

LearnAboutAg[®]



California Foundation for
Agriculture in the Classroom

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

A photograph showing several children engaged in a gardening activity. They are crouching on the ground, planting small purple flowers into dark soil. One child in the foreground is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt with a white graphic of a tree and a heart. Another child is wearing a purple shirt. A yellow watering can is visible in the background. The scene is outdoors, with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a warm and natural atmosphere.

**Our
MISSION**
is to
increase
awareness and
understanding
of agriculture
among
California's
educators
and students.

From the beginning, Ag in the Classroom has recognized teachers as our most valuable resource. Teachers allow us to reach, educate and inspire students. In this report, you meet a few of the tens-of-thousands of teachers throughout the state who use our resources to teach math, science, English Language Arts, and really, every subject. As our board member and the Superintendent of the Borrego Springs Unified School District Martha Deichler likes to say, “There isn’t a subject under the sun that can’t be taught using agriculture as the theme.”

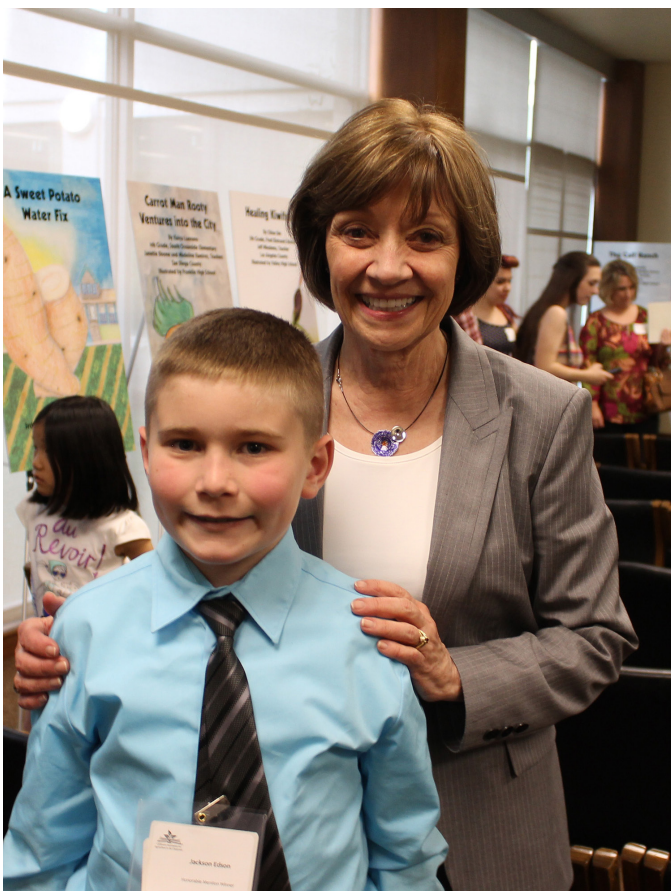
In 2015, we linked agriculture to an important and timely topic. We featured water as the focus of our popular resource, *What’s Growin’ On?*. We distributed this 16-page resource to more than 1 million readers, helping teachers, students and families learn about California’s 400-plus commodities and how we can all take small steps to make the most efficient use of our water.

Support from our donors makes it possible to develop new resources and to support teachers and students through our programs. As Jim Hicks, retired board member says, Ag in the Classroom is “the gift that keeps on giving.” Not all children have the valuable foundation of growing up on a family farm, but through our collective efforts all children will experience California agriculture. Thank you for helping students LearnAboutAg.®

Judy Culbertson



JUDY CULBERTSON
Executive Director



KAREN ROSS

*Secretary of the California
Department of Food and Agriculture*

“Ag in the Classroom shapes the future leaders of the agricultural industry, and we could not have asked for a better partner!”





Circumferences, fractions and ratios never looked this tasty. Julie Cates uses snap peas and pumpkins to teach sixth-grade math. Her passion for agricultural education and nutrition seems to have no limit. That's why Ag in the Classroom selected Julie as the 2015 Outstanding Educator of the Year.

