**OFFICIAL RULES – Illinois Golden Owl Award® Contest**

These are the Oﬃcial Rules of the Illinois Golden Owl Award® Contest (“Contest”). The contest is co-sponsored by the Illinois FFA (IL FFA), 3221 Northﬁeld Dr., Springﬁeld, Illinois 62702; the Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers (IAVAT), 3221 Northﬁeld Dr., Springﬁeld, Illinois 62702; Compeer Financial, 2000 Jacobssen Dr., Normal, Illinois, 61761; Farm Credit Illinois, 1100 Farm Credit Drive, Mahomet, Illinois, 61853 and Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company (“Sponsors”), One Nationwide Plaza, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

**NO PURCHASE IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PURCHASE WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING.**

**ELIGIBILITY**

Nominees must be Illinois educators currently teaching agriculture courses at the secondary (middle/high school) or postsecondary level. **No purchase is necessary**.

Nominations can be submitted by the general public, current or former students, parents, fellow educators, school administrators and community members.

**TEACHERS MAY NOT SELF-NOMINATE**.

[**2023-2024 GRAND PRIZE WINNERS**](https://news.nationwide.com/?q=golden+owl) **ARE EXCLUDED FROM THIS YEAR’S CONTEST. NOMINATIONS FOR THESE TEACHERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Employees, affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, and any entity involved in the development, production, implementation, administration or fulfillment of the Contest (all of the foregoing, together with Nationwide, Compeer, Farm Credit Illinois, IAVAT, and the IL FFA, collectively referred to as "Promotion Entities") are not eligible to enter the Contest. If any immediate family members and/or those living in the same household of such persons, whether related or not, are in the running for Regional Honoree, Postsecondary Award, and/or Grand Prize Winner, such persons will be temporarily replaced by an unbiased third party to complete administration and fulfillment of the Contest.

**HOW TO ENTER**

The Nomination period begins September 1, 2024 and ends November 15, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. PST (“Nomination Period”).

To enter, provide your and the ag teacher’s contact information, including an essay (1000 characters or less) describing how the teacher’s dedication to agriculture education, and commitment and impact on today’s youth make the teacher the best in the state.

Nominations can be completed online at https://forms.gle/VQ56czcNeYPGjVvf7

Entry constitutes consent to participate in the Contest and for the IL FFA to obtain, use, and transfer the entrant’s name, address and other details for Contest administration purposes. IL FFA will not be responsible for lost, incomplete, illegible, late, misdirected, stolen, or mutilated entries; technical or mechanical malfunctions; errors in the Official Rules, in any related ads or materials; or processing error. IL FFA can void the entry of any Entrant who it believes has attempted to tamper with or impair Contest administration, security, fairness, or proper play.

**HONOR­EE DETERMINATION**

Each nominee will be required to complete a short form to finalize their application for honoree. The completed form is due no later than December 15, 2024.

An established committee will evaluate the forms submitted and the nominations received to select five (5) Honorees and one (1) postsecondary award winner.

Nominations will be judged based on the following criteria:

1. Teacher’s dedication to agriculture education
2. Teacher’s commitment to his/her student(s)
3. Teacher’s impact on his/her student(s)

In the event of a tie, the teacher receiving the highest number of nominations shall be selected as Honoree, as determined by the selection committee.

Honorees will be notified no later than February 28, 2025.

**GRAND PRIZE WINNER DETERMINATION**

Each Honoree will be required to compete a short form to finalize their application for the Overall State winner. The postsecondary award winner will not be eligible for the state application process. The completed form is due no later than May 20, 2025.

The committee will review forms submitted and interview candidates during the IAVAT Conference (June 16-18, 2025). The IL Ag Educator of the Year will be announced as the state winner on June 18, 2025, the last day of the conference.

If a Prize winner is not eligible to win, or if IL FFA is unable to contact the winner after a reasonable effort, the prize will be forfeited, and an alternate winner may be selected. Odds of winning depend on number of eligible entries received.

**SPONSORS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAVEL-RELATED EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH PRIZE ACCEPTANCE.**

**PRIZES**

Prizes will be awarded as follows:

1. One (1) Grand Prize Winner: Trophy and $3,000 cash prize
2. Five (5) Regional Honorees: Plaque and $500 cash prize to honoree
3. One (1) Postsecondary Award Winner: Plaque and $500 cash prize to honoree
4. Thirty (30) Sectional Winners: Plaque to teacher, sponsored by the Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers
5. All nominees: Electronic certificate

Prizes are non-transferable, and no substitution will be made except as provided herein at the Sponsors’ sole discretion. Sponsors reserve the right to substitute a prize for one of equal or greater value if the designated prize should become unavailable for any reason. Winners are responsible for all taxes and fees associated with prize receipt and/or use.

If requested, winners must execute and return an Affidavit of Eligibility, Liability Release and (where legal) Publicity Release within three days of notification. Failure to do so may result in disqualification, forfeiture, or award to alternate winner.

**GENERAL RULES**

The Contest is governed by and subject to the laws of the United States and the state of Illinois.

All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. Void where prohibited by law. Prize Winners may receive an IRS 1099 form for the value of their prizes. By participating in the Contest and/or accepting any prize, Entrants grant the Promotion Entities permission to use their name, likenesses, and image in connection with the Contest for purposes of advertising, publicity and promotion purposes, without further compensation to the entrant, unless prohibited by law. Entrants agree to be bound by the Official Rules and the decisions of the judges, which are final and binding on all matters relating to the Contest. The Promotion Entities are not responsible for any typographical or other errors in the printing of the offer, administration of the Contest or the announcement of the prizes, or for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, incomplete or illegal entries.

The Promotion Entities reserve the right at their sole discretion to disqualify any Entrant found to be (a) tampering or attempting to tamper with the entry process or (b) violating the Official Rules.

By participating in the Contest and/or accepting any prize, Entrants grant Sponosrs permission to use their name, likenesses, and image in connection with the Contest for purposes of advertising, publicity and promotion purposes, without further compensation to the entrant, unless prohibited by law.

**DISPUTES/GOVERNING LAW**

Except where prohibited, as a condition of participating in this Contest, Entrant agrees that any and all disputes that cannot be resolved between the parties, and all claims and causes of action arising out of or connected with this Contest, or any prize awarded, or the determination of winner shall be resolved individually, without resort to any form of class action. Further, in any such dispute, under no circumstances will Entrant be permitted to obtain awards for, and hereby waives all rights to claim punitive, incidental or consequential damages, or any other damages, including attorneys' fees, and Entrant further waives all rights to have damages multiplied or increased.

All issues and questions rights and obligations of Entrant in connection with this Contest shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of Illinois, without giving effect to the conflict of laws rules thereof.

**PRIVACY**

By entering the Contest, you agree to the terms and conditions described in the Nationwide Privacy Policy, located at http://nationwide.com/nw/privacy.

**WINNER LIST**

For a list of Prize winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Golden Owl Award Request, John C. Edgar, Assistant Director, Illinois FFA Center, 3221 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL 62702.