



ND FFA Association

LAND JUDGING

CDE Handbook

Purpose

The purpose of the State Land Judging Career Development Event is to engage FFA members in evaluating land and soil characteristics to determine appropriate land uses and conservation practices. By participating in this hands-on contest, students gain valuable skills in soil science, land classification, and sustainable land management. This event supports agricultural literacy by helping students understand how soil properties impact agricultural productivity, environmental stewardship, and land-use decisions. The event aligns with the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) Cluster Skills and Career Readiness Practices to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and career exploration in natural resource and environmental systems.

Objective

The Land Judging CDE is for participants to demonstrate their ability to:

- a. Analyze soil profiles to identify texture, slope, drainage, erosion, and land capability class.
- b. Apply knowledge of soil science to recommend land management practices for conservation and productivity.
- c. Evaluate and interpret field data to make informed decisions about appropriate land use for agriculture and development.

Land Judging in North Dakota was initiated at the Conservation Show in Bismarck in 1951. A land appreciation school was initiated in Dickinson in 1957, and this event became the State Land Judging Contest in 1963. This State Land Judging Contest was combined with the State Range Judging Contest in 1993 and held in September. After years of dwindling participation, 1996 launched a new effort to revitalize this educational activity and was taken over by the Carrington FFA Alumni. Starting in 2003 the NDSU Extension Soil Specialist, Dave Franzen, took over management of this activity and revised the state extension guide for this event. A rotation of bringing the event to different locations of the state every other year was initiated and the decision was made to bring the contest back to Dickinson on odd numbered years.

The State Land Judging Contest will be held during the months of July or early August. Each district is encouraged to organize and hold its' own workouts or contests in preparation for the State Event. Soil and land evaluation are common units to any agriculture/agriscience curriculum in North Dakota. Participation in this event as an outgrowth of that curriculum is encouraged.

Each school should have sufficient copies of "Land Judging in North Dakota" (DBC618 – revised July 2017) to help students learn and prepare for this activity. Copies can be obtained through your county extension office or through the NDSU Ag Communications distribution center for a small charge - phone 701-231-7883.

The state contest will be prepared and conducted by the NDSU Extension Soils Specialist office in cooperation with area Soil Conservation, State Ag Education and Extension offices. Ribbons, Gold Pins, Rosettes, Plaques and Trophies will be provided and presented by the State FFA Officers. The winning 4-H and FFA teams are eligible to represent North Dakota in the International Contest in Oklahoma in May.

General Format

1. Each chapter may enter one team of three to five active members. The score made by the three high individuals on the team will constitute the team score in determining the team rating. 7th & 8th grade members are eligible to participate.
2. High school graduates are eligible to participate in the state contest for individual awards only. These individuals must be so designated at registration. This rule is necessary because graduates are not eligible to participate in the national contest in May.
3. The state contest is open to all chapters. There are no official regional elimination contests, but regional competition is encouraged. One team per chapter is eligible for awards in the FFA Division, but an Open Division is available for additional teams or individuals.
4. Practice sites will be open the day prior to and the morning of the state contest. There will be approximately 4 practice pits and keys for each site will be provided. Soil experts will be available to answer questions. A complete schedule will be distributed via the state listserv prior to the event. Teams will not visit the state contest site prior to the contest.

Clean, unmarked clipboards and knives are allowed for use in the contest. Measuring tapes and leveling instruments may not be used in the contest. Reference materials are not to be used during the official contest. Water will be provided for texturing; contestants may not bring their own water bottles.

5. Individuals and teams in the State Land CDE will be ranked gold, silver or bronze, gold individuals will receive medals. The high individual will be presented the "baby bison" trophy and a \$250 stipend. State plaques and rosettes will be presented to gold chapters; rosettes will be given to teams receiving silver and bronze ratings. The high team will receive the traveling trophy and travel stipend to attend the National Land Judging Event in Oklahoma.

North Dakota FFA Association – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The North Dakota FFA Association adopts and adheres to the National FFA Organization's official AI Policy in full. All North Dakota FFA members, chapters, advisors, and state staff are expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the National FFA Organization regarding the appropriate and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in FFA activities, competitive events, and academic work.

For the complete and current National FFA AI Policy, including detailed guidelines on appropriate use, please visit:

🔗 <https://ffa.app.box.com/v/NFFAAIPolicy>

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the North Dakota FFA Association state office.