

CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

Fantastic Fact:

It takes the energy from 50 leaves to produce one apple!



Imagine this...

STORY WRITING CONTEST

NEW!

Online submissions are now accepted!

You read that right! The *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest is now accepting online submissions. The mail-in option is still available, but students now have another way to get their stories straight to us.

Encourage your students to enter. Here's the scoop behind the exciting contest:

Who: All California students, grades 3-8 are eligible.

What: Students write stories (real or imagined) based on accurate information about California agriculture. High school students illustrate the winning stories, which are then published into a book. The contest meets Common Core State Standards (W.3-8.2,3)

Why: The list is endless. Below is a small sampling of why.

Winning students get:

1. The opportunity to be a published author
2. Their name in lights on the State Assembly floor and a tour of the state capitol
3. An e-reader
4. An all-expense paid trip to the state capitol for the *Imagine this...* Ceremony. Parents included
5. To see their story come alive as it is illustrated by high school art students

Winning teachers get:

1. A scholarship to attend the 2023 California Ag in the Classroom Conference

2. An all-expense paid trip to the state capitol for the *Imagine this...* Ceremony
3. Free resources for their classroom
4. The opportunity to see their student shine as a published author. Hear some of last year's winners reflect on *Imagine this...* in the video below.

Deadline: November 1!

SUBMIT STORIES HERE!



LearnAboutAg®

HEAR FROM LAST YEAR'S WINNERS!

Got 2-minutes?

Watch this short video on what it means to enter and win our story-writing contest!

Better yet?

Show your class or a student you know to inspire them to get writing and enter *Imagine this...*



Teacher Feature



Kristine Kuwano

Grade Taught: 3

School: De Vargas Elementary

County: Santa Clara

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

I love almonds and cherries. Does ice cream count?

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

I read about Ag in the Classroom in an education magazine. Since our project-based learning focused on farming, I looked into the awesome resources. I am so grateful I did. We've used so many of the Ag in the Classroom resources!

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I've been teaching about agriculture for at least 5-6 years. My mom grew up on a farm that my grandparents owned in the Sacramento area, and I've always had a great appreciation for our California farming industry.

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

I love that students can get their own copies of the [What's Growin' On? newspapers](#) to read and discover facts about agriculture. I also often use the [Map of California](#) with all of the different crop regions so students can see what different areas of California produce different commodities. This past year my students also loved the sunflower growing kits, and they compared the sunflower seed life cycle with other life cycles. Finally, we participated in California Virtual Farm Day and got to see commodities grown outside of our area, and then enjoyed the box of goodies, especially the fruit cups!

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

Our 2022 spring project-based learning driving question was: How can we, as California farmers, successfully plan for a variety of crops within a predetermined area? We kicked off our project-based learning by making a "farm to table" soup, and students brought in veggies to share. It got them thinking about where their food comes from. In farm groups, students planned out their plots of land by choosing only California crops. They used their knowledge of mathematical arrays, and researched California crops to try to yield a high-profit margin and have harvests in multiple seasons. We went on a field trip and visited a local farm. After coming up with a final draft on paper, they recreated their farm layout in Minecraft. Finally, they created an informational display board and Google Slide presentation and prepared a speech so they could present their ideas!

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

Make learning about agriculture fun and see how it can tie into standards. A special thank you to people such as the Peterson Farm Bros, who make fun and informational farm parody videos. We also learned a bit about Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta.

Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom?

We've had many "ag-ha" moments! Where we live, in the middle of Silicon Valley, we don't see farming on a day-to-day basis. It's so neat for students to learn and take pride in how we're one of the top agricultural producers of the world! They're also so excited to learn about the types of crops we grow and that our state exports so much. They have a better understanding of how and where crops grow in California, and when they go on road trips, they are excited to report back that they drove past huge farms! My students are also surprised by how much math is involved with planting crops and maximizing space to utilize the land.

A very special thank you for all of the resources to support students learning about California agriculture!

