

# 2010 Ag Day Essay Contest Rules and Guidelines

Official Topic: "Agriculture: Abundant, Affordable, Amazing"

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

## Section I – General Rules

1. The 2010 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 should be **received by February 12, 2010**.

## Section II - Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to students in grades 7 through 12 in the 2009-2010 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). Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the bibliography, footnotes identifying non-original material or title.
2. Each entry must begin with a title page containing: topic, number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, date of birth, school name and grade (deductions of 5 points for incorrect total of words).
3. Essays may be handwritten or typed, double-space (deduction of 5 points if not double-spaced).
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. No reference can be made in the essay that will identify the contestant (deduction of 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification).
7. Essay must be written in English.
8. The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.
9. All entry forms and essays should be received by February 12, 2010, and sent to:  
2010 Ag Day Essay Contest  
Agricultural Council of America  
11020 King Street, Suite 205  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
[essay@agday.org](mailto:essay@agday.org)

10. Any protest must be made immediately. The Essay Contest Chair will decide all protests in conformity with the contest rules.
11. 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 level 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 suggested 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 Whitten Patio March 18, 2010. For more information, contact [essay@agday.org](mailto:essay@agday.org), RE: 2010 Ag Day Essay Contest.