

October 2024



CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

FANTASTIC FACT

The size of a pumpkin depends on water, temperature, insects, diseases, pollination, fertility, soil type, plant population, and weeds.



IMAGINE THIS... STORY WRITING CONTEST

Calling all California students (grades 3-8), our annual story writing contest is open and accepting

submissions.

This contest entails students writing stories (real or imagined) based on accurate information about California agriculture. One winning author is selected from each grade (3-8). These students will travel to the State Capitol in March of 2025 to be recognized and celebrated during National Agriculture Week.

Winning students get:

1. To be a published author!
2. Their name in lights on the State Assembly floor and a tour of the State Capitol
3. Travel expense voucher of \$200
4. The opportunity to see their story come to life, as illustrated by high school art students
5. **NEW!** Take home a large poster of their story's cover page

Deadline: November 1

[SUBMIT STORIES HERE!](#)



LearnAboutAg®



HEAR FROM LAST YEAR'S WINNERS

Do you have a minute? Well, 1:46 to be exact. Check out the above video for inspiration from last year's Imagine this... Story Contest winners. Show the video to your class or a student you know and encourage them to enter the contest.



CONFERENCE RECAP

Oh, the places we went!

The 37th annual AITC Conference, held in Costa Mesa, brought together teachers, educators, industry leaders, and agriculture enthusiasts.

From workshops and hands-on Make N' Take sessions to field trips and the informative agriculture and tech panel, the event, spanning three days, inspired participants to incorporate agriculture education straight into their classrooms.

Orange County Farm Bureau, The Wonderful Company, Tanaka Farms, and Centennial Farm helped make this event possible.

Pencil in the date! Next year's conference will be held in the Sacramento region in late September 2025.

Teacher Feature



MOLLY WONG

Teaches:
TK

School:
Stonegate Elementary
West Sacramento, CA

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

My favorite California commodity is almonds. Or maybe it's kale because I LOVE kale. But also, I love grapes and tomatoes. It's hard to choose... ok, I'll stick with almonds!

What is your favorite way to eat/prepare that commodity?

I love to eat almonds raw, roasted, salted, and in things like granola. I also use almond flour when I bake things like superhero muffins and other gluten-free baked goods. More importantly, though, I am allergic to dairy milk, so almond milk makes a nice replacement since I can't have the real deal.

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I have always enjoyed teaching my TK students about gardening, but I recently used the new [Life on the Farm curriculum](#) that Ag in the Classroom developed.

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

Life on the Farm because it has so many resources embedded and teaches students that agriculture is more than just Old MacDonald and his farm animals!

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

Bring agriculture into your classroom in little bits at a time. If you have a garden at school, utilize that to give students a hands-on lesson in agriculture. You can grow things easily with a cup, soil, water, and seeds. Start small and see how their curiosity grows!

Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom?

The Life on the Farm curriculum has a lesson on making a hamburger. We explored each component of a hamburger -- the lettuce, pickles, ketchup, meat, and bun -- and asked students where those components came from, before the store. This discussion was eye-opening and led to conversations about where snacks or school lunches come from. The learning didn't stop with the lesson but continued once we had opened up the topic.

What's your secret sauce to make your students interested in agriculture?

Let them get their hands dirty (even if you don't like to -- and I say that from experience).

Why should teachers bring agriculture into their classrooms?

Agriculture is part of life, a necessity. The more students learn about agriculture and the things that grow us, the more invested in their future they can become. Farming is hard work, and we need to plant "idea seeds" early because you never know who might want to grow our food in the future!

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



Featured Resource

JOURNEY 2050

How do you feed a growing population?



Journey 2050 is a FREE agriculture education program that challenges participants to answer the question, "How will we sustainably feed nearly 10 billion people by the year 2050?"

The year 2050 is a key moment in time – the world's population will be a projected 10 billion! As a result, food production needs are

expected to rise by 60-70%, and changing agronomic conditions will place pressure on agricultural yields.

Using an inquiry-based approach, this gamified, virtual program encourages students to make decisions and adjust them as they see their impact on society, the environment, and the economy at a local and global scale. Students hear from farmers across the globe, learning about their experiences to understand how agriculture differs geographically.

CHECK OUT THE RESOURCE

Grant Feature

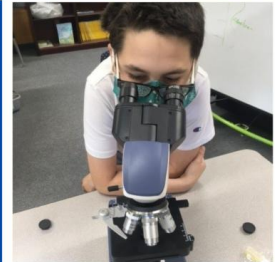
DON'T MISS OUT!

"Who doesn't want \$750 for their classroom?" asked our Educator of the Year, Kevin Jordan.

We couldn't agree more! Literacy for Life Grants are open and it's easy to apply.

Applications are due this Friday, October 4!

Grants of up to \$750 are provided to California PreK-12 educators to support the integration of agriculture into regular classroom instruction.



Literacy for Life grants, sponsored by the Oreggia Family Foundation, are designed to help initiate

new projects or expand existing ones that promote agricultural literacy.

APPLY HERE

Community Events

[National School Lunch Week](#) October 14-18, 2024

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. More information [HERE](#).

[The Whole Vine Festival](#) October 19-20, 2024 Fresno State

The Whole Vine Festival offers the opportunity to taste, learn, and experience everything that makes the San Joaquin Valley unique – from the sweetest table grapes and raisins-nature candy to the most complex and nuanced wines. More information [HERE](#).

[Imagine this...Story Writing Contest](#) 3-8 grade students statewide Submission deadline: November 1, 2024

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 storybook, Imagine this... Stories Inspired by Agriculture. More information [HERE](#).

[California Science Education Conference](#) November 8-10 Sacramento, CA

The California Science Foundation Education Conference aims to ignite curiosity, inspire discovery, and illuminate minds. From dynamic workshops to engaging presentations, this conference is your gateway to cutting-edge teaching strategies, hands-on activities, and invaluable networking opportunities. Ag in the Classroom will be in attendance, be sure to visit our booth. More information [HERE](#).

[Ventura County Farm Day](#) November 12, 2024

More than 15 Ventura County farms, ranches, and agricultural organizations will open their doors to invite the public to experience a day of agricultural activities and tours during the 12th Annual Ventura County Farm Day. More information [HERE](#).

[California School Nutrition Association
Conference](#)

November 13-16, 2024
Sacramento, CA

The CSNA Annual Conference focuses on school nutrition education and personnel. More information [HERE](#).

[National Agriculture in the Classroom White-Reinhardt Scholarship](#)

Deadline: December 2, 2024

This scholarship program provides registration and travel expense funds for educators to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, June 23-26, 2025, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Formal and informal educators are welcome to apply! Apply [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



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