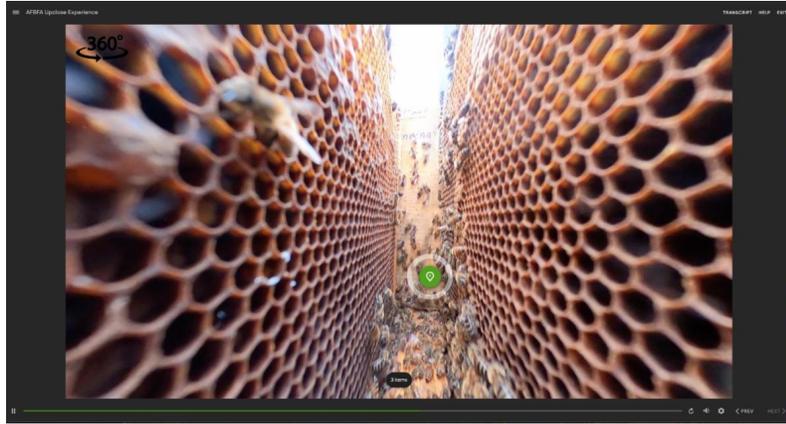
BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



Inside the Hive!

Honeybees play an important role in agriculture and our daily lives. If you've ever had a bee fly into your classroom, you know that many

children would prefer NOT to see a beehive up close. The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture has created a 360 interactive video that invites students of all ages to look inside a beehive. It's all the excitement without the chance of a sting! Be sure to check out their related educational resources, which include books, online courses, and student magazines.



[CHECK OUT THE RESOURCE!](#)



Grant Feature

Green Our Planet Garden Opportunity

Green Our Planet is currently offering grants for their Next Generation Science Standards-aligned school Hydroponics and GardenConnect programs this fall.

Both of these grant opportunities are open to public, private, and charter schools located in the United States.

Green Our Planet is accepting applications on a rolling basis until all grants are awarded.



[LEARN MORE](#)



Community Events

For Educators

[National School Lunch Week](#)
October 10-14, 2022

During National School Lunch Week school districts and organizations throughout the country will celebrate the vital role school lunch programs play in nourishing students. The week is dedicated to encouraging participation in school lunch programs and sharing the positive impact a healthy school lunch can have on a child's life. Join the celebration and spread awareness of the importance of school lunch programs by using resources from The Dairy Council of California's National School Lunch Week Toolkit [HERE.](#)

[Apple Orchard Virtual Field Trip](#)
October 13, 2022
10:00 am Central Time

Join Minnesota Ag in the Classroom for a virtual field trip through an apple orchard. John Jacobson, owner of Pine Tree Apple Orchard, will show the many tools and strategies used for growing apples including irrigation, insect and pest control, and more! Discover how the different apple varieties are grown, harvested, sorted, and made available to all. The target audience is K-5th grade students. Register [HERE.](#)

[Global Fertilizer Day](#)
[Student Career Webinar](#)
October 13, 2022
11 AM - 2 PM Eastern Time

Geared towards middle and high school students, this event through Nutrients for Life, offers a glimpse into the importance of crop nutrients and their role in feeding the world as well as new potential career interests. The schedule includes 20 to 30-minute segments which are guided by a live host. Each segment includes an overview of the career discussed followed by a live Q&A session where you and your students can ask questions. Register your class [HERE.](#)

[School Garden Support Organization](#)
[Network Webinar](#)
October 19, 2022
11 AM

School Garden Support Organization Network (SGSO) is hosting an hour webinar centered around bite-sized 5-minute Lightning Talks, each diving into a variety of school garden programming topics. After each talk, there will be reflection time to integrate the information and time at the end for questions. Register [HERE.](#)

[Ventura County Farm Day](#)
November 5, 2022
10 AM - 3 PM

On Saturday, November 5, more than 15 Ventura County farms, ranches and agricultural organizations will invite the public to experience a day of free agricultural activities and tours during the 10th Annual Ventura County Farm Day. This year's theme is "Meet All The Hands That Feed You." Visitors can map out their day by viewing the Farm Day Trail Map. Each site offers tours and produce and other giveaways. Get more information [HERE.](#)

[2023 Sacramento Regional Stem Fair Accepting Registration Applications](#)

Sacramento, CA

Applications to enter due: November 18, 2022

The 2023 Sacramento Regional STEM Fair is now accepting registration applications. Registration must be complete before any experimentation, to ensure your project can be reviewed by the Scientific Review Committee (SRC) and your project can be approved for competition. Get more information [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.](#)

[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.](#)

[Forestry Challenge](#)

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 interested in forestry. 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. Students benefit by gaining a 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.](#)

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

GIFT
TODAY!

Stay Connected! @LearnAboutAg

