



# Cream of the Crop

A harvest of ideas for educators

June 2018



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

## Fantastic Ag Fact:

A corn stalk can grow 7 to 12 feet tall!



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We are consistently writing new lessons and activities! There are some very exciting lessons coming soon! Here our writing team teachers are learning about planting techniques from a Yolo County farmer!



LearnAboutAg®

## Registration now open! California Ag in the Classroom Conference



**September 27-29, 2018**  
**Renaissance Hotel - Marriott**

## Palm Springs, CA

### [LearnAboutAg.org/Conference](http://LearnAboutAg.org/Conference)

General registration is \$265.  
Sign up to attend, do a Make 'n' Take, or be an exhibitor!



#### Teacher Feature

### **Kim Dittbern**

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher  
Garden Coordinator  
Mountainview School  
Santa Clarita, California

Each year I use Ag in the Classroom resources and agricultural education to enhance first grade science, social science, math, and writing instruction with my students! As our school garden coordinator, I have the opportunity to share these materials with colleagues, thereby increasing the number of students at our school who benefit. Our school garden program is a unique outdoor classroom learning environment, where students share their agricultural science learning discoveries with cross-age buddies!



My biggest success in agricultural education is the look of pure delight on a student's face when they realize the seed they planted has grown into a delicious veggie! Our suburban students may have little contact with agriculture of any kind, so it is especially important to be able to help instill a love for growing food! The mother of a first grade student emailed me & said that she loved that her daughter "keeps bringing home veggies"! She told me how her daughter sliced the radish, prepared the pea & tomato, then added her favorite blue cheese salad dressing to the salad that she made by herself! Another wonderful success story was with the boy who would not touch veggies at all, but after our year-end "salad & garlic bread party" decided he loved salad! Here's to healthy eating, and agricultural education!

Children must be taught where our food & fiber come from - it is essential! Agriculture is a tremendous part of the California economy and vitally important to our future! Students are naturally curious scientists, and excited to learn about the steps

involved in growing food. However, many of our suburban areas are quite removed from agriculture, so the growing experiences and information must be brought to our young people. As educators, we must help nurture in our students, appreciation and respect for this vital sector of our nation's economy.

If you are interested in doing more with agricultural education hands-on learning, I'd recommend getting started with a simple plan. Start in fall if you can, but winter & early spring also works here in Southern California! We originally planted directly into the ground, and in small rolling planters that could be kept close to classrooms. Each year we've purchased additional raised beds for our garden. Start small scale this year, and plan for growth next year. Build on your successes each growing season! There's no such thing as failure, because all growing experiences become "science experiments"! Always plant radishes because in about 25 days you'll have an exciting harvest! Try other veggies like Tom Thumb peas, bantam corn, cherry or currant size tomatoes and other small varieties which will mature faster! Give stevia, rosemary, basil, and other fragrant & tasty herbs a try - children love them! Team up with other colleagues, and interested parents for support. Ask for donations - you'll get them! Use Ag in the Classroom resources - they're very informative and free!

## Featured Resource

### **Steer Towards STEM: Careers in Animal Ag**



This five-lesson unit for grades 3-5 promotes the development of STEM abilities and critical thinking skills, while fostering an appreciation for the people involved in livestock production. The curriculum includes real-life challenges for students to investigate, inquiry-based labs, and opportunities to plan and construct models. Featured careers include animal physiologist, agricultural engineer, range manager, animal nutritionist, and animal geneticist.

**[Find this resource, and other beef resources, online!](#)**

## Grant Feature

### **California Fertilizer Foundation Garden Grants**

The California Fertilizer Foundation's (CFF) School Garden Program's goal is to increase the understanding and



awareness of agriculture and plant nutrition in California's youth through school gardens. Classroom curriculum can be enhanced with first-hand experiences. Our purpose is to provide funding to California's public and private elementary, middle and high schools for continuation and/or implementation of school garden programs.

