

CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

Fantastic Fact:

California produces more than 2 billion pounds of table grapes each year!



[2023 Literacy for Life Grant Recipients.](#)

Congratulations Literacy for Life Grant Recipients

Envelope please...

We are thrilled to announce Carrie Robertson, 6-8th grade teacher at Paul Revere Middle School in Los Angeles, as our Outstanding Educator of the Year!

Additionally, twenty-four educators were awarded Literacy for Life Grants. Read how the winners will incorporate agriculture into their classrooms here: [2022-](#)



Taste and Teach

Classrooms across California keep getting tastier!

Taste and Teach, sponsored by Raley's, Stater Brothers, and California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, awarded 350 teachers throughout the state in this exciting program.

Every month a new California commodity is highlighted. Teachers received a binder full of helpful resources, including instructions on

how to lead students in a taste test while meeting California Academic Standards as well as a gift card to purchase the specific commodities.



TASTE AND TEACH ONLINE RESOURCES



Teacher Feature



Alexandra Pease

Grade Taught: 9 - 12
School: Florin High School
County: Sacramento

Let's start with the

basics: What is your favorite California commodity?

I have many favorite California commodities. At the top of my list are fresh tomatoes, peaches, and strawberries that are easy to pick up at the local farmer's markets in the spring, summer, and fall. It is a true gift to be able to get fresh produce straight from the source. It's one of the reasons I love living in the Sacramento area.

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

I first learned about Ag in the Classroom from one of my former co-workers. She had worked on the illustrated stories for the *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest for years and approached me to see if I would be interested. I was highly interested and excited to start on this project! Every year it is something I look forward to

sharing with my students in my classroom.

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

As a teacher who grew up in California, I believe that agriculture is an important topic to teach in the classroom since it is a large part of our state's economy. In my classroom, I have incorporated agriculture in my lessons since I started teaching 12 years ago in the Central Valley and continue now in Sacramento. It has always been a large part of the culture at the school I have taught at throughout the years.

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

My favorite program is the *Imagine this...* Story Writing contest. This gives my students a chance to be published illustrators! I love going to Ag Day at the Capitol for the celebration and commencement where the student authors and illustrators finally meet. Seeing the authors read over the illustrations and all the students receiving accolades for their hard work is one of my favorite parts of the release of the printed book.

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

The last agriculture-based project I did was a study of plant botany and a close observation study of the plant. It is important that students understand how plants grow and are able to focus on the anatomy and structure of plants.

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

My advice to other teachers on how to incorporate agriculture in the classroom is simply apply real-life lessons. It is important to give students many opportunities to interact with topics that can lead to careers, community participation, and life skills. I incorporate agriculture in my art classroom easily with careers and industry-based curriculum (food, fiber, and floral). We have an amazing FFA program at our school and we try our best to communicate with each other and create cross-curricular lessons.

Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom? Where agriculture came alive for your students?

Many of our students get to participate in our Agriculture Academy here at Florin High School. We have goats, birds, and rabbits on campus. Students love to interact and draw our animals. Our illustrators get really excited to learn about new aspects of agriculture and then apply what they learned as illustrators for the *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest winning stories. I love that they get excited to learn about agriculture and the processes behind many of the common goods that we need to live our everyday lives.

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



New Video Series Features Advancements in Agriculture

Robots, drones, and lasers...oh my! Western Growers has produced a new series of one-minute videos highlighting the newest technology in agriculture. From flying autonomous robots working alongside harvest crews to AI-directed blades and lasers that zap weeds with ruthless efficiency, the next generation of farmers have access to cutting-edge technologies that will help them meet the challenges of the future.



[CHECK OUT THE RESOURCE!](#)



Youth Garden Grant 2023 Now Open!

Since 1982, the Youth Garden Grant has supported school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for youth and their communities.

In early 2023, fifty organizations will be awarded \$500 in funding along with a collection of gardening supplies for their youth garden program.

Any organization planning a new or improving an existing garden program that serves at least 15 youth between the ages of 0 and 18 is eligible to apply.

Grant application deadline is December 2, 2022

[LEARN MORE](#)



For Educators

[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 host 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, 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.](#)

[Champions of Discovery Challenge](#) **Complete challenges by Wednesday, February 15, 2023**

Champions of Discovery Challenge offers an opportunity for teachers and students to track their journey of science explorations and celebrate their accomplishments by the end of the year. Throughout the school year, teachers and students explore six unique science related challenges. As they ask questions, collect data, and meet scientists from the community, sparks of curiosity lead to investigations, which lead to a greater understanding of the world. More Information [HERE.](#)

[Nominations for the "Let's Eat Healthy Annual Leadership Award"](#) **Deadline December 9, 2022**

The Dairy Council of California is accepting nominations for the 2023 Let's Eat Healthy Leadership Award. Nominees are individuals who serve as change-makers across California and are driven to activate solutions to address the nutritional needs of children, families and communities. More Information [HERE.](#)

For Students

[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

locally and globally, 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](#)

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 of 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](#).



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

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GIFT
TODAY!**

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