



Contest

Essay



The Living Soil

SPONSORED BY:

Pitt County Soil and Water Conservation District

Essay Deadline: March 5, 2010

Grade 6

1st Place \$50, 2nd Place \$20, and Honorable Mention

Theme: "The Living Soil"

Considering the natural landscape, you might wonder how native prairies and forests function in the absence of tillage and fertilizers. These soils are tilled by soil organisms, not by machinery. They are fertilized too, but the fertility is used again and again and never leaves the site.

Soil-dwelling organisms release bound-up minerals, converting them into plant-available forms that are taken up by the plants growing on the site. The organisms recycle nutrients again and again with the death and decay of each new generation of plants. There are many different types of creatures that live on or in the topsoil. Each has a role to play. These organisms will work for the farmer's benefit if we simply manage for their survival. Consequently, we may refer to them as soil livestock. There a great variety of organisms which contribute to soil fertility. Earthworms, arthropods, and the various microorganisms merit particular attention.

The following information must be listed on the back of poster :



Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Address: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ County: _____

School: _____ District: _____