



SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
**RESOURCE
CONSERVATION**
D I S T R I C T

3422 W. Hammer Ln. Suite A Stockton, CA 95219 (209) 472-7127 Ext. 125
WWW.SJCRC.D.ORG

August 23, 2011

To: All High School Teachers
Who: The San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District
What: A speech contest for high school students
Where: USDA Stockton Service Center (3422 West Hammer Lane, Suite A, Stockton, CA)
When: Tuesday, September 27 at 3:30 PM
Topic: "What Can RCDs do to Help Bridge Sustainable Conservation Practices with Food Safety Practices?"

Prizes:

- at the local level: 1st Place \$200.00 Savings Bond
(and advancement to regional contest)
2nd Place \$100.00 Savings Bond
3rd Place \$50.00 Savings Bond
- at the regional level: 1st Place Plaque
(and advancement to state finals)
- at the state level: 1st Place \$300.00 Cash
2nd Place \$200.00 Cash
3rd Place \$100.00 Cash

Details: The 1st place winner will advance to the regional level, scheduled October 5th in Dixon, Ca. The winner of the regional competition will advance to the state competition scheduled Thursday, November 10th at the Hilton in Stockton, Ca. Travel expenses to regional level of competition is paid for the student and one chaperone.

Each application you share with your students should also include a copy of the rules, judge's scoring worksheet, tips for speeches, and an example speech. Please consider using this contest as a classroom exercise and encourage students to participate. Also attached is a flyer that should be posted around campus. Copies of the flyer and application packet can be requested.

APPLICATIONS DUE BY: 4:30 p.m., Thursday, September 22, 2011.

Mail or Drop Off: San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District
Attn: John Brodie
3422 W. Hammer Ln., Suite A
Stockton, CA 95219

or Fax to: (209) 472-7890 Attention: John Brodie
Email: info@sjcrd.org – or call (209) 472-7127 x 125

Sincerely,

Molly Watkins, President
San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District

Officers and Directors

Molly Watkins (President), Jack Hamm (Vice President), Richard Rodriguez (Treasurer),
Bill Koster, Patrick Connolly, John Thorning, John Herrick, Diego Olagaray, Marden Wilber
Associate Directors Ralph Lucchetti, Rogene Reynolds, Brad Lange



San Joaquin County
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT



**HIGH SCHOOL SPEAK-OFF COMPETITION
 2011 APPLICATION FORM**

2011 Topic: "What can RCDs do to Help Bridge Sustainable Conservation Practices with Food Safety Practices?"

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

High School: _____

Grade: _____ Club Affiliations: _____

Briefly state your interest in conservation, environmental, or agricultural practices:

PRIZES:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 st Place | \$200.00 Savings Bond | (and advancement to regional contest) |
| 2 nd Place | \$100.00 Savings Bond | |
| 3 rd Place | \$50.00 Savings Bond | |

CONTEST RULES:

- Contestants must be a high school student during the 2010-2011 school year (previous state winner not eligible)
- Speeches must be at least 3 minutes in length, and not more than 5 minutes (including salutation & title)
- There will be no props, costumes, or visual aids
- Notes will be allowed at the district and regional levels, but not at the state level
- 1st Place winners compete in the Regional Speak-Off and have the opportunity to compete at State for cash prize

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Questions?: Email John: info@sjrcrd.org or call 209/472-7127 x 125



HIGH SCHOOL SPEAK-OFF PRIZES AND RULES

TOPIC: "What Can RCDs do to Help Bridge Sustainable Conservation with Food Safety Practices?"

Prizes

- at the local level:
 - 1st Place \$200.00 Savings Bond
(and advancement to regional contest)
 - 2nd Place \$100.00 Savings Bond
 - 3rd Place \$50.00 Savings Bond

- at the regional level: 1st Place Plaque
(and advancement to state finals)

- at the state level:
 - 1st Place \$300.00 Cash
 - 2nd Place \$200.00 Cash
 - 3rd Place \$100.00 Cash

Contestants

- must be a high school student, grades 9-12
- must not be a previous state contest winner
- must have an interest in agriculture, resource conservation or the environment
- must fill out and submit an application form to the San Joaquin Resource Conservation District office

Application

- must include name, address, phone number, social security number, school, grade, age, club affiliations, and a brief statement about interest or involvement in agriculture, conservation, or environmental practices.

Speech

- must be at least three minutes, and not more than five minutes, including the salutation and title
- must not include props, costumes or visual aids
- may include notes at district and regional levels, but not at the state level

Judging

- will include three judges and a timekeeper
- will not include judges or timekeepers that are related, in any way, to contestants



**Conservation Education Speak-off Contest
 Judge's Worksheet**

2011 Topic: "What can RCDs do to Help Bridge Sustainable Conservation Practices with Food Safety Practices?"

Time Limit: 3-5 min.

