

## 2018 Farm-City State Essay Contest

Since 2017, the Alabama Bicentennial Commission has hosted numerous celebrations leading up to the state's 200th birthday. This year's Farm-City theme — **"200 Years of Alabama Agriculture"** — joins in the bicentennial commemoration and will be a fitting subject for the State Farm-City Awards Luncheon next April.

The Alabama Territory was carved out of the Mississippi Territory in 1817, and Alabama was admitted to the Union as the 22nd state Dec. 14, 1819.

In those days, farming was the way of life for the majority, of Alabamians, but the interdependence between urban and rural communities was already evident. Cities sprang up along major waterways, which farmers relied on to ship goods from land-locked areas to worldwide markets via the Port of Mobile.

In the past 200 years, technology has transformed Alabama's agricultural footprint and its cityscapes. The old mule and plow have been replaced by GPS-enabled tractors and cover crops. Farmers have embraced the importance of crop rotation and agricultural diversification to conserve soil nutrients and protect against market fluctuations. The former "Cotton State" now produces a vast array of agricultural products — from timber, beef, pork and poultry to fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, corn and soybeans.

The once bustling riverfronts teeming with farmers, merchants and traders have grown into densely populated city centers with towering skyscrapers. Today, numerous city-dwellers never drive past or walk by a working farm. Regardless of a person's chosen career — be it lawyer, doctor, mechanic, banker, teacher or scientist — everyone relies on agriculture for food, clothing, shelter and much more.

Alabama's Bicentennial is a time for all Alabamians to celebrate the rich history and tradition that make us happy to call this state home. The Alabama Farm-City Committee is proud to join in the commemoration as we celebrate the contributions of our state's farmers over the past 200 years.

As we celebrate National Ag Day and Farm-City Week, let's include celebrating our state's rich history with "200 Years of Alabama Agriculture." To create an entry, consider consulting these resources:

- Alabama Farmers Federation ([AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org))
- National Ag Day ([agday.org](http://agday.org))
- Farm Bureau ([FB.org](http://FB.org))
- Natural Resources Conservation Service ([nrcs.usda.gov](http://nrcs.usda.gov))
- Alabama Cooperative Extension System ([aces.edu](http://aces.edu))

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](http://www.AlfaFarmers.org), [www.AlabamaAITC.org](http://www.AlabamaAITC.org) and [www.AgEducate.org](http://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 2020 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.

**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.**

5. Criteria: Essay should be 500–1000 words, neatly typed, and double-spaced, on 8 ½ x 11, white paper. They will be judged on:
  - a. Content Title
    - Topic Sentence
    - Adherence to topic
    - Accuracy of information
    - Supporting details
    - Appearance
    - Originality
    - Reader Appeal
  - b. Mechanics
    - Grammar
    - Punctuation
    - Sentence Structure
    - Capitalization
    - Spelling
  - c. Organization
    - Clarity
    - Flow of material
    - Conclusion
6. **Deadline for entry at the state level is February 8, 2019.** State winners will be notified by mail no later than March 8, 2019. Award winners will be announced at the state Farm-City Awards Luncheon and Program on April 4, 2019.
7. All entries may be used at the discretion of the AG in the Classroom Steering Committee and Farm-City Committee of Alabama without further permission or monetary consideration.

## **Awards in Each Category**

**FIRST PLACE:** \$300 Cash

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

**SECOND PLACE:** \$200 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](mailto:pculver@alfafarmers.org). Fax: 1(334)284-3957. Mailing address: Alabama Farmers Federation, Attn: Jeff Helms, P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191.