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MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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RETURN TO NEWSROOM

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TENNESSEE ARBOR DAY POSTER CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

- Winners will receive plaque, savings bond and other prizes -

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Ben Apodaca, a fifth-grader at Cedar Bluff Intermediate School in Knoxville was recently named state winner in the 2008 Tennessee Arbor Day Poster Contest. Second place honors went to Andrew Stout, Manley Elementary School in Morristown. Veronika Vafina, a student at Croft Middle School in Nashville was named third place winner in the annual contest open to all Tennessee fifth-graders.

"The annual Arbor Day Poster Contest is a great way to raise awareness of the importance of agriculture and natural resources through education," said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens. "I extend my congratulations to our winners and to all the fifth-graders who invested their time and talent in recognizing the value of trees in our environment."

Apodaca's poster was selected for its interpretation of the contest theme "Trees are terrific...inside and out!" His poster has been sent to the National Arbor Day Foundation in Nebraska to compete in the national contest. The national winner will be announced at the National Arbor Day Awards Ceremony later this spring.

All three state winners will receive a plaque, a savings bond, and other prizes from the National Arbor Day Foundation and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division and other corporate sponsors.

Approximately 961 fifth-grade students from across Tennessee participated in this year's poster contest, which is conducted annually by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Division of Forestry. The contest is designed to help promote the importance of Arbor Day, tree planting and conservation of our natural resources. The Tennessee Urban Forestry Council also co-

sponsored this year's state contest.

Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. Founded by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska in 1872, National Arbor Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April. A number of state Arbor Days are celebrated at different times of the year to coincide with the best tree planting weather. Tennessee celebrates Arbor Day the first Friday of March every year.

Visit <http://state.tn.us/agriculture/forestry/arborday/> to view the winning posters and to learn more about Arbor Day in Tennessee.

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