

THE EVOLUTION OF COMPETITION:

Adapting an Agricultural Communications CDE for a State FFA Association

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Introduction

- Students acquire professional and personal skills in Career Development Events (CDEs) (National FFA Organization, 2022).
- The National Agricultural Communications CDE was proposed during the 69th National FFA Convention (Hamilton, 1996), approved the following year (National FFA Organization, 1997), and first held at the 73rd Convention (Bishop, 2000).
- New Mexico lacked an Agricultural Communications CDE until 2022.
- An Agricultural Communications CDE encompasses writing, editing, video production, web design, and photography.
- A collaboration between agricultural education and communications may increase student preparation (Tucker et al., 2003).

How it Works

- New Mexico's Agricultural Communications CDE followed national rules.
- Teams developed and presented a media plan, and individually completed a knowledge test and a journalistic editing exercise.
- To introduce teachers and students to the contest and to create buy-in, we introduced the contest using the journalism media practicum, with hopes to scale in the coming years.
- Competitors attended a live event (the visiting state officer workshop) to complete the assigned practicum.
- Before the state competition, we held three training sessions, which focused on practicums and teaching tips.

Results to Date

- New Mexico FFA hosted the first Agricultural Communications CDE in 2022.
- Three teams competed, while students from 5-6 other chapters took notes.
- Participants, agricultural educators, and scoring officials said the event was engaging, innovative, and challenging.
- Teachers want personal training to add communication modules into their courses and prepare students for next year's event.

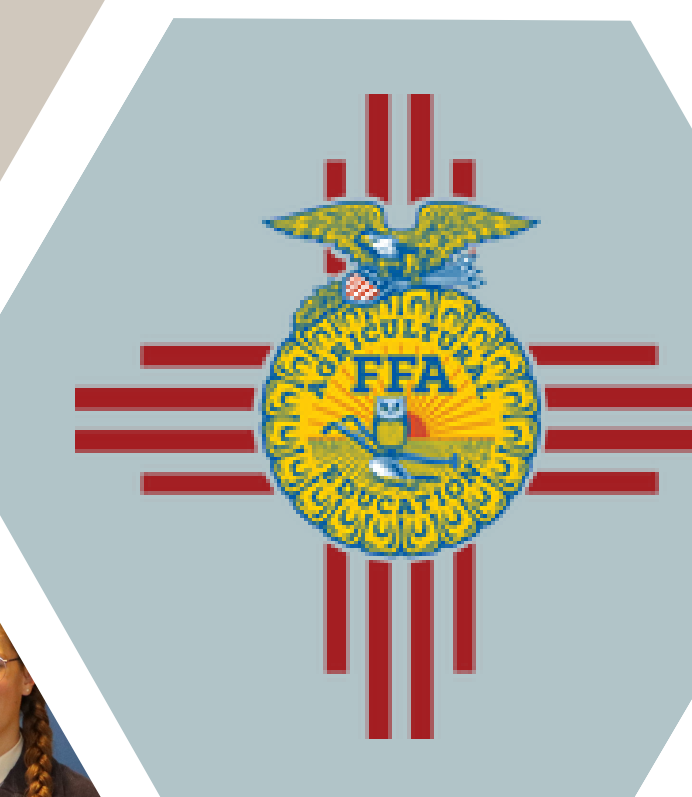
Advice to Others

- Training opportunities are recommended to assist in teaching agricultural communications skills.
- When introducing the event to a state without a previous contest, we recommend progressively adding practicums rather than having them all in one year without prior training.
- Integrating agricultural communications curriculum and resources into current ag ed programs, such as a CDE event, will stimulate interest in future jobs and enhance content-based skills (Pennington et al., 2015).
- Integrating a live event into the competition practicums, such as officer workshops, CDE/LDE presentations, and state officer retiring addresses.

Resources Needed

- Create a 25-question multiple-choice test and editing exercise.
- Create practicum scenarios and publish annual media plan guidelines.
- Computers, Microsoft Suite, and Adobe Creative Suite
- Judges directly involved in the agricultural communications industry.

ABSTRACT



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How do we introduce an Ag Comm CDE to a state without existing curriculum?