

# **National Collegiate Soils Contest Rules**

## **Students of Agronomy, Soils, and Environmental Sciences (SASES)**

*Revised September 30, 2008*

### **I. NAME**

The contest shall be known as the National Collegiate Soils Contest

### **II. ELIGIBILITY**

#### **A. Colleges and Universities**

1. Any college or university that provides a curriculum in agriculture, soils, geosciences, and/or environmental science may enter a team in the National Collegiate Soils Contest if it has an interest in the contest and is selected to represent its region.
2. To compete in the National Collegiate Soils Contest a college or university must be affiliated with the SASES.
3. The number of teams competing in the National Collegiate Soils Contest from each region shall be determined by the number of colleges and universities (“institutions”) competing in each regional contest. The number of teams from each region shall be determined as follows:
  - (a) If three or fewer teams from different institutions compete in a regional contest, all teams go to the national contest.
  - (b) If four to seven teams from different institutions compete in a regional contest, three teams go to the national contest.
  - (c) If eight or nine teams from different institutions compete in a regional contest, four teams go to the national contest.
  - (d) If ten or eleven teams from different institutions compete in a regional contest, five teams go to the national contest
  - (e) If twelve or more teams from different institutions compete in a regional contest, six teams go to the national contest.
4. An institution may enter only one team in the National Collegiate Soils Contest. In cases where an eligible team does not wish to compete, the next ranking team

or teams will be eligible to represent their region in the national contest.

5. If a regional contest is not held, the region may send up to two teams selected by any means agreeable with the team coaches in the region.
6. The host institution cannot enter a team in the National Collegiate Soils Contest.
7. International participation in regional and national soil judging contests shall be encouraged by the National Collegiate Soils Contest Committee of the American Society of Agronomy/Soil Science Society of America, which is authorized to waive or adjust rules or restrictions for eligible institutions outside the United States.

## B. TEAM MEMBERS

1. All team members must be undergraduate students in good standing, enrolled in an agricultural or related curriculum at their respective institution at the time of the national contest; however, any student who has participated in the qualifying regional contest and has received a B.S. degree or equivalent prior to the national contest would be eligible to participate in the national contest provided graduation is not more than one (1) semester or two (2) quarters prior to the national contest.
2. All team members must be eligible to represent their institutions according to the eligibility rules of that institution.
3. A team member may participate in the National Collegiate Soils Contest as long they are classified as an undergraduate student by their institution. Eligibility will be limited to a maximum of four (4) years participation in regional and national soil judging contests.
4. Each team participating in the individual judging portion of the contest should consist of four members, although a team may compete with only three.
5. Team alternates will be allowed to use the practice pits. Alternates will not be allowed to participate in the individual judging portion of the contest. (This provision allows more teams to participate, while keeping the student numbers manageable for the host institution during the actual individual competition.) All team members, including alternates to the individual contest, may compete in the group or team judging portion of the contest.

III LOCATION

A. The National Collegiate Soils Contest shall be rotated from region to region in consecutive years according to the following sequence:

2007 - Region 7	2011 - Region 3
2008 - Region 1	2012 - Region 2
2009 - Region 5	2013 - Region 6
2010 - Region 4	2014 - Region 7

B. The National Collegiate Soils Contest regions shall be as follows:

Region 1:	Connecticut Delaware Maine Maryland	Massachusetts New Hampshire New Jersey New York	Pennsylvania Ohio Rhode Island Vermont
Region 2:	Alabama Florida Georgia Kentucky	North Carolina Puerto Rico South Carolina	Tennessee Virginia West Virginia
Region 3:	Illinois Indiana	Michigan	Wisconsin
Region 4:	Arkansas Louisiana	Mississippi Oklahoma	Texas
Region 5:	Iowa Kansas Minnesota	Missouri Nebraska	North Dakota South Dakota
Region 6:	Alaska Arizona	California Hawaii	Nevada New Mexico
Region 7:	Colorado Idaho Montana	Oregon Utah	Washington Wyoming

C. Any region can change position in the rotational sequence with any other region by mutual agreement.

D. The institutions in the host region for the National Collegiate Soils Contest shall be

responsible for selecting a host institution from that region, subject to the approval of the delegates to the annual convention of the SASES.

#### 1. TIME

- A. A National Collegiate Soils Contest shall be held in the spring with a minimum conflict between the institutions involved. The date will be set by the host institution in consultation with other institutions involved.
- B. The host for each of the regional contests shall notify the chair of the Soil Judging Contest Committee (AS425) and the faculty chair of the host institution for the National Collegiate Soils Contest of the placing of all teams entered in their regional soils contest. This should be reported within ten days after the regional soils contest is held.

