Appendix

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- History of the National AITC Movement
- California’s AITC History
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- CFAITC Educational Resource Committee
- CFAITC Programs and Resources
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Throughout much of the history of the United States, agriculture and education have been closely related. During the decades when most Americans lived on farms or in small towns, students often did farm chores before and after school. Indeed, the school year was determined by planting, cultivating, and harvesting schedules. Old school books are full of agricultural references and examples because farming and farm animals were a familiar part of nearly every child’s life.

In the 1920s, 30s and 40s, as the farm population shrank and agricultural emphasis decreased in school books and educational materials, educators focused on agriculture as an occupational specialty, rather than an integral part of every student’s life. Agriculture education was mainly offered to those few students wanting to make a career of agriculture.

In 1981, at the invitation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, representatives of agricultural groups and educators came to a meeting in Washington, D.C. to discuss agricultural literacy. A national task force was selected from this group. Representation came from agriculture, business, education, and government agencies, some of whom were already conducting educational programs in agriculture.

As a result, in 1981 the USDA established Ag in the Classroom, which has the endorsement of all living former Secretaries of Agriculture, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the National Conference of States Legislatures, most of the governors of the states, and major agriculture organizations and commodity groups. Significant progress has been made through these partnerships of agriculture, business, education, government and dedicated volunteers.

The strength of Ag in the Classroom comes from its grassroots organization and the fact that educators are very much a part of the movement. Giant strides have been made since 1981. Ag in the Classroom is regarded as a refreshing and flexible educational program designed to supplement and enhance the teacher’s existing curriculum.
The roots of the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom reach back to the 1980s when the program was operated through the California Farm Bureau Federation’s Agricultural Education Program. The Farm Bureau’s efforts began when San Francisco educators made a request to the Farm Bureau for an agricultural field trip. This simple request eventually led to the development of the San Francisco Farm Day in 1980, when 10 groups of agriculturists from as far away as Fresno traveled with their farm animals to San Francisco to teach 10,000 students about agriculture.

The demand for agriculture literacy grew rapidly and, in October of 1986, the California Farm Bureau established the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom to create an entity solely dedicated to improving the understanding of agriculture. The Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture among California’s educators and students. The Foundation’s vision is an appreciation of agriculture by all.

The Foundation is funded through voluntary donations from businesses, organizations, and individuals supportive of agricultural education. The Foundation’s fundraising efforts include benefit dinner events, an annual golf benefit, renewal and acquisition letter writing campaigns, and grant writing.

A major role of the Foundation is to serve as a liaison between the agriculture industry and education. Through an established network of educators serving as AITC Ambassadors, the Foundation directly provides teachers throughout the state with new and useful resource opportunities. The Foundation’s materials are also made available to County Farm Bureau Ag Education Committees and other agricultural education programs for use in local agricultural education projects and activities. The success of Ag in the Classroom comes from its grassroots efforts—local and statewide groups cooperating to benefit education and agriculture.

The Foundation works closely with its Educational Resource Committee (ERC) to ensure that educators receive sound, educational, high-quality and unbiased resources. The 100-member committee, made up of agriculturists and educators, meet one to two times per year. Subcommittees of the ERC review all materials before they are included in our programs.
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Teacher Resource Guide

The Teacher Resource Guide is a handy annual 130+ page reference listing materials to help educators infuse agriculturally-related activities and projects into their existing classroom curriculum. Many of the items are available at minimal or no cost. The guide itself is available in quantity for free to all California educators and others interested.

Commodity & Natural Resource Fact/Activity Sheets

California fact sheets include information on production, history, nutrition, top producing counties, and economic values. The activity sheets provide specific lesson ideas and fun facts for each topic. Commodities include almonds, artichokes, avocados, beef, citrus fruits, cling peaches, cut flowers, dairy, dried plums, dry beans, eggs, fresh carrots, pistachios, pears, processing tomatoes, rice, table grapes, strawberries, and walnuts. Natural Resource fact sheets are available on agricultural water, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and forest resources. Complete sets or individual sheets are free from the Foundation and can be downloaded from the Web.

Lesson Plans and Units

CFAITC lessons and units have been written, field-tested and reviewed by educators. Cooperative learning, individual and group problem solving, and critical thinking activities encourage students to “construct” their own knowledge about agricultural concepts while developing skills in science, mathematics, English/language arts, history/social science, health/nutrition and the visual and performing arts. Several recent revisions include correlations with current Content Standards for California Public Schools. Lessons are free for download or available in hard copy at cost.

Red Imported Fire Ants – Teacher Booklet (limited supply)

This 16-page booklet developed in 2001 provides facts and activities for teaching children about the Red Imported Fire Ant, a potentially dangerous and destructive insect to the people, animals, and plants of California. Developed in partnership with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and available for free from both agencies, this teacher guide includes student activities, safety tips and lesson ideas.
**Cream of the Crop Newsletter**

Over 42,500 copies are distributed twice annually to educators, Agriculture in the Classroom volunteers, and others interested in agriculture literacy. This eight-page newsletter is filled with AITC news, features and teacher resources. Contact CFAITC to be added to our mailing list at no cost.

