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The Alliance for Science -- a non-profit organization which seeks "to heighten public understanding and support for science and to preserve the distinctions between science and religion in the public sphere" -- is holding its second annual essay contest. The theme is "Climate, Agriculture, and Evolution." Students are encouraged to submit essays of up to 1000 words on one of two topics: "Climate and Evolution and "Agriculture and Evolution."

Essays will be judged for their scientific focus, and correctness, quality of analysis and interpretation, personal voice and interest, and clarity and style of writing. Cash prizes will be given to the top four students, with \$300.00 for first place. Sponsoring teachers of the top two students will receive cash for purchase of educational materials. Additional prizes include educational DVDs and books.

For the "Climate and Evolution" topic, students are asked to consider the interaction between the slow changes driven by evolution with the potentially much more rapid impact of climate change. For the "Agriculture and Evolution" theme, students are encouraged to think broadly about the interplay between naturally evolved plant and animal species, traditional plant selection and animal breeding methods, and recent technological options such as genetic engineering.

This contest is open to all high school students living in the United States. Students must submit individual original essays and have a sponsoring teacher. Sponsoring teachers can include former teachers, science program coordinators, or science museum staff. Electronic submissions (via e-mail) are preferred, but printed essays will also be accepted. Registration forms and official contest rules are [posted](#) [4] at the Alliance for Science website.

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