

# CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

## **Fantastic Fact:**

Scientifically, tomatoes are considered a fruit. However, the Supreme Court declared them a vegetable because of the way in which people commonly eat them.



## **BIG NEWS!**

**Coach Kiah is coming to the AITC Conference**

Educators have navigated unprecedented waters over the last few years! Our keynote speaker, Coach Kiah Twisselman Burchett, a 6th-generation cattle rancher, can relate.

Kiah embarked on her own personal health journey losing over 100 pounds. Her story, one she will share at the AITC

Conference, coupled with her fierce agriculture advocacy and ability to motivate others, will empower educators. Don't miss this exciting keynote speaker.

## ***Want more?***

Did you know President Ronald Reagan owned a ranch near Santa Barbara? Take our Pre-Conference tour to the Ronald Reagan Museum - see an exact replica of the Oval Office and a 6-ton piece of the Berlin Wall! Tour the Reagan Library, Air Force One, and President Reagan's memorial.

Additionally, farm field trips, hands-on learning, Make N' Take Sessions, and the chance to network with other educators make this the ultimate #LearnAboutAg opportunity!

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER FOR CONFERENCE HERE](#)



## ***Imagine this...*** **Story Writing Contest**

**NEW!**

***Online submissions are  
now accepted!***

The contest is open and it's awesome. Here's why students in Grades 3 through 8 should enter:

### **Winning students get:**

The opportunity to be a published author!

Their name in lights on the State Assembly floor and a tour of the capitol!

An e-reader!

All-expense paid trip to the state capitol for the *Imagine this...* Ceremony. Parents and teacher included!

**Deadline: November 1!**



**SUBMIT STORIES HERE!**



## **Teacher Feature**

**Eco-Lab Team**  
**Jennifer Kinloch**  
**Stephen Kinloch**  
**Leslie Ashby**

**Grade Taught: 6**  
**School:**  
**Ridgeview Elementary**  
**County: Placer**

**Let's start with the basics: What is your favorite California commodity?**

Peppers! So many





varieties, colors, and sizes. We can use them to teach about genetic variation, plant reproduction, thermal energy transfer, and taking and analyzing data. Students LOVE our beginning of the year "salsa day." Students get to pick produce from the lab to make their own salsa! They then compare store bought salsa to their fresh salsa in hopes that they will prefer the fresh!

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

We learned about Ag in the Classroom at their booth at the California Science Education Conference, pre-Covid.

### **How long have you been teaching students about agriculture? Tell us about the Eco-Lab.**

We've been developing our outdoor Eco-Lab for about 8 years. This is an outdoor classroom where we bring science to life. Through the lab, students learn science while also connecting it to social studies, writing, reading, and math. The lab is fully funded through students bringing recycling to school, parent donations, and partnering with the community, and was built by students, teachers, and parents. We use lunchtime waste to feed our worm farms (vermicomposting) and fill our compost towers. Additionally, our year-long STEM project is constructing and revising a worm sifter to separate the castings from the worms. We control pests with partner plants instead of pesticides. Best of all, we have created science units based on the agriculture we grow in our lab.

### **What is your favorite AITC program, resource, or event and why?**

We really like the AITC website! It's filled with ideas, and we truly believe that if someone else has already figured it out, use it! It's also VERY energizing to see what others are doing who are as passionate about agriculture as we are!

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

Our favorite project is based on growing garlic. We research how ancient civilizations used garlic, we teach how garlic can be grown both asexually and sexually, and we take qualitative and quantitative data on our garlic over the course of the year to be displayed on a poster for open house. The poster is a statistical display of the data we collected. For a small donation, we also offer our harvested garlic as part of our open house fundraising event. Our 6th graders have also "buddied" with lower grade level students to incorporate measurement skills that they are learning in math.

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

Start small. You may not be able to get your whole grade level team on board at first, but when students, parents, and administrators start admiring your work, others will follow. Once you have your team on board, then the ideas really start flowing!

## **Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom?**

Our "Ag-ha" moment was actually a series of moments. Parents started telling us stories about how their child took what they learned through the Eco-Lab and built their own garden at home. Many students built their own worm farms at home, and they used the worm sifter they created for their STEM project to maintain it. Best of all, parents have shared how their once "veggie-phobic" children started trying fresh produce at home, even asking for it!

[BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!](#)



## **Featured Resource**

### **Engineering for All!**



Engineering is Elementary, the curriculum division of the Museum of Science, Boston, has launched a new website for K–5 students and their families.

The website features a combination of interactive read-alouds, animations, and activities to engage students in the engineering design process at-home and on-the-go. Many scenarios feature agricultural themes and concepts, including designing a bug trap, creating a system to transport peppers, and devising a way to keep tomato plants watered while on vacation.

Each activity includes a downloadable PDF with pages and prompts to guide students through each step of the engineering design process. In addition, the website features information to support teachers interested in hosting a family science or STEM event at their school or in the community.

