

FFA Leadership Development Program

2020 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Theme:



"Where Would We Bee Without Pollinators?"

To prepare for the public speaking contest, students are to consult with their Ag Science teacher and use this Guidelines Packet which is accessible on the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's website. The student is also to work with their soil and water conservation district (SWCD) as a local resource. A statement signed by an SWCD representative must be attached to the submitted speech.

To locate and contact a soil and water conservation district, refer to page 8 of this packet and follow the instructions.

This program is a partnership between the Texas FFA, the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

For more information contact:

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
1497 Country View Lane
Temple, TX 76504-8806
(254) 773-2250 or 800-792-3485
<https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/>

TEXAS STATE
Soil & Water
CONSERVATION BOARD



Scholarships Available



Three scholarships will be awarded by the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts. One \$3,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the first place contestant, one \$2,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the second place contestant and one \$1,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the third place contestant.

Scholarship money must be used to defray costs of a 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 the institution of higher learning.

Expense Paid Trips: The state first place scholarship winner and his or her advisor will receive an expense paid trip under State of Texas travel guidelines to the annual meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. The first place Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Winner is required to present his or her state winning speech at the annual meeting of SWCD Directors.

To Access the Guidelines Packet

1. Click on the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board's website:
<https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/>
2. Along the top of the webpage, hover over programs and then hover over "Public Information and Education" and click on the first link in the pop up "Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Contest" or visit <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/public-information-and-education/soil-and-water-stewardship-public-speaking-contest>.
3. Once on the page, to the right is a box titled documents where you will find the 2020 Guidelines Packet.

To Get the Student Started

Using the prompt statements or questions noted in the speech outline on page six, the student is to center his/her speech on the theme, "*Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?*". The focus of the speech is to demonstrate knowledge gained about how pollinators form the foundations of a healthy and sustainable future for food and the environment. It is further recommended that the student consult the listed resources that follow to gain a well-rounded view of the theme topic. **Other resources may also be consulted in addition to the listed references.**

Recommended Resources for Speech Development

<https://www.diynatural.com/pollination-pollinators-need-help/>

The above link presents an overview of why pollination and pollinators are important.

<https://pollinator.org/pollinators>

The above resource link provides information about What is pollination? Who are the pollinators? Why are pollinators important? And what do we know about their status?

<https://www.fws.gov/pollinators/pollinatorpages/threats.html>

Brief article points out two major threats to pollinators. Other links are suggested for further information.

<https://www.nap.edu/read/11761/chapter/5>

The article addresses many explanations invoked to account for declines in pollinator populations in North America, including, among others, exposure to pathogens, parasites, and pesticides; habitat fragmentation and loss; climate change; market forces; intra- and inter-specific competition with native and invasive species; and genetic alterations.

<https://kansasruralcenter.org/pollinator-decline-why-does-it-matter-and-what-can-we-do/>

In 2000, the Convention on Biological Diversity declared a “pollinator crisis” and implemented an International Pollinator Initiative aimed at stemming the tide of the decline. In the years since, awareness of the pollinator crisis has increased but pollinators continue to struggle. This article discusses, Pollinator Decline – Why does it matter and what can we do?

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/tx/plantsanimals/?cid=nrcseprd945806>

Monarch butterflies have experienced a significant decline in the past 20 years. Today, population totals hover around 34 million, down from 1 billion in 1995. NRCS helps landowners on the conservation and enhancement of diverse native plant communities and ecosystem management to encourage the production of important plant species required for brooding and nectar during migratory periods.

<https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/sites/default/files/files/programs/Conservation%20initiatives/Example%20Monarch%20Conservation%20Plan.pdf>

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is working in cooperation with 143 Soil and Water Conservation Districts located in Texas to enhance or restore Monarch Butterfly Habitat by planting pollinator friendly plant species on over 1,600 acres on rural lands and by installing Monarch Butterfly gardens in public areas. Examples of a Monarch Habitat Conservation Plan can be studied in this article.

<https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/whats-at-stake>

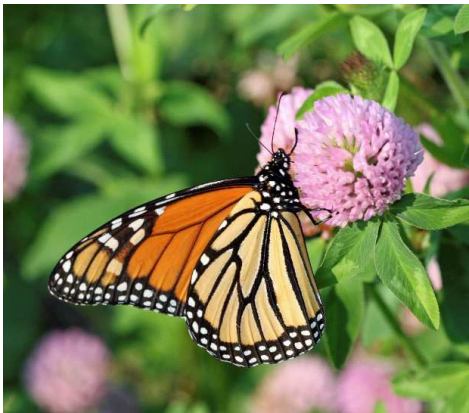
Bees and other pollinators touch lives every day in ways not realized. They are responsible for as much as one third of the food and drinks that are consumed and contribute to the production of our clothing. Furthermore, they help define our seasons, thus this resource points out what’s at stake should pollinators be lost.

<https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/csp2.80>

Based on a paper published in the journal, *Conservation Science and Practice*, there is described why there is a worldwide need to take greater action to curb the global decline in insects.

Objective of the Speech

The primary objective of the speech is for the speaker to demonstrate knowledge about what pollinators are, why they are important, and what is known about their status?



Specific Instructions: The speech must be between *six and eight minutes in length*. For specific rules and requirements relating to the contest, consult the Degree Check Guidelines.

Speech Outline

Introduction

- Introduce the theme “*Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators*”. Consider incorporating a reflective thought based upon what was learned during research for the preparation of the speech.
- Set the tone of the speech with some thought-provoking quote regarding a philosophical view for the conservation of nature’s pollinators.

Body of Speech

- From an interview and discussion with a local soil and water conservation district employee, a conservation district director or USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service district conservationist or NRCS technician, discuss ways in which the local soil and water conservation district, along with agricultural producers cooperating with the SWCD, contribute to sustaining a balanced ecosystem for nature’s pollinators.
- Present a perspective on current and future issues relative to the status of pollinators given the centrality of insects to terrestrial ecosystems and the food chain that supports human and other life forms. How may these issues impact your community, state, nation, world?
- Discuss how good land stewardship contributes to the environmental and economic health to the local community, state, and nation.

Conclusion

- In reflecting on what you have learned do you believe that your generation has an important role in responsible future decisions and actions that impact connected ecosystems on which all life depends.

** It is not required that the above prompt questions be addressed in the speech as chronologically listed. The student has the flexibility to rearrange the prompt questions in a manner that permits a smooth flow of delivery. The student also has the flexibility to introduce other concepts into his or her speech that he or she feels relevant to the theme of the speech.*

Soil and Water Conservation District Consultation Affidavit

My legal 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 2020 Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking
Contest (“Where would we *BEE* without Pollinators?”)

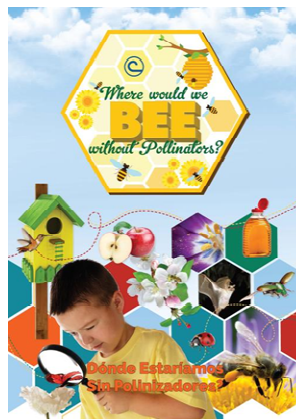
(Student Signature)

(Date)

(SWCD Representative Signature)

(Date)

(This form should be submitted along with the speech.)





How to find your local soil and water conservation district: Follow the below steps.

1. Click on the link
<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. Up pops 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.