

CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

Fantastic Fact:

Most states grow radishes, but California and Florida produce the biggest crops in the United States.



It's here! Introducing the newest [What's Growin' On?](#) student newspaper.

This year's theme "Imagine Your Future in Agriculture" allows students to explore the many different career paths and fields within the vast world of California agriculture. The resource is full of activities, information, ideas and new ways to teach and learn about agriculture in the Golden State.

Order your FREE classroom set today.

ORDER WHAT'S GROWIN' ON?



FEBRUARY

- ♥ **Register** now for Virtual Farm Day on February 27, 2025
- ♥ **Explore** seasonal California commodities: leafy greens, radishes, avocados and cut flowers!
- ♥ **Save the date** for the Ag in the Classroom Conference in Sacramento, September 26-28, 2025



Registration is Open

Join us for an extraordinary virtual journey into California agriculture with California Farm Day.

Agriculture is more than tending crops and milking cows. Agriculture thrives on a diverse network of scientists, growers, mechanics, markets, educators...and many more who all play a role in getting California's 400 commodities from farm, field, or forest to you.

Through a mix of pre-recorded segments and live interactive hosts, classrooms will explore what it means to work in the wide and wonderful world of agriculture.

Our newest edition of the "What's Growin' On?" student newspaper with the theme of "Imagine your Future in Agriculture" will act as a guide for our Farm Day adventures.

Two programs, tailored to different grade levels, are available.

Register below:

[PreK-5th grade program: 10 am -11 am, February 27, 2025](#)

[6th grade-12th grade program: 1 pm - 2 pm, February 27, 2025](#)



Teacher Feature



“We visit local farms, interview farmers and gain insight to the life of a local agricultural hero.”

Katie Kidder
6th Grade Teacher
Dunham School
Petaluma, CA



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

Tomatoes!

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

Sliced with basil, garlic, olive oil, and fresh mozzarella.

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I've been teaching students about agriculture for two years.

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

For me, it's the Ag in the Classroom Conference. This is truly one of the most informative and inspiring events with so many incredible resources for teachers to bring back to school and immediately start using.

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

Talk to your students. Find out what parts of agriculture they are most connected to. That conversation usually creates incredible connections for students. Students start to realize that the grocery store isn't where their milk and eggs come from. How can we dig into their current knowledge or experiences to build their understanding of agriculture within our world?

Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom?

Yes, we created a school wide composting program to reduce lunch waste at our school. Once my students and I got started analyzing data and collecting compostables, we realized how easy it was to implement school wide. Thank you to Ag in the Classroom for the grant to support this project! It provided us with materials as well as two new compost tumblers!

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

We live in Sonoma County, which is somewhat of an agricultural hub. Teaching agriculture creates real life connections for my students to the community in which they live. We visit local farms, interview farmers and gain insight to the life of a local agricultural hero. Students are able to understand that the milk, fruit, veggies, or meat that they have at home comes from the family of a classmate, or one of the many local farms in our area.


Why should teachers bring agriculture into their classrooms?

Teaching agriculture gives our students a better understanding of the world in which they live. It also fosters critical skills in science, technology, and problem-solving. Educating students about agriculture connects them to the land and prepares them for future challenges in food production and conservation.

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



Featured Resource

Cut Flower Activity Sheet	
<p>Line Flowers tulips, lilies, ranunculus, delphinium, gerbera, daisy, yellow</p>	<p>Filler Flowers baby's breath, Queen Anne's lace, statice, aster</p>
<p>Mass Flowers rose, carnation, gerbera, lily, iris, zinnia</p>	<p>Foliage holly, eucalyptus, salal, myrtle, holly</p>
	
Beautiful Bouquet	
<p>Lesson Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Invite a floral designer to visit your classroom to teach about floral arranging and discuss the wide variety of career opportunities in the floral industry.Press flowers in waxed paper. Use the flowers to create a toadly book, labeling each flower with its common and scientific name.Create a manual illustrating the steps of cut flower pollination, fertilization, and reproduction.Research the Fibonacci sequence and determine how the sequence relates to cut flowers.Look at a variety of flowers. Categorize them as line, mass, or filler flowers. Sort by color, smell, and shape.Grow flowers from bulbs or seeds.Color a white carnation using food color in water to learn about capillary action.Dissect a flower and identify its parts.Experiment with different liquids to determine their effect on flower freshness.Visit a commercial greenhouse or nursery to learn how cut flowers are produced.	<p>Fantastic Facts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Mass, line, foliage, and filler flowers are the four categories of flowers used in a bouquet.February, April, May, and December have the greatest number of cut flower sales because Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, and Christmas fall in these months.One-third of flowers are shipped to floral retailers and wholesalers by air and two-thirds by truck.Besides holidays, flowers are purchased to express emotion or send "get well" wishes.The main expense in cut flower production is labor costs. It requires up to 12 workers per acre.Cut flower production is just one part of the floriculture industry.Theodore Shepard, a Ventura housewife, is considered the founder of the cut flower industry.
<p>Lesson Plan: Make Your Own Potpourri</p> <p>Introduction: Potpourri is a mixture of dried, naturally fragrant plant material, used to provide a subtle, natural scent in homes.</p> <p>Objective: Students will compare flowers based on texture, color, and scent. They will use ratios to mix a potpourri recipe.</p> <p>California Standards: CC Math: 6.RP.1, 7.RP.2; Visual Arts: 3-4, Artistic Perception 1.5</p> <p>Materials: Fresh flower petals and herbs, citrus peels, large cardboard sheet, paper towels, large bowl, large jar with lid, cinnamon (sticks or powder), a variety of scented oils.</p> <p>Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Students will sort plant material into groups based on a chosen trait: color, texture, or shape.Using a mathematical ratio, students choose a specific number of items from each of their sorted groups. Have them create a table to show the ratio relationship they used.Cover a piece of cardboard with paper towels. Spread the plant material on the cardboard and let dry for 2-3 weeks. Ruffling the mixture occasionally. Cover cardboard with paper towels.In large bowl, mix dried petals with all other ingredients except scented oil. Put a layer of mixture in the jar. Add 3-4 drops of scented oil. Continue to layer the mixture with the oil until the jar is full.Put lid on the jar and leave 1-2 weeks, shaking daily to mix.Finished potpourri can be used in gift baskets or to make sachets.	



