

Agricultural Sales

Rule years 2026–2029 · Revision 1 · Published October 9, 2026

0. General Rules & Eligibility

Career Development Events are governed by the NAEA CDE Committee. All events follow [CDE General Rules and Eligibility](#).

Qualification for this event

District qualification	Top 3 teams per district
Students per team	4
Grades	9–12
National qualifying event?	Yes
Timeframe	FFA Convention
Host	UNL Ag Economics Division
Event Superintendents	Dr. Kate Brooks, Anastasia Meyer

1. Overview

The Nebraska Agricultural Sales Career Development Event aims to build the communication and problem-solving skills essential for agricultural sales. Students will develop an understanding of the professional sales process. Teams will receive a scenario and identify and demonstrate call planning. Individually, students will sell identified product(s) to a judge posing as a customer.

Objectives

Team Pre-Sales Call Planning Meeting Objectives

- Overall Objective of Team Activity: As a team, analyze the information given and develop a pre-call sales planning demonstration.
 - **Definition:** This is called the **Pre-Sales Call Planning Meeting**, or the **Planning Meeting**.
- Team members will work together to demonstrate teamwork, group dynamics, problem-solving, data analysis, decision-making, and oral communication.
- Teams will receive a team scenario and develop a pre-sales call plan for a face-to-face sales call. Teams will use the product(s) identified prior to the event. This pre-sales call plan should include:
 - Potential questions to build rapport for the scenario.
 - Identifying customer needs and wants using questioning techniques.
 - Identifying and demonstrating active listening skills or techniques for determining needs and wants.
 - Identify and match the customer's potential needs and wants to the product's features and benefits.
 - Identifying potential customer objections and demonstrating techniques to address them.
 - Identifying concerns of customers.
 - Students are expected to explain their pre-sales call plan decisions based on selling principles.
 - The team identifies common interests with the customer.

- Teamwork and team members' involvement will be judged during this event.
- As a team, answer questions regarding the methods and strategies presented in the pre-sales call plan demonstration.

Individual Sales Activity Objectives

- Students will demonstrate verbal, written, and interactive communication skills through an individual sales call and creation of sales material.
- Students will understand and demonstrate a professional sales process by completing the following tasks:
 - Identifying and targeting customers based on given information
 - Understanding customer buying motives
 - Discussing features and benefits of a product with a customer and demonstrating proper product use
 - Addressing potential customer objections that arise during the sales call
 - Developing a sales call that addresses customer needs and concerns
 - Attempting to close the sale by asking for the customer's buying decision
 - Reassuring the customer of the decision to buy and building confidence
 - Building rapport with the customer
 - Demonstrating active listening skills
 - Demonstrating the use of clarifying questions
- Students will demonstrate professional conduct by:
 - Being properly groomed
 - Professionally dressed
 - Exhibiting a positive attitude
 - Using appropriate language

Test Objectives

- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the professional sales process through a written exam.
 - The written exam will consist of 25 multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions.
 - Refer to the suggested resource(s) provided to prepare for the written exam.

2. Eligibility & Team

Open to students in Grades 9–12. Teams are 4 students. Top 3 teams per district advance. This event is national-qualifying.

3. What to Bring

Attire

Official FFA Dress or other business professional dress is required for this event. Students not in official or business professional dress may be deducted up to five points during the sales practicum.

Supplies

The **ONLY** allowable items include:

- A one-inch prepared binder containing the provided product information and any other information gathered by the participant that may include:
 - Pricing sheet
 - Product specifications/features
 - The binder may be used during both the individual and team sales activities
 - A blank notepad or blank paper is allowed during the individual and team activities.
- A calculator (separate from a cell phone)
- Writing utensils

NOTE: **Prohibited** items will result in a deduction of up to five points during the individual sales practicum.

- Business cards are **NOT allowed**.
- The physical product is **NOT allowed** at the sales event.

4. Event Format

Timing

- A. Once CDE registration closes, the contest superintendent will create a spreadsheet with individual and team sales activity times. This will be posted on the Agricultural Sales CDE webpage before the State Convention and will serve as the contest schedule.
- B. Before creating the spreadsheet schedule, a school may request a specific time if it has conflicts with additional contests. The superintendent will do his or her best to accommodate these requests.
- C. After the spreadsheet schedule is released, if schools notice they have a conflict with their scheduled time, they should contact other schools and switch time slots with them. If schools switch, they **must notify** the contest superintendent of the change.
- D. While actual participation time is about an hour, it may take longer depending on movement of participants through the three parts of the event. If you have special time considerations, please contact the event superintendent as soon as possible.
- E. Check the CDE schedule for specific arrival, start and end times, and the event location.
- F. On the day of competition, participants will complete the pre-sales call Planning Meeting prior to the individual sales call. The exam may be taken before or after the activities based on scheduling needs.

