

# Floriculture

Nebraska Career Development Event  
Handbook and Rules for 2026-2030

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## 1. PURPOSE

Floriculture is a discipline of horticulture concerned with the growing and marketing of flowers and ornamental plants, in addition to, usage in floral arrangement and design.

The floriculture industry encompasses the following:

- Greenhouse and field production and management
- Garden center and floral shop operations and management
- Floral design and management

The Nebraska Floriculture Career Development Event is designed to create an interest in careers within the floriculture industry through education, investigation and hands-on technical skill development delivered through the agriculture education curriculum.

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## 2. OBJECTIVES

- Identify plants, plant materials, supplies and equipment utilized in the floriculture industry.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the biological and scientific principles of plant growth and development.
- Identify and recommend solutions for plant disorders.
- Demonstrate the use of elements and principles of design and develop related skills.
- Evaluate marketable floral products for quality and cultural perfection in the retail industry.
- Understand the operation, management and maintenance of facilities for floriculture operations.
- Demonstrate general business practices appropriate to the floriculture industry.
- Effectively work together as a team.

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## 3. ELIGIBILITY

This event is open to students in grades 9-12. The top 25% of schools in a district may qualify a team to the state CDE. Teams shall consist of four students. Schools must register a full team, however teams with less than four students may participate and will not be eligible to earn all points.

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## 4. REQUIRED ATTIRE

It's recommended that FFA members wear Official FFA Dress. Jackets may be removed during hands-on portions. Non-FFA members should wear professional dress.

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## 5. REQUIRED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The following items are required for each student to bring to the competition:

- Two sharpened No. 2 pencils or soft graphite mechanical pencils.
- Calculator (recommended) - phones and tablets are not permitted.

The following items are suggested for the team event. Supplies required may vary by annual rolling event. **Note- No tool boxes allowed. Team tools and supplies must fit within a 16L (~4 gallon) clear plastic storage tote with lid. These are inspected during team check in.**

Floral tools and materials may consist of any or all of the following materials:

- floral scissors,

- ribbon shears,
- pruners,
- wire cutters,
- floral pliers,
- green floral tape,
- green waterproof tape,
- clear waterproof tape,
- floral wire,
- and/or floral adhesive (in dot, strip, or liquid form).

Additional items that may be allowed according to annual event (as indicated):

- Adornments, tulle, decorative paper/packaging.
- Container

Note- when authorized, additional items must be placed into a clear 1 gallon zip-lock bag and shown at check-in with the team supply tote.

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## 6. EVENT SCHEDULE

Check the CDE schedule for specific arrival, start and end times, and the event location.

Team check-in begins 30 minutes prior to the event and seating begins 15 minutes prior to the event start time. Once the event begins, the approximate schedule includes:

- Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)
- Team Activity (45 minutes + 5 minutes cleanup)
- Repositioning/Rotation (5 minutes)
- Individual Plant and Equipment ID Challenge (20 minutes)
- Individual Practicum (15 minutes)
- Individual General Knowledge Exam (45 minutes)

NOTE: *Instructors will be notified two weeks prior to the event of any additional tools and/or supplies needed for completion of the design challenge, in addition to information related to changes in the event.*

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## 7. ANNUAL THEME

### DESIGN CHALLENGE

The team floral design challenge is an annually rolling event that may include any of the following design types.

- All-around or one-sided container design using floral foam (symmetrical, asymmetrical, or implied line styles)
- Horizontal, oblong, or freestyle dinner table design in container with floral foam
- Multi-stem bud vase (1-1/2" throat or similar)
- Mixed loose vase design (3" throat or similar)
- Corsage and/or boutonniere
- Nosegay handheld
- Contemporary/modern freestyle

Please note: *Modifications may be necessary based upon the availability of plant materials and other supplies. Teams will be notified prior to the event when possible.*

**2026 Theme-Grab and Go Designs.** Create each of the following: all-around, one-sided, and multi-stem bud vase using the fresh materials provided. Teams may bring 4 spools ribbon, 1 roll/sheet of tulle, and a maximum of 3 decorative adornments for this activity (1 multi-pack counts as 1 decorative adornment). Provided supplies: In addition to fresh materials, 2 each 6" design bowls, 2/3 block floral foam, and 1 each 1-1/2" multi-stem bud vase will be provided.