Julie's #FindYourFavoriteFridays project received a \$500 Literacy for Life grant. The Foundation provides grants to teachers throughout the state for initiating or expanding projects that incorporate agricultural topics into classroom instruction. The applications are also used to identify a teacher who rises to the top, and this year, that is Julie Cates. The Outstanding Teacher of the Year earns a \$1,000 award and a trip to the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference.

"Julie has found a way to bring agriculture into her classroom every week," says Judy Culbertson, executive director. "She is creative and energetic, and we are proud to support her efforts. She represents our mission well in her classroom, at

events throughout the year, and on social media."

Julie is a first-year teacher at Linwood Elementary School in Tulare County, but she is not new to agricultural education. Before becoming a classroom teacher, she was a nutrition educator for the University of California Cooperative Extension. Julie has dedicated herself to promoting healthy eating habits and helping students understand where food comes from.

"I am in love with agriculture and nutrition education," Julie says. "This is due in no small part to the many opportunities I have had to work on projects through the Tulare County Farm Bureau. I am truly blessed to be at Linwood. We have a wonderful principal, and I teach with an amazing team of teachers."

Since school began in August 2015, her efforts have entered the Twittersphere with Julie's #FindYourFavoriteFridays. Each Friday, she brings a unique fruit or vegetable for students to taste. The idea was inspired by Indiana blogger, The Produce Mom, who uses her #ProduceChallenge to encourage the consumption of fruits and vegetables. Julie adds her own twist with lessons that often involve dissecting, measuring or analyzing the produce.

Activities like *Solution Soup* teach important concepts, including how to convert fractions to decimals. Julie posts her successes on Twitter, so other teachers may be inspired to bring agriculture into their own classrooms. Sometimes she even

cites the Common Core or Next Generation Science Standards for her activities within the tweets.

Julie's teaching goes beyond #FindYourFavoriteFridays, as she has used Ag in the Classroom materials to teach a variety of topics. She has brought in guest speakers, including a representative from the Tulare County Farm Bureau and a cotton farmer. She works with the school garden coordinator, Lori Irvine, to support and promote activities in the garden. Julie is always

looking for new ways to introduce students to agriculture, including #TryItTuesdays and #MooMondays.

Lucky for students, Julie has no shortage of energy and ideas. "I am excited to work with Ag in the Classroom," she says. "Together, we can draw attention to the wonders of modern agriculture and all of its curricular integration areas."

I am in love with agriculture and nutrition education.

JULIE CATES
2015 Outstanding Educator of the Year

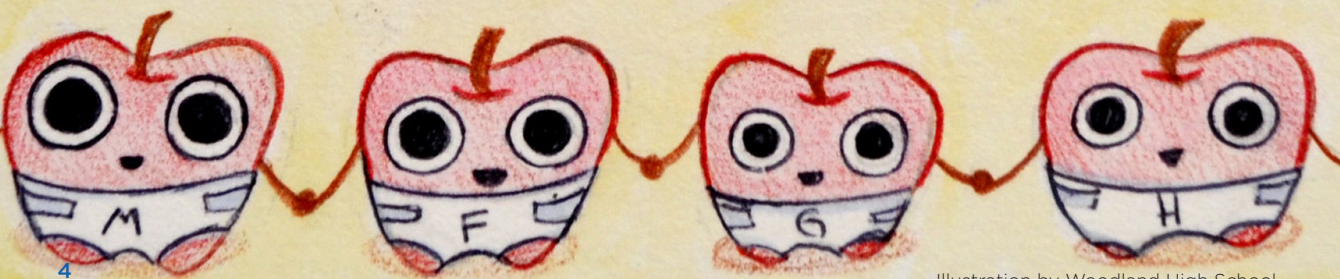


#FindYourFavoriteFridays

Tasting, Teaching and Tweeting



Jaden and the Incredible A



Known for his great sense of humor, award-winning author Jaden Fontes is an expert on apple varieties. He can tell you all about Galas, Fujis, Honeycrisps and more. Did we mention he's a sixth-grader? The night before his homework assignment was due, Jaden wrote

an apple story that would catapult him to success.

