



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

## **Fantastic Fact:**

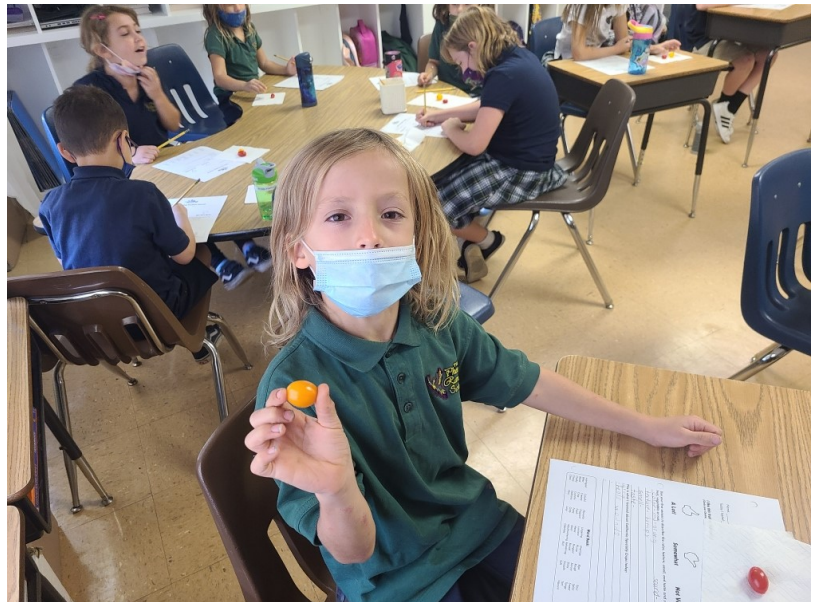
Over 80 varieties of table grapes are grown in California!

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

- **Literacy for Life Grant Winners**
- **Let's Get Social**
- **Teacher Feature**
- **NEW! Interactive Resource**
- **Grant Opportunities**
- **Community Events**

## **TASTE AND TEACH**

Are you a red, orange or yellow tomato person? The second grade class at Phoenix Ranch Elementary School in Simi Valley tasted their way through that question in a recent Taste and Teach lesson. According to teacher Emily Kitmitto, "most students loved all varieties!"



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## **CONGRATULATIONS LITERACY FOR LIFE GRANT RECIPEINTS!**

Envelope please...we are thrilled to announce Jami Beck, 2nd grade teacher at Three Rivers Elementary School in Tulare County, as our Outstanding Educator of the Year!

Additionally, twenty-five educators were awarded Literacy for Life Grants. Read how the winners will incorporate agriculture into their classrooms here:

[2021-2022 Literacy for Life Grant Recipients \(learnaboutag.org\)](https://www.learnaboutag.org/2021-2022-Literacy-for-Life-Grant-Recipients)

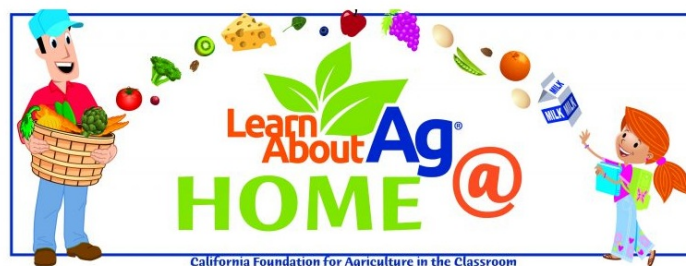


## LET'S GET SOCIAL

Show us what you've got! We'd love to see how you are bringing agriculture into your classroom!

Taste tests? Garden projects? Cooking contests? Farm field trips? Snap a few photos and send them our way. We want to feature your classroom! Send photos to [jennifer@learnaboutag.org](mailto:jennifer@learnaboutag.org).

Stop by our social media channels, below, where we dish about all things agriculture! While you are at it, be sure to visit our blog, [#LearnAboutAg@Home](https://www.learnaboutag.org/blog) for daily activities to incorporate agriculture into your classroom, in person or virtually!



**Carrie Lawson Robertson**  
**Grades: 6-8**

**Paul Revere Charter Middle School and  
Magnet Center  
County: Los Angeles**

**How and when did you first learn about Ag in the Classroom?**

I learned about Ag in the Classroom from my mentor and former middle school horticulture teacher, Mr. Richard Herrera. He had attended the AITC conference several times, and raved about how fun and informative it was. I actually got my current job from him when he retired after starting this program! I've also had the pleasure of attending the conference with my former high school agriculture teacher, Mr. Steve Pietrolungo, (Mr. P.), of the Simi Valley Unified School District.

**How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?**

Since 1999, and I have been at my current school since 2011, originally teaching horticulture. I recently helped lead a major renovation and management of our entire school farm, located on Sunset Blvd. in Los Angeles and now teach Animal Science as well. So, I feel like I just started a new job!

**What is your favorite AITC program/resource/event and why?**

The AITC Annual Conference is by far my favorite event! I love bringing back videos and pictures to show my urban students what "real" agriculture looks like. I also make extensive use of the *What's Growin' On?* newspapers and the Commodity Fact Sheets. My kids and I are obsessed with the old *Imagine this...* cartoon illustration videos. They are hysterical!