Format

Event Theme

The product will be selected and will rotate themes on a 5-year basis:

- A. 2026 Theme: Power, Structure and Technical Systems
- B. 2027 Theme: Food Products and Processing Systems

- C. 2028 Theme: Plant Systems
- D. 2029 Theme: Natural Resources Systems
- E. 2030 Theme: Animal Systems

Specific Product Information Sheets will be made available on the [Agricultural Sales page on the Nebraska CDEs website](#) in September of the current academic year.

Event Format

- A. The event will consist of three parts: a team pre-sales call planning meeting, individual sales activity, and a written exam.
- B. Real-world scenarios will be utilized, and students **will not be allowed** to invent product information, including pricing, packaging, specials, etc. As a salesperson, those decisions typically involve or are at the discretion of management, not the sales representative.
- C. To improve evaluation consistency, judges and teachers will receive a recorded video example of the individual sales activity and the team planning meeting in advance of the event. See the Study Materials below for access to these videos.

Event Components

- A. **TEAM PLANNING MEETING:** The following information will be provided to the team at the event as if they were a group of salespeople working together to develop a pre-sales call plan prior to conducting a sales call.
 - I. Product information (available before the event) will be the same for the team planning meeting and individual sales activity.
 - II. One customer profile will be provided for the team planning meeting. This profile will be different from the profiles used in the individual sales activity.
 - III. The team will be provided with paper and pencils. No presentation equipment such as laptops, flipcharts, or dry-erase boards will be allowed.
 - IV. The team will be given up to 15 minutes to analyze the information and prepare to answer questions about the pre-sales call plan. During these 15 minutes, judges will evaluate the team using the team pre-sales call planning meeting scorecard. After the 15 minutes, team members will have an additional 15 minutes to answer questions from the judges individually, without assistance from their team members.
- B. **INDIVIDUAL SALES ACTIVITY:** Product(s) used in the team planning meeting will be the same for individual sales activity, but customer profiles will be different. (Individual activity will be conducted after the team planning meeting .) Participants will directly sell the product(s) to the judge.
 - I. Two customer profiles will be provided, with two team members assigned profile A and two team members assigned profile B. Each student will have 5 minutes to review their assigned profile prior to meeting with the judge(s).
 - II. The judge(s) will act as the customer, who may or may not buy the product. Participants must establish rapport, ask probing questions to ensure they meet the customer's needs, and clarify customer information as part of the sales call. Participants will have 10 minutes to interact with the judge.
 - III. Participants may **not** offer discounts or other promotional items not included in the original product information sheets.
- C. **INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN Exam:** Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the professional sales process through a written exam
 - I. The written exam will consist of 25 multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions.
 - II. Refer to the suggested resource(s) provided to prepare for the written exam.

5. Scoring & Tiebreakers

Refer to the rubrics in the appendix below. The following represents how team and individual scores are calculated:

Individual Scoring

Component	Detail	Points
Written Exam	25 Questions × 2 Points	50
Sales Activity	Scored by judges using the individual sales activity rubric	150
Grand total		200

Individual Tiebreakers

Individual tiebreakers are resolved in this order:

- Highest individual sales activity score
- Highest written exam score
- Highest team planning meeting score

Team Scoring

Component	Detail	Points
Sum of Individual Scores	4 Students × 200 Points	800
Pre-Sales Call Planning Meeting	Scored by judges using the team pre-sales call planning meeting scorecard	175
Grand total		975

Team Tiebreakers

Team tiebreakers are resolved in the order listed below.

- Highest team planning meeting score
- Total individual sales activity scores
- Top individual(s) on either team

6. Study Resources

Approved study resources

- [UNL CDE Study Materials Folder \(OneDrive\)](#) — Practice materials and examples for this CDE.
- **ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries, W. Scott Downey, ISBN-13: 978-0978895211 (Excluding Chapter 2, Marketing)**
- [2027 Agricultural Sales Product Scenario \(Freeze Dryer\)](#) — 2027 Nebraska Agricultural Sales product scenario — freeze dryer.

Past Exams

- [2020 State FFA Agricultural Sales CDE Test](#) — 2020 State FFA Agricultural Sales CDE Test with answer key (combined from archived sources).
- [2019 State FFA Agricultural Sales CDE Test](#)
- [2019 State FFA Agricultural Sales CDE Test - Answer Key](#)
- [Agricultural Sales page on the Nebraska CDEs website](#) — Previous exams and other study materials, in the resource folder.

7. After the Event

A debriefing session is not available for this event; however, individualized feedback will be made available to students on the rubrics and provided to teachers in their convention results packets.

