



Official Topic: "Agriculture – Every Day in Every Way"

Sponsored by: CHS Inc., The Council for Agricultural Science & Technology, *High Plains Journal*, National Association of Farm Broadcasting, National Agri-Marketing Association, Country Living Association and McCormick Company.

Section I – General Rules

1. The 2009 Ag Day Essay Contest is divided into two levels of competition: State and National.
2. Contestants must compose an original essay with limited guidance from others.
3. Agriculture Council of America will have the right to publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered in the contest without payment to the author.
4. All entries must be received by Feb. 9, 2009.

Section II – Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to students in grades 7 through 12 in the 2008-2009 school year. Contestants must meet all requirements to compete.
2. Contestants are eligible for only one essay entry during any given year.

Section III – Contest Rules

1. Participants' subject must be on the official topic. The official topic must be listed with the total number of words on the top of the title page of the manuscript (deduction of 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit).
2. Each entry must begin with a title page containing: topic, number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, e-mail address, date of birth, school name and grade (deductions of 5 points for incorrect total of words).
3. Essays may be handwritten or type-written, double-spaced (deduction of 5 points if not double-spaced).
4. Essays must contain no more than 450 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the bibliography, footnotes identifying non-original material or title.
5. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with the first page of the essay, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
6. Any quotation or copyrighted materials used in the essay must be properly identified using a bibliography. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
7. No reference can be made in the essay that will identify the contestant (deduction of 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification).
8. Essay must be written in English.
9. Essay may be mailed or e-mailed with entry form. If mailed, the entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.

10. All entry forms and essays should be received by Feb. 9, 2008, and sent by mail or e-mail to:

2009 Ag Day Essay Contest
Agriculture Council of America
11020 King Street, Suite 205
Overland Park, KS 66210
essay@agday.org

11. Any protest must be made immediately. The Essay Contest Chair will decide all protests in conformity with the contest rules.
12. The decision of the contest Chair is final and no higher appeals will be recognized.

Section IV – Judging and Timing

1. Judging will be completed by a panel of qualified judges made up of representatives from the sponsoring organizations and experts from the agriculture industry.
2. In an effort to conceal the identity of each contestant, each entry will be assigned a number by the essay contest Chair. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and first page of the essay before the title page is removed.
3. Judges will not discuss or compare essays being judged.
4. Only judges can assign a penalty or award a point.

Section V – Scoring of Contest

Scoring procedures at all levels of the contest will be identical.

1. Material Organization (logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to topic): 40 points
2. Vocabulary and Style (phrasing and continuity): 25 points
3. Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling: 20 points
4. Neatness: 10 points
5. Adherence to Contest Rules (prepared in the proper format): 5 points

Section VI – Penalties

Required 5-point deduction

1. Failure to identify total number of words
2. Failure to stay within the 450-or-less word limit
3. Self-identification
4. Failure to double space

Section VII – Awards

1. State Winner (one per state) – \$100.
2. National Winner – \$1,000 and trip to Washington, D.C., to be recognized at the Celebration of Ag Dinner held at the Whitten Patio on March 12.
3. For more information, contact essay@agday.org RE: 2009 Ag Day Essay Contest.