[CHECK OUT THE RESOURCE!](#)



## **Grant Feature**

### **Bee Grants**

In partnership with the Bee Cause Project, the Whole Kids Foundation's Bee Grants are

now open. These grant programs support schools and non-profit organizations by offering educational beehives and bee programming. Students can observe bees up close and learn about the vital role these pollinators play in our food system.

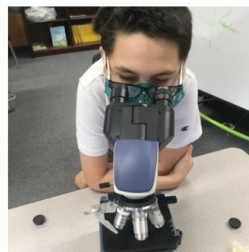
**Deadline: October 15!**



**LEARN MORE**



More Ways to LearnAboutAg



## Literacy for Life

Literacy for Life grants, sponsored by the Oreggia Family Foundation, are designed to initiate new projects or expand existing projects that promote agricultural literacy. Grants of up to \$500 are provided to California educators to support the integration of agriculture into regular classroom instruction. Explore the list of project ideas and read how recipients have used this grant in the past [HERE!](#)

**Deadline: October 1!**

**APPLY FOR GRANT**



Community Events

## For Educators

[Santa Barbara County Farm Day](#)

Santa Barbara County farms, ranches,

**September 17, 2022**

and agricultural organizations will open their doors and invite the public to experience a day of agricultural activities and tours during the 4th Annual Santa Barbara County Farm Day, presented by [SEEAG](#). See more [HERE](#).

**[California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference](#)**

Ventura, California

**September 22-24, 2022**

Collaborate with educators who share your passion for agriculture! The conference is designed for K-12 educators, administrators, and volunteers to come together to learn and share how to incorporate food and fiber into all curricular areas! More details and registration information found [HERE](#).

**[2022 California STEAM Symposium](#)**

Anaheim, CA

**October 1-2, 2022**

The Symposium will provide a space for exploring equity in STEAM learning, particularly for underrepresented populations that the Symposium seeks to grow in STEAM. Register [HERE](#).

**[San Diego Ag in the Classroom Teacher Resource Fair](#)**

San Diego, CA

**October 4, 2022**

The 8th San Diego Ag In The Classroom Teacher Resource Fair, aka the Food and Flower Happy Hour is October 4, 2022 at the San Diego Botanic Garden. This is a fun and educational event geared toward teachers and adult volunteers who work with children. The main purpose is to share information with educators about the community impact and diversity of San Diego agriculture, and how the teaching of agriculture can enrich children's educational experiences. Register [HERE](#).

## For Students

**[Imagine this...Story Writing Contest](#)**

3-8 grade students statewide

**Submission deadline: November 1, 2022**

California students in Grades 3-8 creatively explore where their food comes from by writing narratives. The winning stories from each grade are illustrated by high school art students and published in our annual story book, *Imagine this...* Stories Inspired by Agriculture. More information [HERE](#).

**[Conservation Education Speak-Off](#)**

San Diego County

**Submission deadline: September 28, 2022**

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts hosts an annual Conservation Education Speak-Off – a speech competition for high school students, addressing a specific topic relating to conservation. This year's topic is "How does the long-term California drought affect your region? What can local Resource Conservation Districts do to help?" This is an opportunity for students to gain valuable experience in public speaking, while supporting conservation. More information [HERE](#).



### Purple Plow Challenge

Online

**Fall 2022**

Students can help conserve natural resources locally and protect local ecosystems by addressing current and historical problems associated with the erosion of topsoil that limits the ability to grow food. After thoughtful research to evaluate how these challenges exist globally and locally, students will design, test, and demonstrate a solution that reduces topsoil erosion for their unique location or situation to help conserve productive soil. The final product will be a model which demonstrates a measurable reduction in soil erosion. More information [HERE](#).

### Yuba-Sutter Farm Day

Yuba Sutter Fairgrounds, Yuba City

**September 30**

Farm Day, sponsored by the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau and Yuba-Sutter Fair is an annual event for third-grade students, teachers, and parents. Held at the Yuba-Sutter Fairgrounds, Farm Day provides educational exhibits (equipment, livestock, and crops) and demonstrations geared towards teaching students the importance of agriculture. More information [HERE](#).

### Forestry Challenge

**Shasta: September 28 - October 1**

**Santa Cruz: October 12 - 15**

**El Dorado: October 26 - 29**

**San Bernardino: November 9 - 12**

The Forestry Challenge is an academic event for high school students in technical forestry and current forestry topics. Participants spend four days in the forest learning about the ecology and management of the forested landscapes that provide communities with water, recreational opportunities, wood products, and wildlife habitat. Youth benefit by better understanding the relationship of the forested environment to their community, by exposure to natural resource management as a potential career option, and by undertaking a rigorous critical thinking exercise which is timely and addresses current forestry topics such as wildfire, insects, and forest health. More information found [HERE](#).



### **Show Your Support for Agricultural Literacy**

Help us continue providing FREE programs and materials that create an awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students.

**MAKE A  
GIFT  
TODAY!**

**Stay Connected! @LearnAboutAg**