**2027 Theme-Intimate Wedding.** Create a nosegay handheld bouquet, 1 wrist corsage, 2 boutonnieres. Provided supplies: Assorted fresh flowers and greens. NOTE: *Teams must bring a wristlet, floral tape, pins/cards, corsage bags, and any supplies required for construction of nosegay.*

**2028 Theme-Dinner Event.** Create an oblong dinner table design, mixed bud vase for cocktail table, and one-sided design for welcome table. Provided supplies: 1 each 8" rectangle or similar design tray, 1 each 2" mini-bouquet vase, 1 each 5" design bowl, 1/3 block floral foam.

**2029 Theme-Professional Decor.** Create contemporary focal design and two loose vase compositions for side tables. Provided supplies: 2/3 block floral foam, 2 each 3" x 6" cylinder vase or similar. NOTE: *Teams must bring their own design dish or tray, no larger than 10" round design bowl or 4" x 8" rectangle.*

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## 8. EVENT FORMAT

### Team Activity (300 Points)- 45 minutes

Instructions are given in written and oral formats for team members to construct specific designs, package (if required), and present their final products. Activity 45 minutes. Materials are provided for each team at their assigned workstation. Emphasis areas include *creativity, composition, workmanship, & final presentation (how neatly the display is arranged on the table)*. Cleanup 5 minutes provided. *Please note that there is limited control over flower colors provided, which is considered during judging.*

### Individual Plant and Equipment ID Challenge (200 Points)- 20 minutes

Forty digital images are projected sequentially for 30 seconds and contestants are to choose the most appropriate name from the multiple-choice list provided. Each correct answer is worth 5 points for a total of 200 points in this section.

**Individual Annual Practicum (50 Points)- 20 minutes**

Individual practicums measure essential competencies in business and operation management. Participants will complete two practicums annually, each worth 25 points. (rubrics in appendix)

1. **Interpret fertilizer or pesticide label** for crop suitability, method of application, rate, personal safety equipment, re-entry interval, and calculate dilution required for application solution.
2. **Determination of retail cost** for a finished floral arrangement, mixed planter, or dish garden. Participants will be provided with the wholesale cost of each item used in the design scenario. Determine the retail price per stem or item using the appropriate markup from the wholesale prices provided. Retail markup will use 3 times the wholesale cost for fresh products and 2 times the wholesale cost for hard goods. Participants will also be asked to calculate labor at 20% and additionally add 7% tax to the net total to determine final selling price.

**General Knowledge and Problem-Solving Examination (175 points) (45 minutes)**

Participants will answer 30 multiple-choice general knowledge questions and will solve 5 problems related to the various aspects of the floriculture industry identified in the event objectives. This includes flowers and material from the wholesaler and how they are handled, stored, and used in the flower shop; knowledge of floral design (arrangement) and marketing of floral products from the floral shop as well as participants' knowledge and understanding of basic biological and scientific principles of producing and marketing flowers, plants and foliage.

Each problem will describe the situation or create the problem and list four (4) possible solutions to the problem. The participant must decide on the best possible solution to the problem. All materials and information necessary to solve the problem will be available to the participants as they solve the problem. Each participant will be allowed 50 minutes to complete the 35-question exam. Each answer has a value of 5 points.

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## 9. SCORING

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### Individual Components

	Individual Points	Team Points
Identification of Floriculture Plants, Equipment, & Supplies (40 images x 5 points each)	200	800
Individual General Knowledge Exam (35 questions x 5 points each)	175	700
Individual Annual Practicum (2 @ 25 points each)	50	200

### Team Components

Team Activity–Rolling Design Challenge		300
Total	425	2,000

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## 10. TIEBREAKER

To determine the award order for individuals involved in a tie, the following will be utilized in rank order:

1. Individual Annual Practicum Score
2. General Knowledge Exam Score
3. Identification of Plants, Equipment, & Supplies Score

To determine the award order for teams that are involved in a tie, the following will be utilized in rank order:

1. Team Activity Score
  2. Individual Annual Practicum Score
  3. General Knowledge Exam Score
  4. Identification of Plants, Equipment, & Supplies Score
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## 11. RESOURCE MATERIALS

Refer to the National FFA Career and Leadership Events webpage on <https://www.ffa.org/> ([Direct Link](#)) for the most up to date career and leadership development handbook edition. Nebraska Floriculture CDE will annually update ID and problem-solving components in response to changes made at the national level.

