

Update on 2026 Floriculture State Finals Contest Format

Dear CATA Members,

In the spirit of transparency and collaboration, we want to provide an update on the final decision regarding the structure of the Floriculture State Finals Contest for 2026.

As you know, a working group of Floriculture coaches met in June to address concerns about managing the final round of the contest at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. That group put forward two recommendations for consideration:

1. Extend Lab B with a temporary tent to allow 20 teams in the final round.
2. Reduce the final-round field to 15 teams, moving only the top teams forward.

Following discussions with Cal Poly's horticulture facility, the Floriculture Host Coordinator has determined that the first recommendation (adding the tent) is not feasible. The proposed tent location would conflict with the Nursery and Landscape contest areas and obstruct emergency access to the horticulture unit.

As a result, the Floriculture Host Coordinator **will implement Recommendation #2:**

- **In 2026, the final round of the Floriculture State Finals Contest will include 15 teams.**

We recognize this decision affects many of our programs and students. While this adjustment ensures the contest can continue to be hosted at Cal Poly safely and effectively, we also want members to know that this is not intended as a permanent change.

Next Steps:

- By June 1, 2026, a request should be submitted to reopen the Floriculture CDE Curricular Code.
- This will allow for a broader membership discussion and possible long-term solutions for future years.

We want to thank all the coaches, CDE leadership, and Cal Poly partners who contributed time and thoughtful discussion to this process. Your dedication helps us maintain high-quality, sustainable contests for students.

If you have any questions or would like to share feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out.