



GROW Your AgriRoots – Trailblazer Award Contest ***Rewarding the Next Generation in Agriculture***

Are you a Capital Farm Credit customer with under ten years of experience in operating your own agricultural business? Then we encourage you to apply for a **GROW your AgriRoots Trailblazer Award** for a chance at winning a \$10,000 prize!

The Capital Farm Credit GROW Your AgriRoots Trailblazer Award Contest was created to honor outstanding farm and agribusiness owner-operators in the agricultural community, who excel in their field. Selection of finalists is based on efforts in agriculture, financial character, leadership, community involvement, participation in continuing education or training and innovation.

The contest offers up to two \$10,000 awards to top contestants. Up to five finalists may receive a \$1,000 stipend. Applications open April 15, 2025 and must be **completed by midnight on June 20, 2025 to be eligible for the awards.**

Incomplete applications will not be accepted and applicants who submit incomplete applications will not be contacted. If you have any questions about this contest or application, please call Allyson Tjoelker at 979-822-7879.

Trailblazer Award - Eligibility

- Applicant must be 18 years of age or older as of June 20, 2025.
- Applicant must be an existing or former Capital Farm Credit customer.
- Applicant must have two to ten years of experience in farming, ranching or owning their own agribusiness.
- Applicant may apply as an individual or with a business partner.
- If applicant applies as a partnership and is selected as a recipient, the monetary prize will be awarded to the primary applicant.
- Applicants are eligible for one Capital Farm Credit GROW your AgriRoots Award during a three-year period of time. A minimum of three years must pass before an award winner may apply again.

Officers, Directors, and employees of the Sponsor, Capital Farm Credit, and their subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, press/media representatives, and immediate family members of these entities are not eligible to enter. Family is defined as an individual and spouse and anyone having the following relationship to either: parents, spouse, son, daughter, sibling, stepparent, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-

brother, half-sister, grandparent, grandson, granddaughter, and the spouse of the foregoing and/or those living in the same household of each.

How will applications be judged?

Phase One

An independent panel of qualified judges will review all qualified applications and select up to seven finalists to move onto phase two of the judging process.

Each application in phase one will be **evaluated based on the following criteria** to achieve a score out of 100 possible points:

- Agriculture Business Growth: 30 points
- Financial Character: 20 points
- Leadership & Community Involvement: 15 points
- Continuing Education Programs, Courses or Training: 15 points
- Innovation: 10 points
- Spelling and Grammar and Overall Presentation: 10 points
- Total: 100 points

Phase Two

Finalists and In-Person Interviews

Applicants who are selected as finalists will receive an invitation to participate in an in-person interview with the judging selection committee.

In person interviews will be held on July 30th at the Capital Farm Credit headquarters (3902 South Traditions Drive, College Station, TX 77845). Interviews will be no longer than 40 minutes and are intended for the applicant to provide additional details and clarification regarding their application and for the judging committee to ask questions. Finalists are eligible for travel and lodging reimbursement to attend the in-person judging.

During the interview process, only the named applicant(s) is permitted to be interviewed. No guests will be granted access to the interview. Interviewees will be asked to provide a 15 minute sales pitch to judges. The purpose of the pitch is for finalists to showcase creativity, innovation and business acumen while explaining how the award money would be utilized to improve operations. Guidelines for the sales pitch will be provided to finalists in advance of the interview. Finalists should be prepared to present a powerpoint presentation.

Each application in phase two will be evaluated based on the following Interview selection criteria values:

- Sales Pitch: 40 points
- Ability to explain application and answer interview questions: 30 points
- Professionalism and ability to communicate: 30 points
- Total: 100 points

Application Requirements:

All applications must be submitted online. Online applications open **April 15, 2025**.

A full application consists of:

- Intent to apply through registration
- Biography and contact information
- Series of essay Application
- Emerging Leaders Institute(ELI) Certificate of Completion Business Planning and Goal Setting

The ELI business planning and goal-setting online training takes an estimated 30 minutes to complete and will support applicants in developing a business plan. Once an applicant submits the intent to apply, that applicant will receive access to the Emerging Leaders Institute Business Planning and Goal Setting module.

- Submit a completed Business Plan
 - *Applicants must use the template provided by Capital Farm Credit through the Emerging Leaders Institute.*
- Completed W-9
- High-resolution photo (.jpg or .png)

Applicants without existing operating loans with Capital Farm Credit may be asked to provide additional financial information to complete the application. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and applicants submitting incomplete applications will not be contacted. If you have any questions about this program or application, please call Allyson Tjoelker at 979-822-7879.