#### V. CONTEST PROCEDURES

- A. The host institution shall be responsible for all details for the contest.
- B. A committee consisting of both students and faculty members should be appointed at the host institution to help organize and conduct the contest.
- C. The National Collegiate Soils Contest shall consist of two judging events occurring over two days. The judging for one event is done on an individual basis, and the judging for the other event is by group or team.
  - 1. The individual judging portion of the contest shall consist of three pits/sites to be evaluated by the 4 (or minimum 3) individual contestants.
    - a. The individual judging event shall occur on the first day of the two contest days. (This provision allows the host school additional time to grade individual scorecards.)
    - b. Teams with more than four students must identify the participating team members for the individual judging event at least 24 hours prior to the start of the individual judging portion of the contest (ideally at the coaches meeting).
  - 2. The group judging portion of the contest shall consist of two pits/sites to be evaluated by all eligible team members, including alternates.

#### D. Score Card and Interpretation Sheets

1. The host institution may make minor changes necessary to adapt the score card, contest manual, and interpretations sheets to local conditions.
2. The host institution shall send to all participating institutions and/or regions a copy of the score card, contest manual, and interpretation sheets at least two months prior to the National Collegiate Soils Contest.
3. Written materials that will be allowed in the contest must be indicated to all participating institutions at least one month prior to the contest.

#### E. Coaches Meeting

A coaches meeting shall occur at least 24 hours prior to the start of the individual judging portion of the contest. The host institution and representatives for the official judges shall address questions related to contest content, scoring, and logistics.

#### F. Team Scoring

1. The individual team score will be the sum of the top three individual scores at each pit/site in the individual judging event.
2. The group team score will be the sum of the group score at each pit/site in the group judging event.
3. The total team contest score will be the sum of the individual and group team judging event scores.
4. The contest manual shall include provisions for handling tie-breakers. They shall not be used except to break ties between teams or individuals. The normal procedure is as follows: The clay content of a third horizon at one of the individually-judged sites will be used to break ties in total team and individual scores. In order to break a tie in total team scores, the mean clay content will be calculated from the estimates provided by all members of a given team. The team with the mean estimate closest to the actual value will receive the higher placing. If this does not break the tie, the next deeper horizon will be used in the same manner. The clay content of the tie breaker horizon will be compared to that estimated by the individual in order to break a tie between individuals. If this does not break the tie, the next lowest horizon will be used in the same manner. In order to break a tie in the ranking of teams for group judging, the team estimate of the clay content of a specified third horizon at one of the group-judged sites will be compared to the actual value. The team with the estimate closest to the actual value will receive the higher placing. If this does not break the tie, the next deeper horizon will be used in the same manner. If a different system for tie breakers is used, it must be clearly specified in the contest manual.

## G. Conduct

1. At the discretion of the host institution, coaches may be permitted in the area of the pits during the contest. Coaches will be permitted to examine the pits after the contest.
2. No communications between team members or with the coach(es) shall be allowed while the individual judging event is underway.
3. During the individual judging event, no more than one contestant from each team shall be permitted at a given pit/site at the same time.
4. During the group judging event, communication between team members is expected. However, communication between the team members and the coach(es) is not permitted.
5. In addition to the score card, contestants may utilize any written materials deemed appropriate by the host institution (provided to institutions one month before the contest, see D3 above). Abbreviation sheets must be provided by the host institution during the contest.
6. Any infraction of the rules by any team or member of a team shall make that team ineligible to receive awards, and shall place them last automatically.

## G. Results

Results shall be announced by the host institution as soon as practical after the contest, and will be final.

## H. Contest Rules

1. A set of these National Soils Contest Rules shall be sent to each participating institution (or to each region) by the host institution at least two months prior to the contest.
2. A region may develop specific rules for its regional contest. However, all teams and team members in the National Collegiate Soils Contest must meet the eligibility requirements as set forth in the rules of the National Collegiate Soils Contest.

#### IV. AWARDS

The winning team will receive the large traveling trophy. This trophy was designed and obtained for future national soils contests by Dr. Orville Bidwell (Kansas State) and David Reisig at the 8<sup>th</sup> National Collegiate Soils Contest hosted May 9 and 10, 1968, by Kansas State University. Permanent trophies or plaques will be provided for the first five teams in overall team scores, the top five teams in the group judging competition, and the top ten individuals.