

County Annual Meetings Made Simple

Consider these things while planning a county annual meeting that engages members, fulfills required business, and builds excitement for the year ahead.

County Annual Meeting Common Practices

Refer to your bylaws:

The annual meeting of the County Farm Bureau shall be held at such place and time as shall be determined by the Board of Directors

Notice of time and place of meeting shall be mailed to each member of the County Farm Bureau not less than 10 days in advance of the date thereof

Formal:

What is the business you need to accomplish during the county annual meeting?

Treasurer's Report, Bylaw Changes, Officer Elections, Approve Minutes, Optional Policy Discussions, Voting Delegates, County Dues etc.

Informal:

What kind of experience do you want members to have during the county annual meeting?

Connect with members, recognize accomplishments, identify new board members, leave members excited for what's next

Set Your Goal

Before planning the details, decide what success looks like. What kind of experience do you want members to have during the county annual meeting? Create one goal for your County Annual Meeting.

Ex: Have policy conversations, recruit two new board members, host a family event, feed 100 people, increase Farm Bureau brand awareness

Ideas to Consider When Planning Your CAM

Thoughtful planning can make the difference between a meeting members attend and a meeting they look forward to. Consider these ideas as you begin planning your county annual meeting.

- **Timing:** Schedule your meeting when members are most likely to attend.
- **Location:** Choose a venue that supports your meeting goals.
- **Invitations:** Don't rely on one invitation—use multiple ways to reach members.
- **Audience:** Plan with your intended audience in mind.
- **Program:** Keep the agenda focused, engaging, and purposeful.
- **Member Engagement:** Build in opportunities for members to connect and participate.
- **Meeting Experience:** Make every attendee feel welcomed, valued, and informed.
- **Lasting Impact:** End the meeting with clear next steps and opportunities to stay involved.

Think Beyond the Agenda

Small ideas can make a big difference in attendance and member engagement. Consider adding something that creates a welcoming, memorable experience for members and guests.

- **Kid-Friendly:** Offer childcare, a kids' activity area, or a simple play space with toys, books, or tractors so parents can participate without worrying about keeping little ones entertained.
- **Keep It Under 90 Minutes:** Respect your members' time by keeping reports concise and moving through required business efficiently. A shorter, well-organized meeting is more likely to keep members engaged from start to finish.
- **Start the Speaker During the Meal:** Consider having your guest speaker begin while attendees are eating. It reduces downtime, keeps the program moving, and makes the most of everyone's time.
- **Choose the Right Emcee:** The event doesn't have to be led by the county president. If another board member is a strong facilitator or enjoys public speaking, let them emcee while the president focuses on the business meeting.