



2019 AAEA WRITING AWARDS DIVISION

The 2019 AAEA Writing Awards are sponsored by the AAEA through funding provided by:



Judging for all writing categories will be based on overall writing quality, clarity and the author's proficiency in the category. The writing judges are instructed to NOT consider layout and design in overall scoring criteria.

Writing Entry Basics

- A writer is limited to two entries in each category for categories 1 through 10. However, Cat. 11, Team Story, has no limit for the number of entries a writer may submit. *Note: We have not set entry limits in the online entry system, because we know in some cases a contestant manager will be entering for multiple editors at a publication. We will check to be sure no member has entered more than two entries in Cat W01-W10.*
- Entries in all categories must have been published in print or online between April 16, 2018, and April 15, 2019.
- Entries of any kind with more than one author must be entered as a Team Story in Cat. 11. **All authors of a team story must be AAEA members at the time of entry.** You will see a section called "Credits" on the entry page where the name and affiliation of each team story author should be added in the boxes. *Note: Team Story entries will not be considered as a part of a writer's portfolio for the Writer of the Year, but the first-place Team Story is eligible for Story of the Year.*
- A series may be entered as a single entry in any category except Cat. W03, Editorial Opinion, and Cat. W09, Regular Column. No special consideration is given to a series as compared to a single-story entry in a category.

Preparing Your Entry

- All Writing Division entries will be judged online by two judges per category who will view the entries on the online award platform only. No physical entries will be mailed in. Also, the files you provide should be a PDF of the article as it appeared in the magazine, with all information -- including byline and publication name -- left intact and visible. If you retrieve the article as a Word doc from your system, convert the file to a PDF with a professional PDF converter before uploading so the judge can view it easily. You will be able to upload multiple documents per entry, such as when entering a series of stories as one entry. After you've clicked "Submit your entry," use the Edit mode to go back to click and drag files in the order you wish the judge to read them.
- Please keep file sizes to less than 5 MB if possible to aid judges in accessing entry content. There is a process for uploading larger files (5 MB-250 MB) that will be offered when you are in the entry page. Whatever the file size, be sure the words in the article can be read clearly.
- If you want to be considered for Writer of the Year, type "WOY" in the Comments section of the entry form for each of the three entries to be placed in your Writer of the Year portfolio. (See next page for more WOY information.)
- **IMPORTANT: Provide a PDF with the objective, target audience and circulation of the publication or website.** For the Breaking News and Team Story categories, you are also encouraged to explain the circumstances of the entry's creation/process. Make this PDF the first file in each entry. (You can click and drag file order after you click "Submit Entry".)



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Writer of the Year/Story of the Year

In order to be considered for **Writer of the Year in 2019**, you must designate a “WOY portfolio.” To do so, type the letters “WOY” at the very beginning of your text in the Comments box on the entry page for the three specific entries that you consider your strongest work, from any category except Cat. W11, Team Story. Your three-story portfolio becomes eligible for consideration for Writer of the Year if you place first, second or third in any Writing category you have entered. The judges will rely solely on this portfolio to determine Writer of the Year. No story substitutions will be made. We will contact you for clarification if you indicate more than three or fewer than three stories as “WOY” stories.

The judges will select the **2019 AAEA Story of the Year** from among the 11 first-place category winners (including Team Story).

AAEA Master Writer Program

Each year, those who enter the Writing Awards Program build points toward becoming Master Writers. The program allows a writer to gauge personal professional development by means other than category wins. **One** “judge’s merit” is awarded to any writer placing first, second or third in a category, or when one or both category judges mark(s) a non-placing entry as deserving of merit recognition.

Master Writer Levels

- Level 1** One judge’s merit.
- Level 2** Two judge’s merits in two different categories OR win first place in a category.
- Level 3** Three judge’s merits in three different categories OR win first place in a category and earn a judge’s merit in another category.
- Level 4** Four judge’s merits in four different categories OR win first place in a category and earn two judge’s merits in two other categories OR earn the AAEA Writer of the Year Award.
- Level 5 Master Writer:** Five judge’s merits in five different categories OR win a place in three categories OR receive Writer of the Year Award and three judge’s merits in three different categories.
- Level 6 Writer of Merit:** Receive judge’s merits in each of 10 of the 11 categories

Contact Carly Byrd at cbyrd@asginfo.net if you have questions about your Master Writer Program level or about what categories you need to move up a level.

2019 Writing Categories

Cat. W01: Breaking News

This category is for first-day, breaking news published in any medium. Entries will be judged on news value, immediacy of the story and the writer’s ability to write well under tight deadlines.

Cat. W02: Economics and Management

The economics and management article focuses on the financial, marketing and economic aspects of agriculture. Examples range from the macro perspective of world and industry markets to the micro level of on-farm finance, taxes and marketing plans. The strength of the good economics and management story is making the complex accessible.



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Cat. W03: Editorial Opinion

The editorial confronts an issue by clearly explaining it, building arguments on fact and logic and stating a clear position. The editorial convinces the reader of the need for specific action. Enter only one example.

Cat. W04: Human Interest

The human-interest article addresses the human experiences found in rural areas. Entries may delve into any cultural, social or emotional aspect of farm or agribusiness life.

Cat. W05: Humorous Article

The humorous article looks at the lighter side of farm life or the ag industry -- to enlighten or entertain.

Cat. W06: Issues

The issues article is the "big picture" feature/news story that looks at pressing agricultural topics. It gives an objective view and airs all sides of the issues with the purpose of providing enough information so the reader can draw conclusions.

Cat. W07: On-Farm Production Article

The on-farm production article informs, educates and illustrates agricultural production techniques. The story details the "how-to" of the farm practice, potential benefits and limitations. The article should help the reader decide if the practice would benefit his/her own farming operation.

Cat. W08: Personality Profile

The personality profile is an in-depth look at one individual and his/her contributions to local, regional or national agriculture.

Cat. W09: Regular Column

The regular column can be found routinely in the publication (print or electronic) and is clearly identified as a standing column. Unlike the editorial category, the regular columnist is free to use personal observations and feelings in the narrative. The strength of the regular column lies in the fresh, unique perspective of the writer. Enter only one example.

Cat. W10: Technical Feature

The technical feature examines the specialized aspects of agriculture. Typical subjects include cutting edge machinery technology, and technical solutions encountered in the production, transportation and processing of food and fiber.

Cat. W11: Team Story

The team story is any entry (on any topic, single or series) with more than one author. Only one entry and one entry fee need to be submitted for a team story, with one author's name as the main entrant on the entry form. All of the authors should then be listed on the entry where indicated, and all need to be AAEA members or must join at the time of entering the awards program in order for the entry to be accepted. No limit to number of entries in this category.

**DEADLINE: May 3, 2019,
for entries and payment.***

*If a corporate check will be arriving after the deadline date, please send an email to that effect to cbyrd@asginfo.net.

WRITING CHECKLIST

- Is your AAEA membership current?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2018 and April 15, 2019?
- Have you included the **Required** pdf outlining the objective, target audience, and circulation of the publication or website?
- Have you submitted a maximum of two entries in each category (except for Team Story, which has no limit)?
- Have you listed the name and affiliation in the Credits section? In the event of a winning entry, this is the information that will be on the plaque or certificate.
- Do you wish to be considered for Writer of the Year? If so, type WOY in the comments section of each of the three entries to be included in your Writer of the Year portfolio.