



2016/2017 SCHOLARSHIP DESCRIPTION:

The California Chapter of the American Society of Agronomy will award a total of up to \$2,000 in scholarships to two eligible California residents currently enrolled a degree program in crop production, plant science, soil science or a related field at a 4-year California College or University.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. The applicant must be an undergraduate of at least sophomore-level standing and be enrolled full-time the semester or quarter of the award or the semester or quarter immediately following the award. Enrollment must be at one of the following schools: California State University, Chico or Fresno; California State Polytechnic University Pomona or San Luis Obispo; or the University of California Berkeley, Davis, Riverside, or Santa Cruz.
2. Be a resident of California.
3. Have a minimum GPA of 2.5 (based on a 4.0 scale) calculated through the last quarter or semester prior to application.
4. Candidates must submit two letters of recommendation; at least one from a college or university faculty member and the other can be from an agricultural industry representative or employer.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

1. All application materials must be received no later than **January 6, 2017**. Letters of recommendation are to be sent separately by the respective individuals providing references and received by January 6, 2017. All materials should be mailed or sent by email to the address below. Emailed references should be sent from the email of the reference not the applicant.
2. Complete the attached application form and return it with your essay on the topic provided. The application form is also available electronically. Please look for the CA-ASA Scholarship link on the CA-ASA Web Site at: <http://calasa.ucdavis.edu>
3. Essays from scholarship recipients may be published in the online 2017 Proceedings of the Society or made available to the press.
4. Scholarship funds will be released upon selection and proof of enrollment. Recipients will be notified by January 25, 2017 with the monetary award available after February 1, 2017.

The scholarship award winners will be recognized at the annual California Plant & Soil Conference, which will be held at Doubletree Hotel in Fresno, CA January 31-February 1, 2017. Recipients will be offered one night of hotel lodging and free registration. Award presented at closing banquet February 1, 2017. Attendance at conference preferred but not required.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Applications will be evaluated based on:

Essay narrative content and quality 50%

Leadership, scholarship, and extracurricular activities 20%

Letters of recommendation 25%

Work or business experience in agriculture 5%

Checklist: A complete application package will contain:

- Completed application form.
- College transcripts (unofficial transcripts or photocopies are acceptable).
- Essay on the subject provided.
- Two letters of recommendation (under separate cover or in sealed envelopes).
- Preferred application method is submission electronically by email to below address. Mailed hard copied may be sent, but must be rereceived no later than midnight January 6, 2017 to:

Dr. Karen Lowell
Area Agronomist
USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service
744 A La Guardia Street
Salinas, CA 93905
E-mail: karen.lowell@ca.usda.gov



American Society of Agronomy

California Chapter

Scholarship Application Form

ALL MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MIDNIGHT JANUARY 6, 2017

1. Introductory Information

Name of applicant: _____
First Middle Last

Home Address: _____
(Permanent) Street City Zip Code

Phone Number: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street City Zip Code

E-Mail Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

High School graduated from: _____

Previous High School(s): _____

Hometown: _____

College or University currently attending: _____

Colleges or Universities previously attended: _____

Major or field of study: _____

Desired Career: _____

Questions 2-4 should be answered in MS Word and submitted as a **single document**.

2. Essay (50 % of score)

Using essay format, answer the following question as fully and completely as you can in 1500 words more or less (1 inch margins, about 2 pages single spaced, 12 font size). Type your response on a separate sheet and submit with the application. Scoring is based on the essay's content, quality, originality, and thoughtful response.

Essay Topic:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Healthy Soils Initiative emphasizes that the health of agricultural soil relates to its ability to build and retain adequate soil organic matter. The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) describes four basic management principles to maintain and/or build soil organic matter:

- 1. Keep the soil covered as much as possible;**
- 2. Disturb the soil as little as possible;**
- 3. Keep plants growing throughout the year;**
- 4. Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops.**

Write an essay that describes how you would implement these basic principles in a California cropping system. You should describe the following in your essay:

- 1. The cropping system (e.g. crop, irrigation type, region in which produced, etc.);**
- 2. Detailed description of specific management practices and how they will address the principles noted;**
- 3. Constraints a producer in California might encounter when implementing the practices as described.**

To address the prompt, you will need to research what management practices are likely to increase soil organic matter, then consider which are feasible in the CA cropping systems you have chosen. Some key practices you might consider include use of cover crops, reduced tillage, crop rotation, irrigation water management and application of carbon based soil amendments (e.g. compost, manure).

3. Leadership, scholarship, and extracurricular activities (20% of score)

Summarize your personal leadership abilities, academic capabilities, and personal development experiences.

4. Work or business experience in agriculture (5% of score)

Summarize your agricultural and other relevant work experience. Include any research, directed work experiences or projects involving plant, soil, or water related management topics.

5. Letters of recommendation (25% of score)

Submit under separate cover (email preferred) two letters of recommendation; at least one must be from a college or university faculty member and the other can be from an agricultural industry employer or leader.