

2016 Ag Day Essay Contest

Official Topic: "Agriculture: Stewards of a Healthy Planet"

General Rules

- Contestants must compose an original written essay with limited guidance from adults, teachers, or agricultural industry professionals. Interviews with industry professionals are acceptable research; input beyond research is unacceptable.
- Your essay may be published or duplicated, along with the author's name, without payment to the author.
- All entries must be received at the **WV Department of Agriculture office in Moorefield by midnight, November 30, 2015.**

Qualifications for Contestants

- The contest is open to students in grades 9 through 12 in the 2015-2016 school-year. The contestant must be a U.S. citizen.

Rules

- Entries must begin with a title page containing the following: official topic, "Agriculture: Stewards of a Healthy Planet", number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, date of birth, school name and grade.
- Essays must be typed, double-spaced.
- Essays must contain 450 words or less. Every word is counted. This does not include the bibliography, footnotes identifying non-original material or title and author information.
- 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.
- Any quotation or copyrighted materials used in the essay must be properly identified using a bibliography and footnotes or proper citation. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
- No reference can be made in the essay that will identify the contestant beyond the listing of the name on the title page. The author is allowed to reference a state's name within the essay.
- Essays must be written in English.
- The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner with the title page on the top.
- All essays must be accompanied by an entry form. An entry form is attached or can be downloaded at www.wvagriculture.org. Entry forms and essays must be received by **midnight, November 30, 2015** and sent to:

**West Virginia Department of Agriculture
Attn: Cindy Shreve
60B Moorefield Industrial Park Road
Moorefield, WV 26836**

Judging

- Judging will be completed by a panel of qualified judges made up of representatives from the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and experts from the ag industry.
- In an effort to conceal the identity of each contestant, each entry will be assigned a number. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and the first page of the essay before the title page is removed.

Scoring

- Material Organization (logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to topic): 40 points
- Vocabulary and Style (phrasing and continuity): 25 points
- Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling: 25 points
- Visual Esthetics: 25 points

Penalties

- Automatic 5 point deduction for any of the following
 - Failure to identify total number of words
 - Failure to stay within the 450-or-less word limit
 - Failure to double space

The first place entry will be notified via phone in late December/early January. The winner will be honored in Charleston at WV's Agriculture and Forestry Day at the Legislature on January 20, 2016. The chosen entry will also be entered into the National Ag Day Essay Contest.