Inspired by his love of apples and superheroes (and the quickly approaching deadline), Jaden stuck to family tradition and wrote a funny story about four apple superheroes: Mac McIntosh, Ferris Fuji, Gary Gala and Hank Honeycrisp. The four friends rescue Penny Pink Lady® from Benny Bruiser and “that crazy Apple Jack.” The tale is chock-full of action, romance, fun facts, and of course, apple puns.

Jaden's story was selected by his teacher at St. Stanislaus Catholic School in Modesto as one

JADEN FONTES
2015 Sixth-Grade
Winning Author

of the top-five entries in the class and was submitted in October. In November, the story impressed the regional judges, and ultimately, was named the top sixth-grade story in the 2015 *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest.

“It was very exciting when Jaden won because a large box of apples showed up at school,” says Jaden's teacher Judee Sani. It was really sweet of the Pink Lady® producers to send us some apples. We all celebrated for Jaden and it made all of the students feel like they won.”

There was more celebrating to come, but first, Emilee Noble and Bianca Novoa, seniors at Woodland High School, had to bring Jaden's story to life. With the guidance of their instructor, Scott Coppenger, they worked together to draw the illustrations, add watercolors, outline the artwork in colored pencils, and then add details. They made their deadline with time to spare, and the drawings were scanned—ready to be published.

Jaden, his parents and sister made their way to Sacramento, where he and all of the other

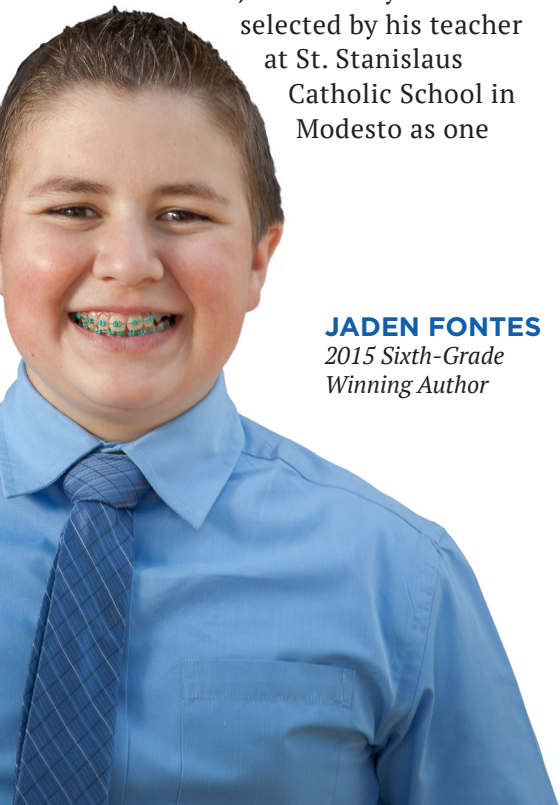
winning student authors, families and student illustrators participated in a special ceremony in the Governor's Council Room with Secretary of California Department of Food and Agriculture Karen Ross.

Although the big day has passed, the legend of the incredible apples will live on. The 2015 *Imagine this... Stories Inspired by Agriculture* book is available for purchase or as a free e-book. As for Jaden, there are still book signing and reading events to come. His super power of creative writing has led him to a whole new world of fame. He has also learned something valuable from the homework assignment.

“If students don't learn about agriculture, they won't know where all the fruits, vegetables and meat and everything they eat comes from,” says Jaden. “They would think it just came from a factory, but it actually comes from farms.”



Read Jaden's story at
LearnAboutAg.org.



Jim Hicks, A True Friend to Ag Education



Going to college was a big step for Jim Hicks. He grew up on a small, poor farm in Morgan County, Indiana. Although his parents were very supportive of his education, they were unable to help him financially. Jim worked hard to pay his tuition to Purdue University, 75 miles from home.

