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Deadline for Ag Day Essay Contest Is February 26
Theme for 2010 Is "Agriculture – Abundant, Affordable, Amazing"

Mason City, IA., Jan. 05, 2010 – The Agri-Business Committee of the Mason City Area Chamber of Commerce is calling on seventh- to 12th-grade, and Junior College students to submit an original essay of 450 words about the importance of agriculture. This year's theme is "Agriculture – Abundant, Affordable, Amazing" and the deadline is Feb. 26.

Teachers and parents are asked to encourage their students to participate.

This year, the theme highlights the importance of agriculture and how the industry continues to overcome new challenges. These include keeping food affordable, meeting the demands of a growing population with fewer acres, working with legislative influences and adding consumer concerns. Students may choose to specifically address one or more of these challenges in their essay. Agriculture has a touch point in each of our lives and is an amazing industry.

"Our Agri-Business Committee. is pleased to support this year's Ag Day essay contest and its theme of "Agriculture – Abundant, Affordable, Amazing" , says Linda Anderegg, Committee Chair. "We recognize the valuable contributions today's youth offer to help our nation's food, fiber and energy systems stay strong. We look forward to seeing the students' opinions and ideas about American agriculture."

This year's winners will receive cash prizes awarded at the 2010 Ag Day Breakfast to be held at 7 a.m. Wednesday, March 17 in the All-Season Building on the North Iowa Fairgrounds in Mason City. The top three essayists in each of three divisions will divide \$450 of total prize money being provided by Hertz Farm Management, Inc.

For over twenty-five years the Agri-Business Committee has sponsored the Ag Day Breakfast. The goal is to spotlight agriculture producers and the food and fiber industry the first of each spring (National Ag Day), to help consumers understand not only how food and fiber products are produced, but to celebrate accomplishments in providing safe, abundant and affordable products.

The Ag Day Essay Contest is sponsored by the Agri-Business Committee of the Mason City Area Chamber of Commerce and Hertz Farm Management, Inc.