List of Appendices

- [Appendix A: Individual Sales Call Rubric](#)
- [Appendix B: Agricultural Sales Team Rubric](#)

Appendix A: Individual Sales Call Rubric

Student: _____ School: _____

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points
First impression	4–5 points Individual identifies themselves with a good first impression.	2–3 points Individual mostly identifies themselves with a good first impression.	0–1 point Individual poorly identifies themselves with a good first impression.	/5
Personal rapport	8–10 points Individual asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	4–7 points Individual mostly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	0–3 points Individual poorly asks questions and utilizes information from answers in an attempt to build personal rapport.	/10
Clarifying questions	11–15 points Individual asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	6–10 points Individual mostly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	0–5 points Individual poorly asks questions to learn about the customer's business.	/15
	11–15 points Individual asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	6–10 points Individual mostly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	0–5 points Individual poorly asks questions to confirm preliminary customer information.	/15
Needs and wants	8–10 points Individual confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	4–7 points Individual mostly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	0–3 points Individual poorly confirmed and discovered customer needs and wants.	/10
Features and benefits	8–10 points Individual applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/ wants.	4–7 points Individual mostly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants.	0–3 points Individual poorly applied features and benefits of their product to the customer's needs/wants.	/10
Matching needs and wants	11–15 points Individual allows customer to participate in matching their wants/ needs to the product features.	6–10 points Individual mostly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/ needs to the product features.	0–5 points Individual poorly allows customer to participate in matching their wants/ needs to the product features.	/15
Trial close	8–10 points Individual uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	4–7 points Individual mostly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	0–3 points Individual poorly uses appropriate sales technique to confirm customer understanding and/ or identify buying signals.	/10
Objections	11–15 points Individual listens and clarifies customers objections.	6–10 points Individual mostly listens and clarifies customers objections.	0–5 points Individual poorly listens and clarifies customers objections.	/15
Addressing objections	11–15 points Individual applies and discusses the features/ benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	6–10 points Individual mostly applies and discusses the features/ benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	0–5 points Individual poorly applies and discusses the features/benefits of the product to address the customers objections.	/15
Close or advance sale	11–15 points Individual closes or attempts to close the sale.	6–10 points Individual mostly closes or attempts to close the sale.	0–5 points Individual poorly closes or attempts to close the sale.	/15
Active listening	11–15 points Individual actively listens to comments and answers from the customer.	6–10 points Individual mostly listens to comments and answers from the customer.	0–5 points Individual poorly listens to comments and answers from the customer.	/15
Total points earned out of 150 points				

Appendix B: Agricultural Sales Team Rubric

Chapter: _____ State: _____ Team Number: _____

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill	Moderate evidence of skill	Weak evidence of skill	Points Earned
Effective listening	7–10 points Clearly evident that all team members are listening	4–6 points Listening occurs but distraction is evident	0–3 points Not listening to each other and/or talking over each other	/10
Oral communication	6–8 points Clearly evident that all team members are discussing the topic	3–5 points Communication occurs but side conversations are occurring or two to three members dominating	0–2 points One member dominating conversation	/8
Demonstrated cooperation	7–10 points All team members clearly completing tasks, sharing written and oral solutions	4–6 points Tasks primarily completed by two to three members, other members assist occasionally	0–3 points Tasks primarily completed by one member	/10
Respect	7–10 points Clearly all team members respected the input of other team members.	4–6 points Most team members respected the input of other team members.	0–3 points The team members did not respect the input of other team members.	/10
Participated in the team preparation	6–8 points All team members are clearly engaged, attentive, and making notes for the full term of event	3–5 points Members are engaged and attentive with two to three making notes, participation fades over time	0–2 points No members form the primary team, no other members participate	/8
Completing Team Goal				
Rapport	11–15 points All questions for building rapport were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	6–10 points Most questions for building rapport were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	0–5 points Questions for building rapport were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.	/15
Common interests	11–15 points All identified common interests were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	6–10 points Most identified common interests were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	0–5 points Identified common interests were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.	/15
Questions to identify wants and needs	11–15 points All questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	6–10 points Most questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	0–5 points Questions and active listening techniques for identifying needs and wants were not appropriate or pertinent to the scenario.	/15
Determine wants and needs	11–15 points All potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	6–10 points Most potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	0–5 points Potential needs and wants and how the product meets those needs were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	/15
Objections and concerns	11–15 points All potential objections and concerns identified were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	6–10 points Most potential objections and concerns identified were appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	0–5 points Potential objections and concerns identified were not appropriate and pertinent to the scenario.	/15
Product Knowledge/ Scenario Clarifying Questions	17–24 points All team members questioned were able to provide applicable and correct answers for the customer and the products.	8–16 points Half of the team members questioned were able to provide applicable and correct answers for the customer and the products.	0–7 points No team member was able to provide applicable and correct answers for the customer and the products	/24
	21–30 points All individual answers were satisfactory.	11–20 points Most individual answers were satisfactory.	0–10 points Individual answers were less than satisfactory or inappropriate.	/30
Total points earned out of 175 points				

Subcommittee

Standing subcommittee for this event

Name	School / Organization	Role
Abby Hitchler	Boone Central	Chair
Dr. Kate Brooks	UNL — Agricultural Economics	Superintendent
Anastasia Meyer	UNL — Eastern Nebraska Research, Extension and Education Center	Superintendent
Abby Hitchler	Boone Central	Exec liaison
Monty Larsen	UNL	Exec liaison
Katie Arp-Donahue	Central	Member
Ashtyn Vivion	Alliance	Member
Randy Vlasin	Imperial	Member

What changed — 2026–2029 rev 1 EDITORIAL

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