2014 Farm-City State Essay Contest

The Alabama Farm-City poster, essay and multimedia theme for 2014 is “Agriculture: 365 Sunrises and 7 Billion Mouths to Feed.”

Each morning, most Americans awake to a bounty of food and fiber, never realizing the science, management, labor and cooperation it takes to feed, clothe, shelter and fuel the world.

This year, Ag Day and the Alabama Farm-City Committee celebrate the marvel of farm production with the theme “Agriculture: 365 Sunrises and 7 Billion Mouths to Feed.”

As the sun comes up on Alabama agriculture each day, we find farmers feeding cows, walking through chicken houses, working on farm machinery, planting crops, harvesting fields, greeting customers at the farmers market, watching the weather and praying for blessings from above. But, if we look closer, we’ll also see them creating habitat for wildlife, protecting streams from erosion, helping neighbors, leading communities, teaching children and creating jobs for thousands in nearby towns and cities.

Each sunrise is a new opportunity for Alabama’s largest industry. It’s a chance to explore new varieties and technologies; educate future generations about the land; and experience the joy of a hard day’s work, a perfectly ripe peach or a bumper crop.

For farmers, however, each day also brings responsibility and challenges. Seven billion people worldwide depend on agriculture for sustenance, and the number is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050. That means each farmer must not only continue feeding about 155 people, but he or she also must find ways to be more efficient and productive.

In Alabama, agriculture is a $70 billion a year business and creates jobs for 22 percent of the workforce. But farmers don’t do this alone. Alabama agriculture is a network of people and businesses that involves researchers, farmers, bankers, suppliers, processors, transporters, retailers, regulators and more. Farm-City and Ag Day give us a chance to honor the cooperation and interdependence that — day in and day out — keep us fed.

“Agriculture: 365 Sunrises and 7 Billion Mouths to Feed” reminds us that we should never take our food — or the rural-urban partnerships that bring it to our tables — for granted.

The contest is sponsored by the Farm-City Committee of Alabama, P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191-0001, in cooperation with Alabama Ag in the Classroom and Alabama Farmers Cooperative. More information for teachers and students is available online at www.AlfaFarmers.org, www.AlabamaAITC.org and www.AgEducate.org or by contacting your local Alabama Cooperative Extension System office.

State winners in the poster, essay and multimedia contests will be featured in the Alabama Farm-City Committee’s 2016 Farm-City Calendar.

Eligibility and Rules

1. Division I is open to all students in grades 7 – 9.
   Division II is open to all students in grades 10 – 12.
2. First and second place winners will be named.
3. Essays must relate to the theme. The name of the theme must be stated in the essay.
4. Each student is required to complete the enclosed information form and attach it to the essay entry.
5. **All entries will be judged first at the County Farm-City Committee level with the first place winner in each county being submitted to the State Farm-City Committee. One entry per division, per county may be submitted for judging at the state level.**

6. **Criteria:** Essay should be 500–1000 words, neatly typed, and double-spaced, on 8 ½ x 11, white paper. They will be judged on:
   1. **Content Title**
      - Topic Sentence
      - Adherence to topic
      - Accuracy of information
      - Supporting details
      - Appearance
      - Originality
      - Reader Appeal
   2. **Mechanics**
      - Grammar
      - Punctuation
      - Sentence Structure
      - Capitalization
      - Spelling
   3. **Organization**
      - Clarity
      - Flow of material
      - Conclusion

7. **Deadline for entry at the state level is February 20, 2015. State winners will be notified by mail no later than March 10.** Award winners will be announced at the State Farm-City Awards Luncheon.

8. **All entries may be used at the discretion of the AG in the Classroom Steering Committee and the Farm-City Committee of Alabama without further permission or monetary consideration.**

**Awards in Each Category**

**FIRST PLACE:** $300 Cash

**SECOND PLACE:** $200 Cash

**Student's Classroom:** $300 Cash

**Student's Classroom:** $200 Cash

For further information, contact your local Farm-City Committee or the State Farm-City Committee at 1(800)392-5705 or 1(334)613-4410. E-mail: pculver@alfafarmers.org. Fax: 1(334)284-3957. Mailing address: Alabama Farmers Federation, Attn: Jeff Helms, P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191.
2014
Farm-City Essay Contest

Date: ________________ Grade: ______
County: ________________ Age: ______

Student’s Name: __________________________
Student’s Home Address: __________________________

Student’s Phone Number: __________________________
Parent’s Name: __________________________

School Name: __________________________
School Address: __________________________

School Phone Number: __________________________
Teacher’s Name: __________________________

Teacher’s Signature: (First & Last name) __________________________

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