| Judges will use the criteria below in judging each speaker: | Maximum Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|--|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Was there a strong opening sentence or device to capture attention and interest? | 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Did speaker introduce topic and theme of speech sufficiently and clearly? | 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| CONTENT: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Was speech well organized, easy to follow? | 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Did speech show quality research and mastery of the information? | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| Did speech include ways in which RCD's can be used to address the topic? | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| DELIVERY SKILLS: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Was speaking style fluent, not sounding memorized or read? | 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Was there connectedness, with good eye contact? | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| Did speaker appear physically at ease, with appropriate gestures and delivery? | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| CONCLUSION: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Was the overall impression strong and effective, with appropriate non-verbal follow-up used to end the speech? | 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| JUDGE'S TOTAL SCORE | 100 | | | | | | | | | |
| Timekeeper will assess time-penalty points as follows: Subtract points for increments of over or under the 3-5 minute time allowed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 -10 seconds | 2 points | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 - 20 seconds | 3 points | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 - 30 seconds | 4 points | | | | | | | | | |
| SCORE TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | |

Judge No.: _____

Judge's Signature (Required): _____



HIGH SCHOOL SPEAK-OFF SPEECH CONTEST TIPS

1. **Know the room.** Be familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone.
2. **Know the audience.** Greet some of the audience as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to a group of strangers.
 - *Remember: The speech contest is sponsored by the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District. District Directors will be your judges and audience. Most Directors are from rural backgrounds. They are farmers and ranchers, and they are proud of the community service function they perform. Contestants who do well are those that present speeches that the judges can relate to, and speeches that are related to the mission of the Resources Conservation District. Focus your speech on positive solutions for issues related to the topic, not predictions of environmental disaster.*
 - *For more information on the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District visit <http://www.sjcrd.org/>*
3. **Know your material.** If you're not familiar with your material or are uncomfortable with it, your nervousness will increase. Practice your speech and revise it if necessary.
4. **Relax.** Ease tension by doing exercises.
5. **Visualize yourself giving your speech.** Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear, and assured. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful
6. **Realize that people want you to succeed.** Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They don't want you to fail.
7. **Don't apologize.** If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you have with your speech, you may be calling the audience's attention to something they hadn't noticed.
8. **Concentrate on the message – not the medium.** Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and outwardly toward your message and your audience. Your nervousness will dissipate.
9. **Turn nervousness into positive energy.** Harness your nervous energy and transform it into vitality and enthusiasm
10. **Gain experience.** Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking.



EXAMPLE SPEECH - 1ST PLACE AT STATE
BY: MEGAN KINZE, TRACY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

TOPIC: "BACKYARD STEWARDSHIP"

It was repulsively green, had horned antennae, ugly beady eyes and a fat, wiggling body. I grimaced to myself as I looked at this creature...this thing I had just picked up.

Unfortunately, my parents had recently decided I was old enough to pick tomato worms off the tomato plants in our family garden. I still remember the joys of standing outside, examining our tomato plants carefully for the fat green culprits.

At five years old, I learned a lesson I would keep for the rest of my life: the importance of backyard stewardship. Backyard stewardship means learning about the problems in your backyard and then doing something about them. In order to become active in conservation, agricultural problems need to be solved, children need to be taught and volunteers need to have a way to take action. As with so many other things, conservation begins at home. In fact, nature is all around us...and it's only a few feet from the back door.

Backyard stewardship takes time-tested agricultural methods from farmers across America and brings them home. United States agricultural production is twice the amount it was in 1930. This means that farmers are definitely doing more than a few things right...and we can learn from these successes.

One of the biggest problems that has been facing nearly every city in California in the past ten years has been a growing amount of wastes and garbage produced by each household. The problem is simple: we're running out of room to store this waste. Cities have come up with the solution: composting. This is something farmers have been doing for years when they plow under waste vegetation. This is also done on an individual basis in backyards statewide. How did this situation come about? Individuals saw a problem and worked to create a balance between agriculture and the environment. For other problems like pest management and soil erosion that still need to be solved, a solution of partnership will create a win-win situation.... productive plants for proud people.

I was not alone in my early attempts at backyard conservation. Williams Richards, a farmer, visiting college professor and chief of the USDA Conservation Service once remarked, "We have to give young people an opportunity to learn about our natural resources and the importance of those resources to their lives if we really want to leave them a legacy that is worthwhile. Outdoor classes are one way we can do that; it's as simple as walking outside and looking at the natural systems around you". Richards has described in essence the future of backyard stewardship. Through the work of caring parents and ready volunteers, thousands of eager students are learning the value of nature both at home and at school.

Families can practice backyard conservation simply by working in the backyard and enjoying nature. But, one's backyard stewardship efforts do not have to be limited to home. I remember watering marigolds that my Brownie Girl Scout troop had planted at our Girl Scout Hut. I was lucky enough to live in the country and do this every day, but for those girls who didn't, they were taking care of a larger backyard. How are children able to learn more about backyard stewardship? Some 15, 000 volunteers keep the goal of conservation alive through participation in Resource Conservation Districts across the country. It is through these people...helping youth, helping farmers, helping everyone, that the 778 million acres of private land in America are well taken care of. In these days of changing legislation, stewards of the land are needed to create a partnership between agricultural production and the environment. It is out of the belief that local people best understand their land that Resource Conservation Districts were born and continue to live today. There are still unsolved agricultural problems, but it is awareness that will foster solutions.

It is through conserving resources, teaching children and helping RCDs that backyard stewardship will be successful. Remembering my experience out in our garden at age five, I now realize that backyard stewardship means learning to manage every aspect in your backyard...even if it means looking carefully at the good, the bad and the ugly.