New Jersey Conservation
POSTER CONTEST

2026

Prizes for Statewide Competition

1st Place $100
2nd Place $50
3rd Place $25

The New Jersey Conservation Poster Contest is open to all students in grades 2-12 and students compete in grade categories. Local Soil Conservation District prizes may also be awarded!

Contest Sponsors:

The NJ Department of Agriculture,
the NJ Association of Conservation Districts, and
your local Soil Conservation District

New Jersey Natural Resources Conservation Program

The Poster Contest is open to all students in grades 2-12 — public, private, home schooled and youth groups included.

Why Participate ?

Designing a poster and researching the theme can give you a voice in your community about important conservation issues. Good posters capture people's attention and deliver stories in a way that everyone can understand. A powerful graphic can inspire people to be concerned about conservation.

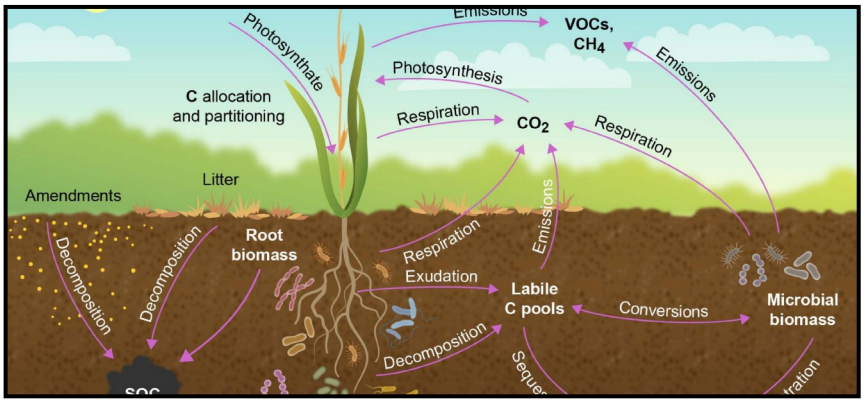
Information Resources: *Soil. Where it all Begins*

You will want to learn all you can about the importance of healthy soil. Productive soils are the foundation of any healthy ecosystem. As the world's population grows and demand for food production increases, it's essential that we work together to protect and enhance our soils. Providing accurate information is essential. Find out about the soil in your area and see what your community is doing to help.

You can find resources at your school or public library, science books, local newspapers, nature centers and from the NACD website www.nacdnet.org Stewardship & Education section. Get guidance from your teacher or parents to find information on the internet about soil.

Web Resources:

- http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/health/
- https://www.nutrientsforlife.org/for-students
- http://www.soils4kids.org/about
- http://lifeunderyourfeet.org/en/soileco/intro/whatis.asp
- https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/stewardship-program/
- https://www.soils4teachers.org/soil-and-environment
- https://www.farmers.gov/conservation/soil-health
- https://www.soils.org/files/about-soils/soils-overview.pdf
- https://www.energy.gov/science/doe-explainssoil
- https://www.sare.org/resources/building-soils-for-better-crops/
- https://organiclandcare.rutgers.edu/guides/the-life-of-the-soil/



DID YOU KNOW…..

- There are 70,000 different types of soil in the U.S.
- 1 Tablespoon of soil has more organisms in it than there are people on earth.
- It takes 500 years to form one inch of topsoil
- There is 5,000 different types of bacteria in one gram of soil.
- 1,400,000 Earthworms that can be found in an acre of cropland.
- Soil is more than just one layer. It has multiple layers, just like a cake, that are called horizons.
- Only about 10% of Earth's land surface has suitable soil for producing our food supply, housing, cities, schools, hospitals, air to breath and more.
- 10 %of the world's carbon dioxide emissions are stored in soil.
- .01% of the earth's water is held in soil.

NJ Soil Conservation Districts (SCD) are special purpose subdivisions of the State. In cooperation with the State Soil Conservation Committee, they are empowered to conserve and manage soil and water resources and address stormwater, soil erosion and sedimentation problems that result from land disturbance activities. There are 13 Soil Conservation Districts in New Jersey. (See back page for list.)

In response to growing public concern for water quality, NJ conservation districts have become the primary local governmental agencies responsible for monitoring nonpoint sources of pollution associated with agriculture, construction and mining. The technical services of the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service and other resource agencies are made available through the districts.

Online Tips for Creating an Effective Poster

The National Association of Conservation Districts at www.nacdnet.org provides links to assist with creating posters. Click on the "Stewardship & Education" tab and find "Poster Contest" under "Contests" for an overview of the 2026 theme, and for tips on what makes a good poster and the National Visual Arts Standards.

New Jersey Rules

These rules must be followed for your poster to be accepted by your local Soil Conservation District. Entries that do not conform to the rules will not be judged.

Please review and follow your local Soil District rules for the deadline!

1. Clearly print your name and information on the entry form **AND** tape the completed entry form to the back of your poster.
2. Tape a 1-3 sentence explanation of your poster, neatly written on a 3" x 5" or 4" x 6" index card, to the back of the poster. Be sure to write your name and county on the index card.
3. **Contest theme *"Soil. Where it all Begins"* must appear somewhere in your poster. Leave a 1 inch border of white space at the edges of the poster; lettering should not run on to the edges.**
4. The poster must be flat, no 3-D objects.
5. Poster size must be Poster size must be between 8.5" x 11" and 22" x 28".
6. Any medium may be used including paint, crayons, colored pencils, charcoal , paper or other materials. No collage or montage.
7. One poster per student.
8. The poster must be the original artwork of the student.
9. **ENTRY DEADLINE: See Local District Rules**
10. Decisions of the judges are final and all entries become the property of the contest sponsors.

