



CAREER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

2026 PLANNING GUIDE

National FFA looks forward to hosting career and leadership development events (CDEs/LDEs) during the 99th National FFA Convention & Expo. Use this guide to understand updates for this year's events. All 2026 event information may be accessed through the CDE/LDE webpage.

2026 CDE/LDE Details

Dates

March	Declaration/Certification Opens
Late May	Schedules released for Finals Hall, Awards Recognition and Main Stage Recognition
July 1	State Staff complete CDE/LDE Declarations
Early Aug.	Event Orientation Packets Posted to FFA.org
Sept. 2	Team Certification and Uploads Due Online Drop/Add Process begins.

Subscribe to CDE/LDE Alerts

Subscribe [here](#) to receive email notifications about new materials or updates posted to the CDE/LDE webpage.

Handbook Updates

All 2026 handbooks will be available in July 2025. The date of the handbook version is in the top right corner. Detailed handbook changes will be documented in the 2026 CDE/LDE Handbook Detailed Update Summary, available on the CDE/LDE webpage.

Details by Event

CDE/LDE	Component(s)	Key Details
Agricultural Communications	Writing Mechanics Exam Press conference Team Practicums	
Agricultural Issues Forum	Presentation	Upload portfolios by Sept. 2.
Agricultural Sales	Written exam Sales Call Customer service call Team Activity	
Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems	Written exam Skill practicums Team activity	
Agronomy	Identification—weeds, seeds, crop plants Soils Pest management—Insect identification Disease and disorders Written exam Team activity	
Conduct of Chapter Meetings	Written exam Presentations	
Creed Speaking	Presentations	
Dairy Cattle Evaluation & Management	Evaluation classes Oral reasons classes Team Practicums (3) Team scenario	The team activity topic area for 2026 is TBD .

CDE/LDE	Component(s)	Key Details
Employment Skills	<i>Hosted Virtually Mid-late Sept.</i> <i>Initial Screening interview</i> <i>Follow-up thank you email</i> Preliminary, Semi-Final and Final rounds in Indianapolis Face-to-face Interview Follow-up correspondence Networking activity Telephone job offer	The online job application will be released on Aug. 19 and must be submitted by Sept. 2. Upload of resume, cover letter, and job description by Sept. 2.
Environmental & Natural Resources	Written exam Identification Four rotational practicums Team activity	
Extemporaneous Public Speaking	Presentations	
Farm & Agribusiness Management	Individual exam Team activity	
Floriculture	• Single General Knowledge and Problem-solving exam • Disease, Disorders, Plant & Equipment Identification • Annual Practicums - Floral arrangement, Growing procedures and Retail Pricing • Two rotational practicums • Team activity	
Food Science & Technology	Written exam Problem-solving/math Customer Inquiry Sensory evaluation Product specification compliance Team Activities: Product development and Food Safety Audit	
Forestry	Written exam Tree Measurement Tree identification Equipment, Forest Products and Disorders Identification One rotational practicum Forest industry scenario team activity	
Horse Evaluation	Written exam Cull/Keep classes of 8 video runs Halter/performance evaluation classes Oral reasons Team practicums (2), scenario/presentation	
Livestock Evaluation	Performance Class & Team Questions Keep/Cull classes Evaluation placing classes Oral reasons	
Marketing Plan	Presentations	Upload marketing plan by Sept. 2.

CDE/LDE	Component(s)	Key Details
Meats Evaluation & Technology	Written exam — lab practicum Retail meat cut identification Beef quality and yield grading Evaluation class questions Team activity	
Milk Quality & Products	Written exam Problem-solving Milk flavor identification and evaluation Product identification Cheese identification California Mastitis Test (CMT) Team activity	CMT will include an assessment of images of bacterial culture tri-plates acquired from the Minnesota Easy® Culture System. Assessment of the images would indicate one of the following: 1. Contaminated 2. Gram Negative 3. No Growth 4. Staphylococcus species 5. Staphylococcus aureus 6. Streptococcus species 7. Streptococcus agalactiae Each of the 5 CMT milk samples will have an accompanying image, and practice images will also be available.
Nursery/Landscape	Identification Landscape estimating Nursery propagation/potting Team Skills Challenge/Team Cooperation Verbal customer assistance Written exam	
Parliamentary Procedure	Written Exam Minutes practicum Preliminary & Semi-final team problem-solving Presentations	Minutes practicum objectives and points will be reallocated into other portions of the event.
Poultry Evaluation	Written exam, placing classes Carcass parts identification Oral reasons — 2 classes Egg grading, Written factors class Further processed evaluation Team activity	Further Processed Products will be revised.
Prepared Public Speaking	Presentations	Upload the manuscript by Sept. 2.
Veterinary Science	General Knowledge Math applications Identification Practicums - Clinical procedures & Handling/restraint Team activity	Two case-based scenarios that integrate general knowledge, clinical practice, handling/restraint skills, team activities and identification including anatomical structures of clinical relevance. The 2026 Scenario Resource Guide to the Veterinary Science Handbook will provide the focus areas, details and additional resources for the 2026 event. It should be used in addition to the 2026 Veterinary Science Handbook.