

4-H FACE for *Wildlife* Contest

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Procedures and Guidelines

What is FACE?

The Food And Cover Establishment contest is a program offered in the 4-H Wildlife Project. FACE is designed to teach 4-H'ers how to plant food plots that enhance food and cover resources for wildlife. The program is implemented by UT Extension and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

What is the objective of the program?

The objective is to give youth an opportunity to learn about wildlife habitat improvement by implementing a habitat management practice that enhances food and cover resources for wildlife. 4-H'ers should gain knowledge concerning agronomy, as well, as they collect a soil sample, get it tested and amend their plot site with the appropriate amount of lime and fertilizer. 4-H'ers must take the initiative to ask an adult (usually a parent or other relative) to help with preparing the site (plowing/disking), soil amendment and planting.

Type of planting and site selection

FACE seed comes in a 5-pound bag, which includes a mixture of grain sorghum and cowpeas. This is a warm-season mixture; therefore, it is planted in the spring. This mixture provides both forage (leaf material) and seed for a variety of wildlife species.

FACE plots are best situated within and along the edges of fields containing suitable nesting cover (broomsedge and other native warm-season grasses) and brooding cover (annual forbs, such as ragweed and partridge pea). This placement allows FACE plots to benefit species such as bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbits, white-tailed deer and several species of songbirds. It is crucial that suitable escape cover (brushy fencerows, blackberry thickets, etc.) be within or adjacent to the field. Plots should not be positioned directly adjacent to the woods, but away from the edge of the woods at least 30-50 feet. This placement prevents the trees from over shading the plot and competing with the plot for nutrients. It also allows a "soft edge" of forbs and brambles to establish between the woods and the plot, providing additional cover adjacent to the plot. If possible, plots should not be planted near houses or other areas of human activity.

Requirements

Extension agents should order seed only for 4-H'ers planning to participate in the program. **4-H'ers receiving seed should be enrolled in the 4-H Wildlife Project and given a FACE county activity code (C49C).** 4-H'ers of all ages are eligible. An individual 4-H'er can receive more than one bag of seed, **but only one plot must be entered in the contest.** Plant one bag of seed per plot. If a 4-H'er wants more than one bag, he/she should plan to plant more than one plot. If there are bags of seed left over, the surplus should first be offered to Extension agents in other counties. If there is still seed remaining, it may be given to anyone willing to plant it. TWRA is purchasing and providing FACE seed for youth programming – not as a seed give-away program for general landowners.

It is important for Extension agents to keep track of who received seed and if it was planted. TWRA needs this information for reporting. **Regional Extension offices have an Excel spreadsheet for the following information per county:** name, address and phone number of the Extension agent; the number of FACE bags ordered; the number

of FACE bags provided to 4-H'ers; the number of bags planted by 4-H'ers; the number of soil samples received and submitted for testing; the number of plots judged; and the name and address of the county winner.

After planting, plots should be protected from livestock grazing. 4-H'ers are expected to keep records on their FACE plot(s). The form on the back of SP209-A should be filled out for record keeping and submitted to the Extension agent when the plot is judged. Plots should not be mowed, but left standing through the following winter.

Timetable & procedures for the contest...

September

Extension agents send their regional program leader the number of bags of FACE seed needed for the following spring. Program leaders send the region's seed order and shipping address to the Extension wildlife specialist, who sends each region's order and shipping address to the TWRA small game program coordinator.

4-H'ers collect soil samples and give them to their Extension agent to send for testing. Plot site is limed if necessary. Lime should be incorporated into the seedbed by plowing or disking.

October

TWRA requisitions seed mix from various seed companies for the following year's contest.

March/April

TWRA purchases seed and has it shipped to regional Extension offices. Extension agents pick up their seed and deliver it to participating 4-H'ers.

May/June

Seedbed is amended with fertilizer, as recommended by the soil test, and prepared by disking. Plots are planted and covered lightly by disking.

August

Extension agents and/or county TWRA officers judge plots (agents are encouraged to contact the TWRA officer in their county and ask them to help with judging). If TWRA officers cannot help, Extension agents should judge the plots by themselves. Ideally, the Extension agent and TWRA officer judge each plot in the county together, scoring each plot independently. The two scores for each plot are then averaged to determine the final score. The high-scoring plot in each county is declared a winner. In case of a tie, total points for Plot Location (see FACE score sheet, F820) should be used to decide the winner. Extension agents should collect FACE plot records (form on SP209-A) from each participating 4-H member when the plot is judged. Extension agents then send the name, address and other information for the county winner (see Requirements above) to the regional program leader.

September

Each program leader sends the Extension wildlife specialist the Excel spreadsheet with this information. The Extension wildlife specialist sends a list of all county winners and other information to the TWRA small game program coordinator.

October

TWRA sends prizes and awards to the appropriate Extension agent, who then recognizes the county winner at the appropriate time (club meeting or other gathering).

Prizes and awards

Each county FACE plot winner receives a gift valued at \$50 or more, a certificate and a 1-year subscription to *TWRA Wildlife* magazine.

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