



Idaho State Soils Handbook

Event Purpose

Land and home site evaluation is an event designed to evaluate a soil or set of soils. The purpose of land and home site evaluation is to teach participants to recognize soil factors and characteristics that affect agricultural production and suitability for selecting a home site. This will help the participants to make wise decisions in managing soil and land resources.

Objectives

Land evaluation can help participants learn to:

- Identify basic soil differences and properties.
- Determine how physical and chemical soil properties affect crop growth.
- Identify reasons why various soils respond differently to management practices.
- Determine the influence of topographic features on soil productivity, land protection, and native vegetation.
- Define and understand soil and water conservation practices.
- Determine proper land use and management.
- Determine how soil properties may be used as a basis for selecting a home site.

General Rules

1. Regional Field Days are held at four or five locations around the state during the months of September and October. The top three teams from each FFA district at the Regional Field Days qualify for the State event.
2. A school (FFA Chapter) may have unlimited participants in the Regional Field Days but an official team of 3-5 members must be designated at the Regional Field Day and at the State event.
3. The State event is held in Burley, Idaho, usually on the second Wednesday of October. This is typically after Columbus Day. The cost is \$50.00 per team. Registration and the organization meeting for the State event begin at 7:00 a.m. at the Burley High School.

Event Rules

1. Team make-up:
 - a. A chapter team will consist of three to five individuals, with the scores of the high three members comprising the team score.
 - b. The top three teams from each FFA District will be eligible to participate at the state event.
2. Contestants can have the following pieces of equipment:
 - Unmarked clipboards (recommend clear boards)
 - #2 Pencil with good eraser
 - Knife or digging tool
 - Towel or rag
 - Contest cards
3. No calculators, cell phones, measuring devices of any kind, or personal water bottles are allowed. Water to moisten soil will be provided as needed.
4. Evaluation cards will be handed out after the practice site has been completed.
5. No talking is allowed within the field description site.
6. Participants will not disturb the area between the flagging in the soil pits.

7. A white nail will mark the top of the soil profile in the flagged area. Other white nails may be used in the flagged area for topsoil present or depth of soil.
8. If site information is reviewed, it will be done at the end of the state event, not at each site.
9. The official instructional handbook for the Soil and Land Evaluation Career Development Event is Bulletin 795: *Soil and the Environment, A Land and Homesite Evaluation Handbook and Training Guide*. <http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/edComm/pdf/BUL/BUL795.pdf>
10. A three-person team of event checkers will check the official placings at each site before the contest begins. Any errors on the official scorecards will be corrected only after consultation with the state coordinator. Unless a clear error has been made, all determinations (e.g., % slope, texture, soil depth, etc.) made by contest officials are final.

Format and Scoring

1. Land Evaluation Score card, 3 sites:

- a. Part I Soil and Land Characteristics

Factors	Points
A- Surface Texture	4
B- Subsoil Texture	4
C- Subsoil Permeability	4
D- Depth of Soil	3
E- Slope	3
F- Erosion loss	3
G- Surface runoff	3
H- Drainage	3
I- Climate	3
J- Major factors	10 ¹
Total points, Part 1	40

- b. Part II Land Capability Class and Recommended Land Treatments

Treatments	Points
K- Land capability class	5
L- Vegetative	13 ¹
M- Mechanical	9 ¹
N- Fertilizer/Soil amendment	8 ¹
Total points, Part II	35
Total points, both parts	75

¹ one point given for each item (correctly marked or not marked)

2. Homesite Evaluation Scorecard, 2 sites:

- a. Part I Soil and Land Characteristics

Features	Points
A through I and Final Evaluation	2 each
Total points, Part I	20

- b. Part II Limitation for various uses of site for a single family dwelling without a basement.

Degree of Limitation	Points
Each box under the columns:	2 for each box including unmarked boxes and final evaluation
1-Foundation without basement	
2-Lawns, Shrubs, and gardens	
3-Septic System	
4-Sewage lagoon	
Total points, Part II	80
Total points, both parts	100
3 sites Land evaluation	225
2 sites Homesite evaluation	200
Total per individual	425
Total per team (top 3 individuals)	1275

Awards

Awards will be presented at a ceremony following the event. FFA and 4-H will be recognized separately at this ceremony. The top 10 teams and individuals in each organization will be recognized. Individuals and teams from 1st through 5th place will receive plaques (pins for individuals) based on their rankings with clarification as follows:

1. The number of individual plaques awarded will correspond to the number of teams that compete up to a maximum of five individual plaques. For example, if two 4-H teams compete, two individual 4-H plaques will be awarded.
2. 4-H team plaques will be awarded to the first-place team and up to 5th place, but there will be one award less than the total number of team's participating. For example, if three 4-H teams compete, then only two winning team plaques will be awarded.
3. The top two winning teams (either FFA or 4-H) at State will receive money to attend the National Soil Judging competition at Oklahoma City, OK, in May of the following year of the State event.

References

Agencies and Organizations involved in the Idaho Soil and Land Evaluation program include:

University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences: Extension soil specialists and soil scientists help coordinate the overall state program, schedule and organize regional events and the state events, provide technical support, and conducts the state event and some of the regional events. They maintain the official instructional handbook, *Soil and the Environment, A Land and Homesite Evaluation Handbook and Training Guide* (Bulletin 795). Cooperative Extension County faculty work with FFA and 4-H leaders and members in preparing and participating in the regional and state events.

Copies of the instructional handbook, *Soil and the Environment, A Land and Homesite Evaluation Handbook and Training Guide* (Bulletin 795) can be ordered from CALS Communications, 875 Perimeter Drive MS 2332, Moscow, Idaho 83844-2332, phone 208-885-7982, order #1104, \$4.00 each.

Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education: The Agriculture and Natural Resources program manager assists in the development and coordination of the regional and state events. Idaho agricultural science and technology instructors, the University of Idaho Department of Agricultural Education and 4-H Youth Development, and district FFA organizations support the program.

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS): Soil scientists and soil conservationists work to organize, provide technical support, and help conduct the state and regional events.

Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts: IASCD Auxiliary and individual Soil Conservation Districts each support the program through planning, conducting events and contributing financial resources supporting the events and/or to the Maynard Fosberg - Land Judging Endowment. The East and West Cassia Soil Conservation Districts have been the major organizers and sponsors of the state event in Burley for many years.

Maynard Fosberg Land Judging Endowment:

In 1985 the Maynard Fosberg Land Judging Endowment was established through the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) at the University of Idaho to help support the program financially and provide a scholarship to an incoming freshman in soil science that participated in the Soil and Land Evaluation Program. Individuals and organizations wishing to contribute to this endowment should contact the CALs Development Office.