ESF Environmental Challenge
Science Fair and Career Exploration for 7th and 8th Grade Students

Environmental Challenge encourages:
- Student projects that support and extend 7/8th grade science curriculum
- Student research, scientific inquiry, and critical thinking
- Students to begin exploring science and science-related careers
- Students to explore and understand the urban environment and its relationship to the global environment
- Eligible students to participate in the Greater Syracuse Scholastic Science Fair

Rules and Guidelines to Follow:
- There is no specific theme but projects should use the inquiry process and test a hypothesis, not simply be reports about a subject.
- Projects should conform to ISEF rules regarding HUMAN SUBJECTS, VERTEBRATE ANIMALS, POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS BIOLOGICAL AGENTS, and HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS, ACTIVITIES or DEVICES.
  http://www.societyforscience.org/isef/rulesandguidelines
- The ISEF forms are not required unless projects fall into non-exempt areas of the categories above. ESF Outreach recommends avoiding projects requiring an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects or a Scientific Review Committee (SRC) for Vertebrate Animals, Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents, and Hazardous Chemicals, Activities or Devices.
- Schools are responsible for all student projects the require IRB and SRC review under ISEF rules. ESF Outreach is unable to review or support projects and the IRB/SRC process.
- Projects that entail combustion of any sort are strongly discouraged. There should be no demonstrations of combustion/flammability at the Science Fair; it will result in immediate disqualification and confiscation of materials.
- No liquids or food items should be brought along with projects. (Carrier Dome field rule)

Suggestions and Resources:
- Projects should have a specific testable hypothesis. Projects that simply present information on a topic without testing a hypothesis will lose points in the “Use of Inquiry Process” category.
- Remember that this is the “Environmental Challenge”, so projects that include how the research relates to the environment (including the human environment) will generally score better.
- Human subject and vertebrate animal studies that are exempt from IRB/SRC review are generally those that are observational with no personally identifying information recorded, no interaction with subjects, no manipulation of the environment, and follow all federal and state regulations.