

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM CONFERENCE

More than 200 educators from across the state joined us in Sacramento for the 36th Annual Ag in the Classroom Conference in September.

The conference, spanning three days, took attendees from the farm to the fork, quite literally, as we had collaborative events with the Sacramento Farm to Fork Festival, which was occurring simultaneously with our conference. 🌱



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Honoring Agriculture Advocates

In the wake of the loss of two revered icons in agricultural education, Laura Tower and Jean Landeen, we reflect on their extraordinary contributions to agriculture literacy and advocacy.

During her 25-year tenure, Laura Wheeler Tower held leadership roles within the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. Her guidance influenced not just the organization but also the current Executive Director, Judy Culbertson, and numerous members of the Ag in the Classroom staff. Laura served on boards within the California Department of Education, authoring publications, and focusing on agricultural education. A farm owner in Farmington, Laura was involved in many community organizations that benefit youth and agriculture, including 4-H, FFA, and Farm Bureau.



Jean Landeen was a trailblazer. She was one of the earliest females to devote her entire career at the California Department of Education as a champion of agriculture education. Despite having taught only four years in the classroom, Jean made a huge impact in her profession by pioneering the development of urban agriculture programs, helping to write the AgEd State Standards and Frameworks documents, and serving as the lead consultant in the early development of the California Ag in the Classroom movement.



We will honor the life and legacy of Laura and Jean by continuing to reach classrooms across the state, and by sharing the many important lessons that only agriculture can teach.

"The heartfelt donations we receive in their memory will enable us to educate future generations in California," said Culbertson.

"With these contributions, we sow the seeds of knowledge, ensuring that the vital lessons of agriculture are passed down to the next generations in California." 🌱

Fall 2023



Knowin' What's Growin'

Have you ever wondered what kind of crops are growing along the side of the road as you drive down Interstate 5? You're not alone. Ag in the Classroom was recently awarded a Specialty Crops Block Grant, which will support the development of a new web-based application Knowin' What's Growin'. The app will help users identify what's growing throughout the Golden State and learn more about the production practices and the crop's commodity value. Is that a pear or pistachio tree I just passed? A tap of the app will tell you.



The overall goal of the project is to increase specialty crop awareness and consumption among California's fourth-grade students and teachers. The specific age-related audience is ultimately what helped Ag in the Classroom secure this grant. Research shows that 93 percent of children under-consume vegetables and 60 percent under-consume fruit, a serious issue.

Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in children could help improve overall health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases in adulthood. Teaching students about California specialty crop uses and benefits helps increase the consumption of those commodities.

The project goal is to reach 1,600 California fourth graders and teachers with knowledge about specialty crops, using the innovative app with geo-specific crop information and kid-friendly recipes, along with a teachers' guide aligned to California education standards. 🌱

SAVE THE DATE

Seed Survivor
Mobile Classroom Tour
 November 2023- March 2024

National Agriculture Week
Special Events
 March/April 2024



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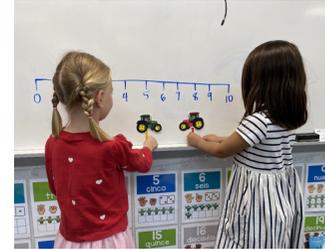
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Life on the Farm Early Childhood Curriculum

It's never too early to learn about agriculture.

With that motto in mind, Ag in the Classroom has developed a new early childhood unit, Life on the Farm. The unit is designed for preschool, transitional kindergarten, or kindergarten classrooms. This curriculum helps introduce young learners to agriculture concepts in a developmentally appropriate, yet accurate way.

The unit, funded by the National Ag in the Classroom organization, is broken down into five daily themes. Literacy, math, science, and art activities help students learn about crops, livestock, and machines while increasing appreciation for the important role agriculture plays in their community.



Unfortunately, many early learners are implicitly taught that most farms look like Old MacDonald's farm of the past: a single-family living and working on a farm to provide for their day-to-day needs. Each of the lessons in the unit helps students understand that today we get most of our food from much larger farms—still family-owned—that specialize in growing one type of food. There are egg farms, dairy farms, almond farms, and apple farms.

Want to see the unit in action yourself? Scan the QR code to download the unit, and watch the corresponding Life on the Farm webinar. 🌱



Imagine this... Story Writing Contest

Any 3-8 grade students in your life? Encourage young writers to submit a story for the Imagine this... Story Writing Contest!

Going on its twenty-fifth year, the contest entails students writing stories (real or imagined) based on accurate information about California agriculture. One winning author is selected from each grade. These individuals will travel with their families and teachers to the State Capitol in March to be recognized and celebrated during National Ag Week.

Scan the QR code to learn more or submit a story. The deadline is November 1! 🌱



We are California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (CFAITC). Our mission is to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students. Our vision is an appreciation of agriculture by all.

We are a 501 (c) (3) organization.
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