- Floriculture Plant Identification List
- Floriculture Equipment and Supply Identification List
- Disorder Identification List

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## 12. PAST EXAMS

Students can study from the following materials in preparation for the event:

- Past CDE materials and other resources are available on <https://www.ffa.org/> ([Direct Link](#)).
- Scace, P. and DelPrince, J. 2021. Principles of Floral Design, An Illustrated Guide, Second Edition. Goodheart-Willcox Company, Inc. Tinley Park, IL. ISBN: 978-1-64564-049-3
- Shry, C. and Reiley, E. 2016. Introductory Horticulture, 9th Ed. (or previous). Delmar Cengage Learning. ISBN# 978-1285424729
- Adams, S. (2025). Greenhouse Management for the Smaller Structure - Educational and Hobby. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/agronomyfacpub/1781/> ([Direct Link](#)).

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## 13. POST-CDE DEBRIEFING OPPORTUNITY

Preparation and recommendations for team success:

1. Team Active Design Rubric
2. Individual Annual Practicum Rubrics
  - a. Interpret fertilizer or pesticide label
  - b. Determine Retail Cost of Floral Arrangement, Mixed Planter, or Dish Garden
3. Sample Floral Design Pricing Worksheet
4. Suggested Tools for Team Box
5. Acceptable Optional Supplies for Rolling Challenges (as per event)

# APPENDIX

## Appendix 1. Team Activity Design Rubric

Design 1				
Criteria	Excellent	Emerging	Attempt	No Attempt
Style <sup>1</sup>	50	38	25	0
Mechanics <sup>2</sup>	25	19	12	0
Creativity <sup>3</sup>	25	19	12	0
Design 1 Maximum 100 points				
Design 2				
Criteria	Excellent	Emerging	Attempt	No Attempt
Style <sup>1</sup>	50	38	25	0
Mechanics <sup>2</sup>	25	19	12	0
Creativity <sup>3</sup>	25	19	12	0
Design 2 Maximum 100 points				
Design 3				
Criteria	Excellent	Emerging	Attempt	No Attempt
Style <sup>1</sup>	50	38	25	0
Mechanics <sup>2</sup>	25	19	12	0
Creativity <sup>3</sup>	25	19	12	0
Design 3 Maximum 100 points				
Total Team Score Maximum 300 points				

<sup>1</sup> Is the created design that is assigned, i.e. all-around, symmetrical, oblong, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Quality of construction, i.e. presence of broken materials, stems firmly inserted.

<sup>3</sup> Inclusion of unique artistry beyond the rigidity of a straightforward design style.

## Appendix 2. Individual Annual Practicum Rubrics

### Interpret Fertilizer or Pesticide Label (25 points)

Criterion	Correct	Incorrect
Crop suitability	5	0
Identified application method	5	0
Rate determination	5	0
Required personal protection equipment and re-entry interval	5	0
Determination of final solution	5	0
	Maximum 25 points	

### Determine Retail Cost of Floral Arrangement, Mixed Planter, or Dish Garden

Criterion	Correct	Incorrect
Identified fresh materials & hardgood supplies & correct markup	5	0
Correct sum of retail materials	5	0
Identified labor cost	5	0
Correctly identified tax amount	5	0
Determination of Final Retail Price	5	0
	Maximum 25 points	

### Appendix 3. Sample Floral Design Pricing Worksheet

#### FLORAL DESIGN PRICING WORKSHEET

DESIGN NAME Type or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Description	Quantity	A B C			
		Wholesale Cost per Item	Mark Up (3x Fresh, 2x Hard goods)	Retail Cost per Stem (B x C)	Total Item Retail (A x D)
<b>D (Retail Materials) Subtotal</b> →					<b>\$</b>

<b>E (\$25/hour) Labor 0.40 hour</b> →	<b>\$</b>
<b>F (Include materials &amp; labor) Tax 7%</b> →	<b>\$</b>
<b>G Design Retail Total</b> →	<b>\$</b>

## Appendix 4. Suggested Tools for Team Box



**Appendix 5. Acceptable Optional Supplies for Rolling Challenges (as per event)**

**Optional Supplies for Rolling Challenge**