**Ambassador Program**

An AITC Ambassador is a teacher/representative who has volunteered to act as a liaison between Ag in the Classroom (AITC), their local school(s) or other organizations. The Ambassador helps AITC distribute information about agricultural education programs and resources to others interested in learning more about agriculture literacy. This includes distributing *Cream of the Crop* newsletters and maintaining a resource file of materials provided by the Foundation and its sponsors.

**AITC Conference**

The annual statewide conference draws over 400 participants — both educators and volunteers in ag literacy. The goal is to underscore the value of exposing students to agriculture's worth in a non-agricultural society, and to provide tools for teaching about it at all grade levels. Participants receive bushels of resources and tons of ideas to help young people understand just how agriculture is linked to their lives. A strong emphasis is placed on infusing agriculture into existing curriculum to meet state content standards. Conference is held annually in October - location changes each year.

**What’s Growin’ on in California?**

This 16-page Newspapers in Education supplement is filled with activities for teachers and students and includes hot links to interactive Web sites, fun facts, and activities using math, science, history and language arts concepts all focusing on agriculture as a theme. A great resource for county Farm Bureaus and volunteer committees to share at county fairs, ag/farm day events, summer seminars and with schools in their county.
University Student Teacher Program

USTP workshops are offered at no cost to college credential programs and are designed to introduce student teachers to agriculture literacy and its many possibilities in today's classroom. Workshops provide examples of:

- Lesson plans with agricultural themes for subjects already being taught at elementary and secondary levels
- Classroom applications of ag awareness activities
- Teacher-developed, field-tested materials and lesson plans

A USTP Presenter can meet with a class of student teachers of any size for any length of time and presentations can be tailored to emphasize specific curricular focuses.

Imagine this... Story Writing Contest

Imagine this... a statewide story writing contest for children in grades 3-8, links agriculture and education in a way which supports both language and fine arts. Students write agriculturally-themed stories in one of three grade categories 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8 and submit them for regional selection. At the state level first and second place essays are selected from each regional winning category, but that's not the end of it!

The winning stories are distributed to Sacramento-area high school art departments, where students create illustrations for each story. They learn the art of animation and create the graphics used in the production of an Imagine this... video. High school students involved in dramatic arts personalize the stories by providing voices for the characters. The 40-minute video, when complete, features each winning story plus clips from interviews with the winning authors and their teachers and a behind the scenes look at the making of the video. The video is unveiled each year in March during National Agriculture Week at a celebration honoring the authors, artists, narrators, and their teachers.
County Support Services

The following is a summation of services and support that each county may utilize throughout the year while working on Agriculture in the Classroom projects and activities. Please contact the Foundation any time we can be of assistance.

Agricultural Education Assistance Funds
Up to $1,000 per county annually to enhance agricultural education activities, and an additional $300 per county in CFAITC resource materials/inventory items.

County Agricultural Literacy Program Development
CFAITC hosts regional meetings and works with individual counties to share and plan education activities, which provide an opportunity for county Farm Bureau members and leaders to be involved with schools and educators in their area.

Educational Resources
CFAITC provides educational resources to educators, public and private schools, county Farm Bureaus, local AITC programs, UC Cooperative Extension Offices and County Offices of Education to help ensure that agricultural themes are integrated into every classroom. CFAITC offers educator friendly materials for free or low cost to anyone interested in agricultural literacy.

California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference
Counties are encouraged to take an active role in the annual conference by supporting teachers from their county to attend, offering scholarships and travel funds for representatives from their county, and by participating in outreach opportunities during the conference such as educational booths and displays.

County Summer Agricultural Seminar/Farm Day Support
In addition to resources, CFAITC provides support for the planning and implementation of Summer Agricultural Seminars and Ag/Farm Days. Foundation staff attend numerous planning meetings and strive to participate in as many of the approximately 22 annual County Summer Agricultural Seminars as possible.
AITC Ambassador Program
The Foundation works with County AITC programs to maintain a current database of AITC Ambassadors. The AITC Ambassador program provides both CFAITC and the county AITC committee with direct links to the classroom and is an important component to state and county activities.

County Visits
CFAITC staff are committed to increasing the communication and personal contacts with county Farm Bureau leaders and members, staff and AITC volunteers. Please do not hesitate to invite a CFAITC staff member out to your county and involve them in your local efforts. We are here to help make your efforts easier and to enhance the work you are doing to promote agriculture literacy.
California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom
2002 County Agriculture in the Classroom Guide Evaluation Form

Once you have had the opportunity to use this binder, please take a few moments to complete this evaluation form. This guide is intended to help you make Agriculture in the Classroom possible in your county. Please let us know if we have met this goal. We value your opinions.

Name ____________________________ County ____________________________ (Optional)

Please answer the following questions: (1-needs improvement, 2-3-satisfactory, 4-excellent)

1. Includes information I can use. 1 2 3 4
2. Information is easy to locate within the Guide. 1 2 3 4
3. Information was current and correct. 1 2 3 4
4. Templates and samples were useful. 1 2 3 4

Additional Comments:
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Please mail this completed evaluation to:
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