



Quick Facts – 2017 Farm Bureau® Rural Entrepreneurship Challenge

- The Farm Bureau® Rural Entrepreneurship Challenge, now in its third year, is a business competition for entrepreneurs with agriculture and food business ideas that positively impact rural communities in the U.S. This is the first national business competition focused exclusively on rural entrepreneurs working on food and agriculture businesses.
- A total of \$145,000 in startup funds will be distributed to 10 agriculture and food businesses in rural communities.
- The online period for the 2017 Challenge is May 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016. More information about the application is available at <http://www.strongruralamerica.com/challenge/challenge-application/>.
- The top 10 teams will be announced in October in Washington, D.C. The top teams include six semi-finalist teams who will each receive \$10,000 and four teams who will advance and compete for \$85,000. The final four teams will compete in a live event during the AFBF's 98th Annual Convention and IDEAg Trade Show in Phoenix, Arizona, January 7-9, 2017.
- The final four teams will compete for the title of Farm Bureau® Entrepreneur of the Year and \$30,000. The finalists will also compete for the People's Choice Award and \$25,000. The two remaining runner-up teams will each receive \$15,000.
- To be eligible, applicants need to 1) be a current Farm Bureau member, 2) have a business related to agriculture or food, and 3) have a for-profit business.
- Agriculture and food businesses include but are not limited to the following: farms and ranches, agricultural technology, value-added food processing, food hubs, community supported agriculture programs (CSAs), farm-to-table restaurants and farmers' markets.
- To become more inclusive of rural businesses, this year we have *removed* the requirement that businesses be located in counties with fewer than 50,000 residents or towns with fewer than 2,500 residents. We found examples of many rural businesses that are located in counties that also contain highly populated cities with overall populations of more than 50,000.
- This competition focuses on the American Farm Bureau Federation's mission to enhance and strengthen the lives of rural Americans to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities.
- The 2017 Challenge timeline, eligibility guidelines, and application will be posted to <http://www.strongruralamerica.com/challenge>.
- You can review the 2015 and 2016 finalists and winners at <http://www.strongruralamerica.com/challenge>.

For more information

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