

SOIL STEWARDSHIP PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST



GUIDELINES

To prepare for the 2025 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest, students are to consult with their Ag Science teacher, use this Guidelines Packet and reference the SDE Handbook. The student is also to work with their Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as a local resource. A signed SWCD affidavit included on the last page of this packet must be submitted along with the speech for contests.

The Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest is a partnership between the Texas FFA Association, the Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCD).

Speech Objective:

The 2025 Theme, "Life Beneath Our Feet," brings into focus the vital yet often overlooked realm of soil health. As Texans, we are intimately connected to our land—its richness, its productivity, and its resilience. This year's theme highlights the essential role that soil plays not only in sustaining our agriculture and natural landscapes but also in ensuring the overall health of our environment. Our objective is to deepen the understanding of soil as a living, dynamic resource. We aim to illustrate how soil is more than just dirt; it is a complex ecosystem full of life that supports plant growth and influences water quality, and contributes to the well-being of our environment. By recognizing soil as a critical component of our environmental health, we emphasize the importance of soil conservation practices that protect and enhance this invaluable resource. The TSSWCB, ATSWCD, and SWCDs across the state seek to inspire actionable steps towards soil conservation. We encourage every Texan to appreciate the significance of soil health in our daily lives and to engage in practices that foster its sustainability. Let this year's theme be a call to action to not only cherish but actively protect the life beneath our feet. Together, we can ensure that our soils remain fertile and resilient, securing a prosperous future for our land and its diverse ecosystems.

To locate your local SWCD:

1. Visit: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/locatormap>
2. Click on the region number in which your county is located.
3. Find the name of your county and click on it. There you will find the name of your SWCD, and information on how to contact the district, or the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Field Representative who assists the district.

For more information:

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
1497 Country View Lane
Temple, TX 76504-8806
(254) 773-2250
www.tsswcb.texas.gov

QUESTIONS?

Please send any questions or concerns to
youthdevelopment@tsswcb.texas.gov

SWCD AFFIDAVIT

My name is _____ and I am currently a member of the _____
FFA Chapter affiliated with _____ High School in _____
Texas. I hereby state that that the information stated is both accurate and complete and
that I have consulted with the _____ Soil and Water Conservation
District in preparation for the 2025 Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Contest,
"Life Beneath Our Feet."

Contestant Signature

Date

Advisor Signature

Date

SWCD Representative Signature

SWCD Rep. Job Title

Date

*** This form is a requirement for SDE competition.*

QUESTIONS?

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SCHOLARSHIPS

Three scholarships will be awarded by the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts to the top three individuals of the state contest.

- **\$4,000 scholarship to the 1st place contestant**
- **\$3,000 scholarship to the 2nd place contestant**
- **\$2,000 scholarship to the 3rd place contestant**

Scholarship money must be used to defray costs of the recipient's education at a technical institution, college, or university of the recipient's choice. Scholarship funds will be transmitted directly to a public speaking contest winner's chosen technical school, college, or university in the student's name upon proof of registration as a full-time student at a single institution of higher learning.

Expense Paid Trip:

The 1st place winner in the state contest and his/her advisor will receive an expense paid trip under the State of Texas travel guidelines to the Annual Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. The 1st place winner in the state contest is required to present their speech at the aforementioned meeting.

Thank You Notes:

We ask that the winners of the scholarship money from the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts consider sending a thank you note.

Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts
1497 Country View Lane
Temple, Texas 76504

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