“I didn’t know a soul there,” Jim says. “I came from a small school, 12 boys and 10 girls in my high school graduating class. Going to college was a big step for me, and I guess I did it because Purdue offered the education I wanted.”

Jim knew he wanted to be involved in agribusiness. As college graduation neared, he followed the advice of his professor and wrote a letter to a fertilizer company who might have an opportunity for him. Without even asking about starting salary, Jim accepted a position as a salesman. He had a company car, an expense account and a desire to succeed. He started work the day after graduation.

His career was interrupted in 1962 when his Air Force Reserve unit was called to active duty during the Cuban Missile Crisis. After serving in the Air Force, he returned to his work, traveling across the Midwest and on to California. Jim is proud to say he worked in the agricultural fertilizer industry for 54 years.

In September 2015, he retired as CEO of Jim Hicks and Company. The business he started in 1982 is now managed by two of his sons. But Jim still has one business enterprise he won’t retire from—his investment in students. “Education opens doors,” Jim says. He and his wife, Neta, created the Jim Hicks Family Foundation to help students succeed. The foundation provides scholarships

and supports organizations like the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

For years, Jim would drive on the Southern California freeways, often thinking about the nearly 25 million people living there and wondering what the children knew about agriculture. That’s why it was “love at first sight” when he discovered Ag in the Classroom. He wanted to help students understand where their food comes from and how it gets from farm to fork.

Jim began supporting Ag in the Classroom with his first donation in 1991. In 2008, he attended his first event, the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, hosted in Costa Mesa. In 2011, he accepted an offer to join the board of directors.

“It’s been such a blessing to know Jim Hicks as a supporter, board member and friend,” says Judy Culbertson, executive director. “His endless enthusiasm for agricultural education and his down-to-earth way of thinking have helped us get to where we are today.”

In 2013, Jim and Neta created an endowment for the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, ensuring the organization would continue serving students for years to come. Although he recently retired from the board of directors, he remains an invaluable supporter and friend.

“Jim’s commitment to ag education is unmatched,” says Kenny Watkins, chairman of the board. “He and his family have gone above and beyond in their support. Jim has also helped us spread the word, cultivating even more support. We cannot thank him enough.”

As a true sports fan, the words of Lou Gehrig hang

on Jim’s wall. “I am the luckiest man in the world,” he says as he reflects on his life. “I have a great marriage, wonderful family and rewarding career of 54 years.”

Ag in the Classroom is very lucky to have Jim Hicks as a friend. With his support and guidance, the organization has taken many big steps to provide agricultural education to California’s more than seven million students. Jim is providing the next generation with the opportunity to learn about agriculture and to build a successful career and life.

“This program is the gift that keeps on giving,” Jim says. “Many of the students will go on to become community leaders, and both the teachers and students become enthusiastic supporters of the benefits of agriculture for the rest of their lives.”

This program is the gift that keeps on giving.

JIM HICKS
Retired Board Member



Ag in *their*

Teachers are our

Educator Grants

More than \$40,000 was provided to educators in 2015. The *Literacy for Life* and *Look at Agriculture... Organically!* grants funded hands-on projects to integrate agriculture into K-12 curriculum. Thank you to the Oreggia Family Foundation and the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) Foundation for helping teachers bring learning to life.

- Lisa teaches her students about healthy eating in their garden.
- The class made berry jam and delivered it to a local shelter.
- They have enjoyed their own homegrown mashed potatoes!



California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference

The 20th California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference was held October 22-24, 2015 aboard The Queen Mary in Long Beach. New and returning participants had a great experience learning and networking.

- Dionne has been to ten Ag in the Classroom conferences!
- She especially loves the field trips to farms and dairies.
- She shares photos from the trips with her students.

Meet Dionne

“Thank you so much for continuing to give me the opportunity to learn something new and to grow as an educator. Thank you for giving me the tools to motivate my students.”

