

CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

Fantastic Fact:

Peaches are grown in 41 states but California accounts for nearly 100% of the commercial production of cling peaches.

LAST CHANCE FOR THE EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

**Early bird registration
ends August 14!**

You won't want to miss
this.

We're hitting the Farm to
Fork Capital,
Sacramento, for our
[California Agriculture in
the Classroom
Conference](#).

This conference is
designed for PreK-12
educators,
administrators, and
volunteers to come
together to learn and
exchange ideas on
effectively integrating food and fiber into every facet of the curriculum.



Highlights will include:

- Farmer panel
- Author panel
- Field trips to see agriculture in action
- Interactive Make 'N Take sessions
- Exciting guest speakers
- Farm to Fork Festival

Passionate about presenting?

We have opportunities for workshop and Make 'N take presenters, see registration link, below, for more information.

Early Bird Special Registration: \$310

After August 15 Registration: \$350



WHO WANTS TO TASTE AND TEACH?

☐ Exciting news! ☐

Classrooms just got tastier. Taste and teach your way through the school year with our Taste and Teach program.

Each month, educators and students explore a different California commodity. Educators receive a binder full of resources, lessons, activities, and ideas centered around the month's specific commodity, and a one-time \$100 gift card to Raley's, Bel Air Markets, Nob Hill or Stater Brother's grocery

stores to purchase California grown commodities for tasting.

Learn more about the Taste and Teach program and submit your application below.

Deadline: August 21, 2023

APPLY TO TASTE AND TEACH PROGRAM



WATERMELON WISDOM

See that spot? It's a good thing. Called a "field spot" this marking often indicates that a watermelon has spent enough time on the vine to get ripe, ready, and certainly sweet.

Find additional watermelon tips (what's that knocking on a watermelon all about?) [on our social media!](#)

P.S. National Watermelon Day is August 13th!





Aimee Snell

School: Delta Charter High School

Agriculture Teacher

County: San Joaquin

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

Oranges! One orange tree can produce up to 200 pounds of oranges each year which is incredible. Growing up, my grandmother had an orange tree in her backyard that I would pick with her every year. Now, oranges remind me of home.

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I have been teaching students about agriculture for the past two years.

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

I recognized the need for hands-on opportunities for students to learn about agriculture. Our school farm had an existing hen house that had not been used in some time, which gave me the idea to start a small-scale egg layer operation with the intention of providing a zero cost Supervised Agriculture Experience project for students. I also integrated the project into the classroom as part of our curriculum. We first incubated and hatched fertilized chicken eggs (donated from the local community college). While the eggs were incubating, students learned about the development of the egg, cleaned and prepared the hen house, as well as prepared a brooder area in the classroom for newly hatched chicks. Many students loved this project and by project completion, even the uninterested students became totally invested! As an educator, it was a wonderful experience to watch students who had no idea about the agriculture industry be present and engaged in this project. Students learned about an agriculture commodity from start to finish and will continue to learn through the operation of the small egg layer flock. This egg layer project can now be used in all agriculture classes including veterinary science and biology. This project also brought the local community together, by the selling of the eggs and teaching younger students at our campus preschool about eggs.

Do you have any advice for other teachers on how to implement agriculture

into their classrooms?

My advice would be to first identify a need, identify an area of interest of your students, then identify an area of interest for yourself. If you bring a component of agriculture into your classroom that you are also passionate about, your students will feel that passion which creates a more enjoyable lesson. Whether it be incubating and hatching eggs in the classroom, going on a nature walk at school to identify different types of plants, growing a small garden, or even having a small aquaponics tank in the classroom, find something that will provide an engaging and hands-on opportunity to learn.

My students truly enjoyed when they were able to work with their hands. It provides them a sense of ownership, "This is mine, I made this, I did this, I can do this." Many students come into class and ask me, "What are we making today Mrs. Snell?" "Do we get to work with the chickens today?" "Did my terrarium survive the weekend?" This truly connects them to the concepts being taught and provides a greater understanding of the vital industry that feeds them and their families. Students get to learn what makes their world go round.

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

The day our incubated eggs hatched, there were many ag-ha moments in my classroom! For a few students, this was their first interaction with an animal other than a cat or dog. For one student, she had never even held a puppy until I had brought mine in for a veterinary science lesson. Once the chicks hatched many students asked which ones were males and which were females. "How can you tell what they are Mrs. Snell?" I simply said they will have to wait for what I had planned the next day to find out! I had brought in a friend of mine who was a manager at Foster Farms to teach the students how to feather sex the day-old chicks and speak to them about the production side of raising hens for eggs. Seeing their eyes widen and their excitement when they correctly sexed a chick by taking a look at its feathers, was amazing. Students were in my classroom at lunch still asking questions and holding the chicks. The best moment was a student saying, "I didn't know any of this, but it makes so much sense now."

Many people think you just go to the store to buy eggs and do not realize all the work that goes into getting those eggs to the grocery store. It is truly heartwarming to watch these ag-ha moments and agriculture come alive for students, either for the first time or in a new way. These Ag-ha moments are why I chose this truly unique and rewarding profession.

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



Featured Resource

ALL ABOARD!

Calling all history buffs and agriculture enthusiasts.

Step into the captivating world of California's agricultural past with our [Tracking the History of California Agriculture](#) interactive timeline.



Journey back to the monumental development of the Transcontinental Railroad, a turning point that propelled California to agricultural greatness. From the Gold Rush to today's thriving orchards and vineyards, our timeline highlights key moments that have made California the agricultural powerhouse it is today.

Teachers, this isn't just another history lesson; it's an interactive adventure! Invite your students to explore engaging content and captivating visuals on our website, below.

FIND THE RESOURCE HERE!



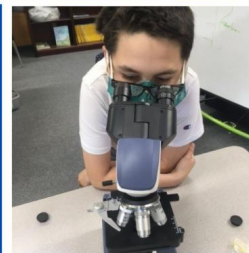
Grant Feature

LITERACY FOR LIFE GRANTS

Eager to start a new project-or expand on an existing one? Apply for the [Literacy for Life Grant](#).

Grants of up to \$500 are provided to California educators to support the integration of agriculture into regular classroom instruction.

Deadline: October 2, 2023





Community Events

[CA Ag in the Classroom Conference](#)

September 22-24, 2023

Sacramento, CA

From Farm to Fork Festival fun to incredible field trips and guest speakers, we are planning a conference to remember. Join us in the Golden State's capitol region in September! Register [HERE](#).

[American Farm Bureau Educator Experience](#)

Salt Lake City, Utah

Application deadline: August 18, 2023

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture (AFBFA) and Nationwide have teamed up to bring educators to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Convention **January 19-22, 2024**, for an immersive educational experience. Located in Salt Lake City, Utah, participants will experience local agriculture through tours, workshops, networking and more. Apply [HERE](#).

[Life Lab Growing Classroom Workshop](#)

August 24-25

Designed for K-6 classroom teachers and educators, Life Lab (located on the UC Santa Cruz campus) has recently opened registration for their "Growing Classroom" workshop. Attendees learn how gardens breathe life into standards-based lessons, promote ecological literacy, inspire a love of nourishing foods, and support students' social development. Register [HERE](#).

[Forestry Challenge](#)

Shasta Forestry Challenge
September 27 to 30

Santa Cruz Forestry Challenge -
October 11 to 14

El Dorado Forestry Challenge
October 25 to 28

San Bernardino Forestry Challenge
Session 1 - November 8 to 11

San Bernardino Forestry Challenge
Session 2 - November 15 to 18

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. Find out more [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.

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TODAY!

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