California dominates the fresh cut flower market, ever wonder why? Hint: our Mediterranean climate doesn't hurt! Discover the colorful history of California's cut flower industry and get hand's on with fun activities in our Cut Flower Fact and Activity Sheet.

ORDER RESOURCE



GRANTS & AWARDS
2025 Nationwide Educator Resource Grant

The American Farm Bureau 2025 Educator Grant is open and accepting applications.

This grant provides educator packs which include the Book of the Year, *The Soil in Jackie's Garden*, an accompanying educator guide, and a set of 30 Soils Ag Mags for educational use.

All U.S. educators (including homeschoolers) may apply. Note: The Book of the Year is best suited for grades K-3.

Deadline: February 21, 2025

[LEARN MORE](#)



Ag Day is an annual celebration recognizing California's agricultural community by showcasing the bounty of crops and commodities produced in our state. It is also a day for farmers and ranchers to show their appreciation by bringing together state legislators, government leaders and the public for agricultural education.

Join us in celebration of California's agricultural excellence, with this year's theme of "Ag At Work: Cultivating Careers and Communities." With more than 300 distinct careers available in agriculture, "farmer" and "farmworker" are just the beginning. Drone pilots, irrigation tech, robotics, research, veterinary services... it's all in a day's work.

Ag Day is presented by CDFA along with partners California Women for Agriculture and the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

- 11:30 am - 1:30 pm – Booths open to the public
- 11:30 am – 12:00 pm - Welcome by CDFA Secretary Karen Ross, short program celebrating California agriculture



Calling All Presenters!

Help others bring agriculture into the classroom by sharing your knowledge at the AITC Conference this fall in Sacramento.

We are accepting submittals for workshop presentations and Make 'N' Take presentations (short hands-on activities, where participants get to make, then take, their creations).

[Workshop Presentation Form](#)

[Make 'N' Take Proposal Form](#)



**WE ARE
HIRING!**

OPEN POSITION: CURRICULUM DEVELOPER

Do you have a passion for agriculture literacy and education?

Be part of a team dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students. Ag in the Classroom is hiring a Curriculum Developer. The job description and application details are below.

APPLY HERE!



Community Events

[Sonoma County Ag Days](#)
March 11- 12, 2025

Sonoma County educators, bring your class to Ag Days at the Sonoma County Event Center at the Fairgrounds. See "Agriculture in Action" through interactive exhibits and demonstrations.

Kindergarten through 6th-grade students will have the opportunity to utilize their five senses to learn about the source of their food and fiber, visit with farm animals, and experience life on a farm. Students, teachers, and parents can talk with farmers and ranchers and learn how to work with the environment and natural resources to raise plants and animals.

Find more information [HERE](#).

[CTA Good Teaching Conference-South](#)

March 22 - March 24, 2025

Garden Grove, CA

The CTA Good Teaching Conferences support excellent teaching and learning practices for classroom teachers via peer-to-peer instruction. Find more information [HERE](#).

AITC will have an exhibit booth at the Northern California location.

Find more information on the Southern California event [HERE](#).

[Kern County Farm Day in the City](#)

March 19, 2025

8:30 am - 1:00 pm

Kern County event aimed at bridging the farm-to-table gap for 2nd – 4th-grade students. Students will experience exhibits ranging from livestock, and farm machinery, to various crops. Exhibitors are comprised of local farmers, ranchers, agricultural organizations, and high school FFA students who have a passion for agriculture education.

[Napa County Farm Bureau Ag Day](#)

March 20, 2025

Join the Napa County Farm Bureau Foundation and the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office along with dozens of Napa County's Agricultural leaders at the celebration of local agriculture. This is a FREE even. Napa County Farm Bureau Foundation's mission is to educate our community about the importance of agriculture to all of our lives. We supply teachers with California Public School Standards aligned lessons plans, school garden assistance, and much more.

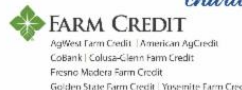
Find more information: [HERE](#)



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

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and students.

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