

Guidelines for the 2025 SS-AAEA Undergraduate Paper Competition and the SS-AAEA Journal

Instructions for entering the 2025 SS-AAEA Undergraduate Paper Competition:

1. Submit a Statement of Intent (see web site) to jweister@aaea.org by **May 16, 2025**.
2. Complete the entry form found on the web site.
3. Submit the entry form and the complete paper to jweister@aaea.org by **June 16, 2025**.
4. Once notification that the paper is accepted has been received, prepare to give an oral presentation of the research on Sunday, July 27, 2025, between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.
5. Students may both enter the paper competition and submit to the *SS-AAEA Journal*. Students who also wish to publish their paper in the *Journal* must also complete the submission form from the web site and complete any editorial changes before publication, if necessary.
6. This paper may be a co-authored paper, but by no more than 2 students.

General guidelines for the SS-AAEA Journal

The Journal is a peer-reviewed online publication containing research articles produced and written by undergraduate students. Students may submit to the *Journal* without entering the SS-AAEA Undergraduate Paper Competition. Students who write excellent papers for a class or honors project are encouraged to submit their work to the Journal. A résumé that lists a published article provides a signal to graduate schools and potential employers that the student possesses self-discipline, intellectual talent, and a strong work ethic.

All articles submitted to the Journal will be handled by the editor (typically the SS-AAEA Senior Advisor) and reviewed by one or more professional agricultural economists. All articles on an interesting subject that employ valid research methodologies and polished writing will be published.

Instructions for SS-AAEA Journal submissions:

1. Fill out the submission form and submit it to jweister@aaea.org with the paper attached to the e-mail.
2. Write the paper using the formatting guidelines on pages 3-4.
3. All papers submitted to the *Journal* will receive a decision of either *accept* or *reject* regarding publication (i.e., no “revise and resubmit”). However, students may be required to complete any editorial changes before publication.
4. Papers may be submitted to the *Journal* at any time; no deadlines exist. Submissions will be reviewed and a decision will be returned within 30 days.

Undergraduate Paper Competition Rules

Students entering the SS-AAEA Undergraduate Paper Competition are required to give a presentation on their research at the AAEA Annual Meeting. The written paper and the presentation may be judged *separately* by *different* judges. The written paper comprises 60 percent of the total score and the remaining 40 percent consists of the oral presentation (100-point scale).

Students may submit a paper for potential publication in the SS-AAEA Journal without entering the competition. In addition, a paper entered in the competition will only be published in the SS-AAEA Journal if approved by the judges and the Journal editor.

Deadlines

- a. *Statement of Intent*: All students entering the competition must submit a Statement of Intent (see web site) to complete and present their paper at the annual meeting to jweister@aaea.org by **May 16, 2025**. The Statement of Intent should include a tentative paper title.
- b. *Submission of Paper*: Following successful completion of (a) above, students must submit the Entry Form (page iii) and their final paper to jweister@aaea.org by **June 16, 2025**. Authors must submit their paper in Microsoft Word (*.doc, *.docx) or other compatible format. Students will be notified by **June 26, 2025**, if their paper has been accepted for the competition.
- c. *Presentation*: All students with accepted papers for written judging will be expected to give an oral presentation at the 2025 AAEA Annual Meeting, on Sunday, July 27, 2025, between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. The presentation is to be saved on a thumb drive and brought Sunday.
- d. *Awards*: The student with the highest overall score will receive a plaque, a \$200 cash award, and be recognized at the AAEA Awards Ceremony (Monday, July 28, at 6:30 pm). Cash awards of \$150 and \$100 will be given to the students in second and third place, respectively.
- e. All papers deemed acceptable by judges and the Journal editor will be automatically published in the SS-AAEA Journal, unless an author requests otherwise.

Qualifications for Paper Competition

Students entering the competition must register for the AAEA Annual Meeting. Students who graduate in Fall 2024 or Spring 2025 must complete a majority of their work on the written paper *prior* to graduation. Advisors of these students will be asked to submit an email affirming the student's work.

Written Paper (60 percent of total score)

Two to three professional agricultural economists will complete an evaluation of each written paper submitted and accepted for the competition prior to the annual meeting. The criteria for evaluating the written paper are as follows:

- a. Statement of the problem and objectives—10%
- b. Proper use of economic concepts—20%
- c. Logic and conceptualization—10%
- d. Conclusions and implications drawn from the analysis—20%
- e. Writing system and clarity of presentation—20%
- f. Evidence of student creativity and originality—20%
- g. *Note*: Students and advisors sometimes incorrectly believe the papers that win the contest use the most sophisticated mathematical and statistical methods. As a result, in some years a few students use methodological techniques they do not understand. Therefore, students should only use methods taught in their undergraduate courses or that they have learned and understand. A good paper using very simple methods—even simple averages—may outperform a paper using advanced econometric techniques.

Oral Presentation (40 percent of total score)

A panel of three professional agricultural economists will judge all student presentations, which will take place on Sunday, July 27, 2025, between 9:00 am and 5:30 pm. (As noted above, these judges will *not* be the same judges who evaluate the written paper.) The room designated for these presentations will be furnished with a computer and projector. Students will only need to bring their own USB drive that contains the file with their PowerPoint presentation (*.ppt or *.pptx), and, optionally, any other materials they wish to provide to the judges. Any other presentation file formats (Adobe Acrobat, Apple Keynote, Prezi, etc.) must receive prior approval from the SS-AAEA Senior Advisor.

Time. Each student will be allotted twelve (12) minutes for his or her oral presentation at the AAEEA Annual Meeting. Students will receive a signal from the Senior Advisor at the end of ten (10) minutes and again at twelve (12) minutes. Penalties for exceeding twelve minutes are as follows:

- a. Over 12 minutes but less than 13 minutes: 1% deduction
- b. Over 13 minutes but less than 14 minutes: 5% deduction
- c. Over 14 minutes: 10% deduction
- d. If a presentation exceeds 15 minutes, the student will not be allowed to continue.

Questions. Each judge will ask each student one or two questions. Students should be prepared to demonstrate they understand any quantitative tool used in their paper.

Judging. The oral presentations will be evaluated by a panel of three judges according to the following criteria:

- a. Economic content—30%
- b. Organization of material—10%
- c. Communication of skills—25%
- d. Ability to respond to questions—20%
- e. Evidence of student creativity and originality—15%

Undergraduate Paper/SS-AAEA *Journal* Formatting Instructions

Formatting Instructions are forthcoming.