DIONNE LAMBERT
Los Angeles County Teacher



Classroom

greatest resource!

Bring Learning to Life

Meet Lisa

“Armando, one of my students, said it best, ‘We are the best little farmers in the entire state!’ My students are eager to try anything and everything we grow. I truly believe that if children can be taught to grow their own food, being hungry and healthy will never be an issue in their lives.”

LISA LISS

*Sacramento County Teacher
and 2015 grant recipient*



University Student Teacher Program

Ag in the Classroom provides hands-on workshops for students seeking teaching credentials throughout our state. The program reached 390 pre-service teachers across eight universities in 2015.

- Browning has been a passionate supporter since he discovered Ag in the Classroom in 2011.
- He has presented workshops and helped write curriculum.
- He taught agriculture as an elementary school teacher, before becoming a professor.

Meet Browning

“The University Student Teacher Program helps future teachers gain insights into accurate, timely and meaningful connections to agriculture. A common comment I have heard after these workshops is, ‘I didn’t know that was part of agriculture!’ I am grateful for how the program promotes agricultural literacy to diverse audiences of future teachers.”

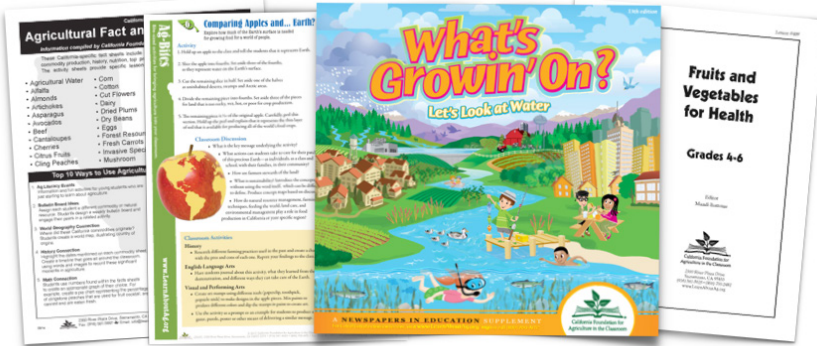
BROWNING NEDDEAU

*Assistant Professor,
California State University,
Monterey Bay*

Students and Teachers Love Our Resources!

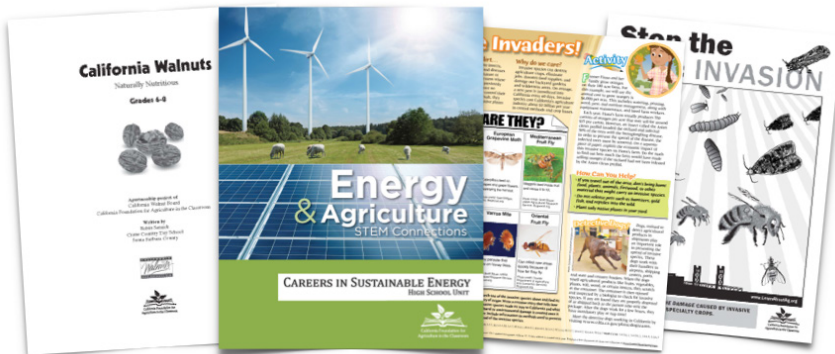
An average of 30-40 packages of free teaching resources are requested by and mailed to California educators each week. Resources are available for download at LearnAboutAg.org and are aligned to current California Education Standards.

Teacher Favorites



- Lesson Plan Units, like *Fruits and Vegetables for Health* and *Food Safety: From Farm to Fork*
- Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheets
- Ag-Bites (bite-sized, hands-on activities)
- *What's Growin' On?* student newspaper

New This Year



- STEM Connections, Energy and Agriculture: Five-lesson unit focused on careers
- California Walnuts: Three lesson plans about nutrition, walnut seasons and grafting
- Invasive Species Fact and Activity Sheets

See all of our resources at LearnAboutAg.org!





