

CREAM OF THE CROP

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

Fantastic Fact:
Lettuce is a member of the sunflower family

CALIFORNIA FARM DAY



Over 31,000 students registered to "tune in" to our Virtual Farm Day!

Through a mix of pre-recorded segments and live interactive hosts, classrooms explored what it meant 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" guided our

Farm Day adventures.

Did you miss the show? Don't worry. California Farm Day is available on YouTube. Enjoy the 60-minute show in one watch or show it to your students in segments. Quizzes follow each segment to test newly gained agricultural knowledge.

Thank you to California Department of Food and Agriculture Cal-AgPlate Grant, J.R. Simplot Company and the Thornton and Katrina Glide Foundation for supporting this program. Thank you to presenting sponsor McDonald's, California & Nevada franchise owners.

We've collaborated with McDonald's to explore how California commodities go from farm to fork. More opportunities await. Email info@mcdclassroom.com or see the Farm Day link below, to inquire about the opportunity for a McDonald's franchise owner to visit your classroom.

CALIFORNIA FARM DAY



LearnAboutAg®



HELP US, HELP YOU!

Do you have a dream resource? Or a current Ag in the Classroom program that you can't live without? Or perhaps you want more STEM related activities...you get the picture. We want to hear from you!

Ag in the Classroom's top priority is increasing awareness and understanding of agriculture among CA teachers and students. Please complete a quick 5-minute survey to let us know how we can serve you best.

All survey participants are entered into a drawing to win a \$100 grocery gift card AND a hydroponic growing unit.

TAKE RESOURCE SURVEY



Teacher Feature

**“Start on a small scale
and, over time, you
will find it easier to
add more content and
activities into your
schedule.”**

Chris Lavagnino
4th Grade Teacher
Ronald Reagan Elementary
Chowchilla, CA



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

At the moment, my favorite California commodity is almonds. As a resident of the Central Valley, there are many points of access to this healthy and tasty treat

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

I am happy to eat almonds in almost any form that is available to me. The easiest is in natural form mixed with other tree nuts or within a bag of trail mix.

How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I have been actively teaching students about our state's agricultural heritage for nearly 15 years. As a 4th grade teacher, California history is our main focus for social studies - so it's easy to get excited over this topic.

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

My good friend Lance Omeje (now retired from Fresno Unified School District and working on a new ag-education project in Uganda) got me hooked with the simple "newspaper pot" making STEAM project and things just blossomed from there.

**Editor Note: Find this activity in the 6th edition of [What's Growin' On?](#) (page 13, lower left corner).*

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

I love the *What's Growin' On?* student newspaper because there's so much content and variety of topics each year. I'm also a bit biased because I have been lucky to have helped research and create recent editions with an amazing team of fellow educators, CFAITC staff, and talented artists.

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

Start on a small scale and, over time, you will find it easier to add more content and activities into your schedule. Some food for thought: a good place to begin is applying for the "Taste and Teach" program.

Any Ag-ha moments in your classroom?

When guest presenters from the community and other groups speak with my classes, I am always encouraged to see students focused on their talks. We recently had a McDonald's owner/operator come in and the kids just ate it up!

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

Honestly, it's about *who you know*. And what I mean by this is networking and going to the experts for advice and presentations. The CFAITC staff are wonderful people, willing and able to help in many ways to bring ag education to you. A simple e-mail will get the hay rolling!

Why should teachers bring agriculture into their classrooms?

It's more like why would you NOT do this? This is a great way to engage students with enquiries and research.

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



Featured Resource



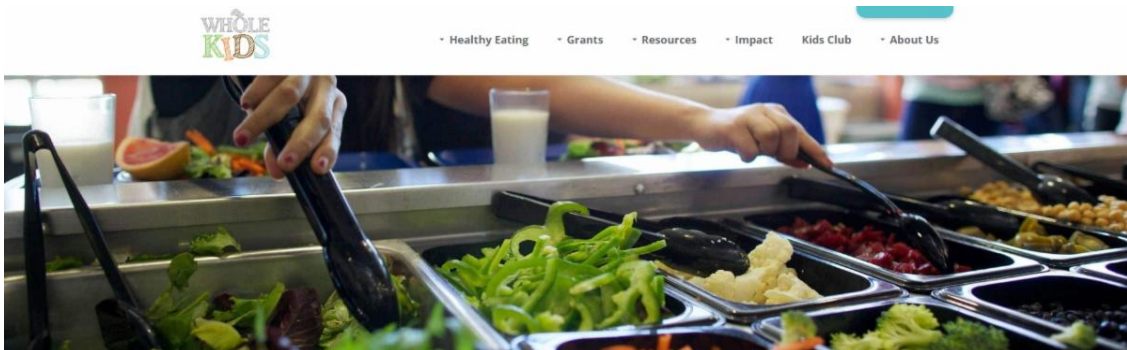
GET GARDENING!

Ag in the Classroom is proud to support school garden programs. Check out our garden-related resources for garden lesson ideas, a guide to starting your school garden, and more.

SCHOOL GARDEN RESOURCES



Grant Feature



SALAD BAR GRANT

A salad bar at school means kids have the choice of fresh vegetables and fruit for lunch throughout the school year.

Students with access to a salad bar in their school cafeteria not only put more fruits and veggies on their plates, but they also eat them!

The Salad Bars to Schools grant includes salad bar equipment and access to salad bar specific training modules available through Chef Ann Foundation's School Food Institute.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Community Events



California Agriculture Day at the Capitol: March 19, 2025.

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

- 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](#)

Curious about forestry and environmental education?

Outdoor Education for Educators!

Dive deep into key ecological and management issues facing California's forests at FIT's residential summer PD sessions!

Forestry Institute for Teachers

2025 FIT Summer Sessions

FIT is professional learning for all PK-12 California educators, including: formal and nonformal educators, program leads, administrators and curriculum specialists.

FIT's team of credentialed instructors and local experts weave environmental education with unique forestry field experiences to help you explore ecosystem stewardship for current and future generations.

Session	Location	Dates
El Dorado	Georgetown	June 15 - 21
Tuolumne	Sonora	June 22 - 28
Shasta	Shingletown	June 29 - July 5
Humboldt	Arcata	July 13 - 19

See website to learn more about sessions

Space is limited

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Visit forestryinstitute.org today!

Registration is open for the Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT) 2025 summer program.

Join fellow educators and natural resource professionals at one of FIT's immersive, week-long

professional learning sessions. FIT's teams of credentialed instructors and local experts weave environmental education curricula with unique forestry field experiences to help you explore forest stewardship for current and future generations. Expect an enriching week of outdoor learning that will expand your perspectives and teaching practice.

PreK-12+ educators (formal and nonformal) of any subject matter are encouraged to participate. Consider attending with colleagues from your school site or district to enrich your experience. Registration covers room, board, and materials.

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION



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](#).

[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](#)



Thank You Sponsors!



The James G. Boswell Foundation



ELIZABETH AND ROBERT RENIERS



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 DONATION TODAY!

Stay Connected! @LearnAboutAg



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