**Describe an agriculture-based project you have been involved in lately.**

I have a thing for soil! My latest pet project is the launch of an extensive composting program to amend our very poor school farm soil. We are recycling waste from our animal pens, composting it for a year, and then applying it to our fields as a sustainable fertilizer and water retention tool. I'm also a little obsessed with our school potbelly pig, Daisy. She's adorable!

**Do you have any advice for other teachers on how to implement agriculture into their classrooms?**

Agriculture is everywhere! I can guarantee students have experienced agriculture, no matter where they come from, and all you have to do is make the connection! Food, clothing, air, water, tourism, pets, health, technology, marketing, transportation...it's all around us, every day! You do not need to have a school garden or farm to provide rich and engaging agricultural experiences for your students!

**We have to ask, favorite California commodities?**

Great question! I think my favorite has to be artichokes. I love the purple flower it makes, and as it grows in Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Castroville areas, it reminds me of my travels there!

**Are you an educator including agriculture in your**

classroom?  
**Sign up to be a future Teacher Feature!**

Please send an interest email to [info@LearnAboutAg.org](mailto:info@LearnAboutAg.org).



## Featured Resources

### Take a Trip... New Resource Here!

California leads the nation in agricultural production, but that wasn't always the case. The Transcontinental Railroad transformed the golden state and connected the west with the rest of the nation. Our new interactive resource [Tracking the History of California Agriculture](#) lets students explore how and why California became the agricultural leader it is today. With the click of the mouse or tap of the keyboard, students are transported back 19,000 years, where evidence of human life in what is now known as California can be found. Fast forward to 1542, where explorers landed in what is now known as San Diego Bay and rest is history...



## Grant Feature

### Grant Opportunity!

Are you planning a new garden or expanding an existing one? The 2022 Youth Garden Grant is designed to support school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for students and their communities. The application deadline is December 17, 2021.

[Apply HERE!](#)



## More Ways to LearnAboutAg<sup>®</sup>

### Get a Garden Report Card!

Participate in the [School Garden Sustainability Survey](#) and next spring, receive a scorecard that will showcase strengths and opportunities for improvement in your school garden! Developed by the University of Texas at Austin, funded by Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation, and in partnership with the the SGSO Network, this survey is a part of a nationwide collection of school garden data to help school gardens across the country determine why



some succeed and become sustainable. This project is based on the success of the [Austin School Garden survey](#), which has helpful information on what makes a school garden thrive.



## Community Events

### For Educators

#### **Ventura County Farm Day**

**Event Location:** Ventura County  
**Event Date:**

- November 6, 2021

Save the date for the ninth annual Ventura County Farm Day, presented by **SEEAG!** Enjoy free activities and agricultural tours hosted at a variety of different farms, ranches, and agricultural organizations across the county. Learn more [here](#).

#### **Cal Water H2O Challenge**

**Event Location:** Throughout California, Classrooms grades 4-6.  
**Register by:**  
January 31, 2022

The Cal Water H2O Challenge is a project-based, environmentally-focused competition for classrooms. Register for the Classroom Challenge by November 30, 2021 and you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$500 grant to help your classroom with your project. General registration is open until January 31, 2022. Register [here](#).

#### **See Salmon!**

**Event Location:** Virtual tours of Nimbus Fish Hatchery, Sacramento County, Ca  
**Event Dates:** Ongoing

Located in eastern Sacramento County, Nimbus Fish Hatchery raises Chinook salmon and steelhead for release into the American River. The facility, run by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, remains closed, but virtual tours are available. [Request a tour here!](#)

### For Students

**Monterey County  
Agricultural Education  
Farm Day**

**Event Location:** Salinas, Ca

**Event Dates:**

- November 3-4, 2021

The Farm Day Experience provides basic, current facts about the agricultural industry in Monterey county, gives students and teachers the opportunity to become familiar with food production, and makes the important, personal contact with farming that has been lost through increased urbanization. It also gives those involved in agriculture a chance to interact with enthusiastic and interested children – and adults.

**San Joaquin County  
AgVenture**

**Event Location:** Manteca, Ca

- November 4, 2021

**Event Location:** Stockton, Ca

- January 19, 2022

**Event Location:** Lodi, Ca

- March 3, 2022

**Event Location:** Tracy, Ca

- April 14, 2022

San Joaquin County AgVenture is an agriculture and nutrition education program for 3rd graders in San Joaquin County. Each student has the opportunity to attend one FREE AgVenture event throughout San Joaquin County based on their school location where they will learn about local agriculture, nutrition, water and soil and so much more. For more information contact [sjcagventure@yahoo.com](mailto:sjcagventure@yahoo.com).

**Agribee™ Agricultural  
Spelling Bee Finals**

**Event Location:** Chico, Ca

**Event Dates:**

- November 19, 2021

Butte County Farm Bureau's Agribee™ Contest is back! The Agribee is a define and spell bee, using agriculturally-related words, for fourth and fifth grade students. The program is currently available to schools in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba Counties in California. Each participating school organizes a school-wide Agribee and identifies two finalists who compete in the Agribee Finals. The Agribee Final Contest first-place student will receive a laptop computer and a special, agriculture focused field trip for the student's class. Each Agribee participant is commended for their hard work and receives a t-shirt and certificate. Agribee Finals will be held on Friday, November 19th in Chico, Ca.

Help us continue providing programs and materials that create an awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students. Make a **donation** today!

**Stay Connected! @LearnAboutAg**

