judges know the current rules of the contest you are asking them to judge. Rules do change from time to time, and if you have been using non-teachers, they may not know what these changes are.
5. Make sure that you select judges who understand and will not have a problem working with you with their contest schedule. Make sure that they are aware that students can and do participate in more than one event. If when you call them to judge and their first comment is, “WHEN WILL I BE THROUGH?” this might send up a red flag for you.

Chapter 5: Event Coordinator Check Lists

Leadership Development Event Checklist

Two (2) months before event

Items to Check	Accomplished	Not Accomplished
Secure site for contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get approval from administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure judges for contests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure rooms for event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set entry deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send out/post advisor letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set entry fees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set local contest rules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notify district officers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Order awards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Order scan sheets (if needed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send roster deadline date to Advisors (and post)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a list of judges' phone numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact university Personnel about contest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership Development Event Checklist

One (1) month before event

Items to Check	Accomplished	Not Accomplished
Send out judges reminder letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send out/post advisor reminder letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check on awards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure CC paraphernalia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure score sheets for all contests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
determine food items needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership Development Event Checklist

Two (2) WEEKS before event

Items to Check	Accomplished	Not Accomplished
Amount of food needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remind site administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send out/post participation times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send out/post site map	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send letter to district officers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send final reminder to judges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contest paraphernalia is secured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check for rosters of competing chapters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership Development Event Checklist

Two (2) DAYS before event

Items to Check	Accomplished	Not Accomplished
Amount of food needed is secured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check rooms to be used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contest score sheets and rules are copied	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contest quizzes and CC problems, questions are verified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure A/C or heat is secured (Check weather forecast)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tables and chairs for judges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Look at pedestrian flow around contest rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership Development Event Checklist

CONTEST DAY

Items to Check	Accomplished	Not Accomplished
Food is ready, and at site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contest paraphernalia is placed properly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rooms are open and ready	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contest score sheets and rules are ready	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map of location of participation rooms is ready	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judges phone list at the ready	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>