Deadline: **June 15, 2018**

[\*\*Apply Online!\*\*](#)

## More Ways to LearnAboutAg®

### **Food and Farm Facts**

Developed by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, Food and Farm Facts features facts about food in America, how it is grown and who produces it. The booklet contains color photographs and infographic style illustrations. [Get the book here!](#)

### **Farm Academy Live**

Farm Academy Live offers classrooms virtual field trips to farms using interactive video conference technology. Trusted by teachers since 2009, 100,000 students across 33 states and four countries have benefited from this program. This 40-minute virtual tour of a farm teaches plant and animal science in line with national science standards. The experience is enhanced by offering students the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities like ginning cotton by hand and mixing a feed ration for a dairy cow. Find out more about this FREE resource [here!](#)

## Community Events

### **For Educators**

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<b><u>SMUD Workshops</u></b> Make STEAM education come alive for your students with free, professional workshops that include hands-on activities and materials. K-12 teachers and students will be inspired and motivated to learn from a variety of resources including workshops, games and activities, printed materials and virtual field trips.	Sacramento, CA	Year-Round (including summer)
<b><u>EAT Foundation Classes</u></b> The EAT Foundation offers a variety of Continuing Education (CE) Classes which combine hands-on Workshops, Seminars, and Tours in the field of Agriculture. Courses are offered in 1, 2 & 3 day Sessions and take place at various locations and times of the year.	Hanford, CA	Summer 2018
<b><u>Teacher Almond Day</u></b>	Teacher Almond Day	September 8, 2018

This is an exciting opportunity for teachers to learn about Yolo County's almond industry! Join the Yolo County Farm Bureau, Woodland Community College, and California Foundation for Ag in the Classroom for an overview of the production of almonds, tours and FREE resources for your classroom!

## For Youth

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<p><b><u><a href="#">Summer Steam Maker Festival</a></u></b>            Take a free field trip to the San Diego Fair! Demonstrations, hands-on activities, and challenges.</p>	San Diego, CA	June 13, 2018
<p><b><u><a href="#">Agricultural Learning and Leadership STEAM-Powered Summer Camps</a></u></b>            This week-long day camp gives you the chance to see technology in use, with field trips to local farms using high-tech solutions to modern agricultural problems. Then, you get to play, design, build, and control your own versions of the tech-inaction!</p>	Stockton, CA	June and July 2018
<p><b><u><a href="#">'The Farm' at the California State Fair</a></u></b>            Visit the 3.5 acres celebrating the importance of agriculture and food production in California. Learn about more than 70 crops grown in California, taste local culinary delights prepared by chefs at our outdoor kitchen grill, and learn about fish farming by visiting our aquaculture display.</p>	Sacramento, CA	July 13-29, 2018
<p><b><u><a href="#">Tahoe Farm Day</a></u></b>            Farm Days are fun, hands-on field trips where lessons of agriculture and its role in our everyday lives, our county, and its economy are taught in the context of local farms, ranches, forests, and watersheds. Registration is available to all 3rd grade classes in El Dorado County.</p>	South Lake Tahoe, CA	September 11, 2018
<p><b><u><a href="#">Hilmar Cheese Company School and Youth Tours</a></u></b>            Join us for the most fun and educational field trip in the Central Valley! Free for all public schools, private schools and home schools associated with a school district. Organized and led by trained tour guides, safe and fully accessible. All students receive free cheese samples, a hairnet, Daisy's Dairy "ABCs" and a souvenir pencil.</p>	Hilmar, CA	Year-Round
<p><b><u><a href="#">AgVentures! Learning Center</a></u></b>            Tours of the Learning Center are available year-round for elementary school students. Cost is \$3 per student.</p>	Tulare, CA	Year-Round



### Show Your Support for Agricultural Literacy

Help us continue providing programs and materials that create an awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students. Make a one-time or recurring [donation](#).



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