Poster Evaluations

Posters will be judged on the following criteria: Relevance to contest theme: **"Soil. Where it all Begins"**

— Conservation message — Visual effectiveness
— Originality — Overall appeal

CASH PRIZES for the New Jersey Statewide competition are awarded by the:

New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts

First - $100 Second - $50 Third - $25

Local District Rules & Prizes

Contact your local district to verify participation (Page 4)

1. The teacher of each class/group participating in the contest is responsible for selecting one or two winning posters per class**. Please do not send in posters from an entire class**. (If you teach multiple classes you may submit posters from each class period.)

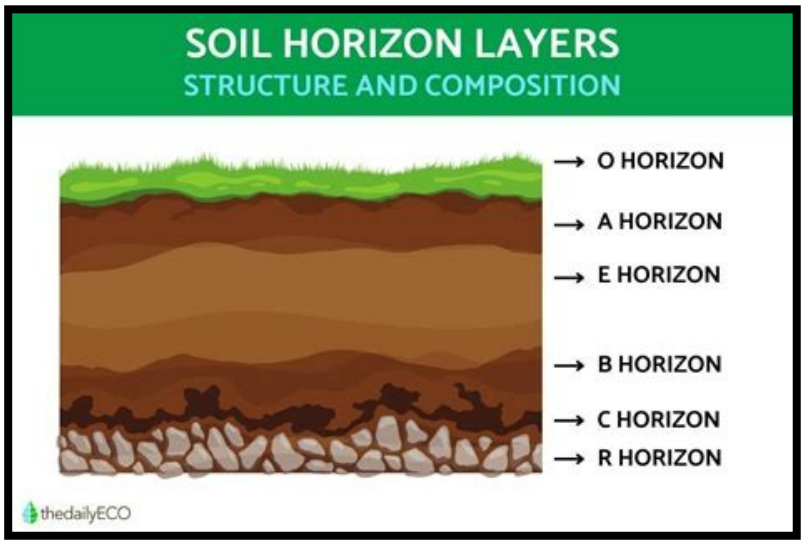
2. The contest can be entered as an individual if not created as part of a school assignment. A parent or teacher must sign the entry form where indicated.

3. Follow ALL the rules to the left. The contest theme "Soil – Where It All Begins" **must** appear on the poster as part of the design.

4. Your entry form should be taped to the back of the poster along with a brief explanation of your poster written on an index card (also taped to the back of poster).

ENTRY DEADLINE (Post-marked by): March 13, 2026

Mail or deliver entries to:
Hudson Essex Passaic Soil Conservation District
80 Orchard St.
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Questions? Please email janet@hepscd.org



New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts

http://www.njacd.org/

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEW JERSEY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Please contact your local SCD to verify their participation!

Bergen County SCD
700 Kinderkamack Rd. Ste 103
Oradell, NJ 07649
(201) 261-4407
www.bergenscd.org

Burlington County SCD
1971 Jacksonville Jobstown Rd.
Columbus, NJ 08022
(609) 267-7410
www.bscd.org

DelAtlantic SCD
(Cape, Atlantic & Camden Counties)
Mays Landing Office Bldg.
6260 Old Harding Highway
Mays Landing, NJ 08330
(609) 625-3144
West Berlin Office Bldg.
408 Commerce Lane
W. Berlin, NJ 08091
(856) 767-6299
www.delatlantic.org

Cumberland-Salem SCD
P. 0. Box 68
1516 Route 77
Deerfield, NJ 08313
(856) 451-2422
https://cumberlandsalem.org/

Freehold SCD
(Monmouth & Middlesex Counties)
4000 Kozloski Rd., Suite 5
Freehold, NJ 07728
(732) 683-8500
www.freeholdsoil.org
info@freeholdscd.org

Gloucester County SCD
14 Parke Place, Suite B
Sewell, NJ 08080
(856) 589-5250
gloucester@gloucesterscd.org
www.gloucesterscd.org

Hudson, Essex, Passaic SCD
80 Orchard St
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
(862) 333-4505
https://hepsoilnj.org/

Hunterdon County SCD
687 Pittstown Road
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
(908) 788-9466
https://hcscd.weebly.com/

Mercer County SCD
590 Hughes Drive
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690
(609) 586-9603
www.mercerscd.org

Morris County SCD
P.O. Box 900, 30 Schuyler Place
Morristown, NJ 07960-0900
(973) 285-2953
www.mcscd.org

Ocean County SCD
714 Lacey Road
Forked River, NJ 08731
(609) 971-7002
www.soildistrict.org

Somerset-Union SCD
Somerset County
308 Milltown Road 4-H Bldg.
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
(908) 526-2701
soilconservation@co.somerset.nj.us

Upper Delaware SCD
(Warren & Sussex Counties)
P.O. Box 198
51 Main Street, Suite B
Blairstown, NJ 07825
(908) 852-2579
www.upperdelawarescd-nj.com

NJACD
NJ Association of Conservation Districts

2026 Poster Contest Entry Form

Attach this form to back of each poster

Circle Your Grade Category: 2nd—3rd 4th—6th 7th—9th 10th—12th

Your County Soil Conservation District: (see above) _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____
Home Address: _____
Town: _____ NJ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____
Winners will be notified by email, if possible. Please neatly print a suitable email address:
_____

If your poster was created through a school project or assignment please complete teacher & school information.
Teacher Name: _____
School Name: _____
School Address: _____
Town: _____ NJ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

I certify that this poster is the original artwork of the student named above. Parent OR Teacher Must Sign.

_____
Signature ☐ ***Parent*** ☐ ***OR Teacher***

_____
Student Signature