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“I believe the key place to educate the public about agriculture is in the classroom, starting with the teachers, then, providing students with experiences and knowledge that will last a lifetime.”

KENNY WATKINS
Chairman of the Board

Thank you for **keeping ag literacy alive** with your **generous support.**

BENEFACTORS

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\$10,000 - \$15,000

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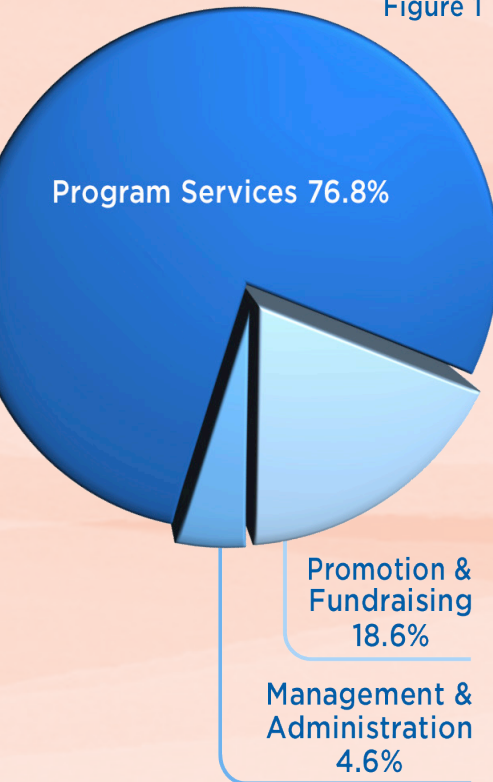
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Financial Highlights 2015

Figure 1



	2015	2014
Public Support and Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 576,747	\$ 625,147
Grant Income	85,364	164,667
Service Agreement Income	82,093	46,250
Special Event Revenue (net of direct benefits)	71,257	81,372
Program Fees	32,506	39,080
Investment Income (Loss)	(15,203)	50,976
Other Income	372	370
Subtotal	833,136	1,007,862
Net Assets Released from Program Restrictions	19,973	31,777
<i>Total Unrestricted Public Support & Revenue</i>	<u>\$853,109</u>	<u>\$1,039,639</u>
Expenses (See Figure 1)		
Program Services	\$727,583	\$844,751
Promotion & Fundraising	176,301	122,734
Management & Administration	44,040	43,721
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<u>\$947,924</u>	<u>\$1,011,206</u>
Statement of Financial Position		
Assets		
Current Assets	\$393,813	\$395,619
Jim Hicks Endowment	517,819	517,819
Henry J. Voss Endowment	84,463	84,463
Marketable Securities Investments	751,004	770,779
<i>Total Assets</i>	<u>\$ 1,747,099</u>	<u>\$ 1,768,680</u>
Liabilities & Net Assets		
Current Liabilities	81,693	59,343
Deferred Revenue	19,857	—
<i>Total Current Liabilities</i>	101,550	59,343
Unrestricted	992,267	1,087,082
Temporarily Restricted	104,927	73,900
Permanently Restricted	548,355	548,355
Total Net Assets	1,645,549	1,709,337
<i>Total Liabilities & Net Assets</i>	<u>\$ 1,747,099</u>	<u>\$ 1,768,680</u>

In 2015...

What's Growin' On? student newspaper —*Let's Look at Water* edition— reached more than 1 million California readers.

1,176 students learned about ag through *Literacy for Life* and *Look at Agriculture... Organically!* grants.

5,088 students and 237 teachers learned about California Specialty Crops through Taste Test Grants.

Cream of the Crop e-newsletter was delivered to 16,178 subscribers each month.

Ag in the Classroom hosted Agrium's Seed Survivor Mobile on a tour of California, reaching 5,129 students.

An average of 30-40 packages of teaching resources were mailed across the state each week!

170 educators attended the 2015 California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference aboard The Queen Mary in Long Beach.

15,743 teaching resources were downloaded from **LearnAboutAg.org**.

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