



2025 AITC Conference Workshops

Saturday, September 27, 2025

Session #1: 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

- **Mary Kaye Godde Stamets, L&M Stamets**

Title: Desert Almond Farmer: At the Little Country School in the Valley

Description: Students will fire up their imaginations when they listen to virtual classmates talk about the chapters in “Desert Almond Farmer” with their teacher and characters in the book. They will get a deeper understanding of a pioneer’s life, California agricultural history, and how fruit and nut trees grow. This workshop features sample audio clips and a discussion about them.

Grades: 4-6

Room: Shasta A

- **Kay Hones, KeyInfo, Inc**

Title: Grant Writing for Ag in Schools

Description: Do you need supplies for your school garden? Healthy fruit snacks for students? Or maybe it’s chickens to raise in class? Join this workshop to learn five strategies for writing successful grants, brainstorm different ag projects and materials in schools and draft a grant for your next Ag in School project!

Grades: K-12

Room: Shasta B

- **Mandi Bottoms, CFAITC Curriculum Specialist and Lauren Krohn, Sprout and Savor Nutrition; and Representative from the California Department of Education Nutrition Services Division**

Title: Farm to School Connections

Description: Come hungry for ideas...and maybe some locally grown produce, too! In this hands-on, team-led workshop, you’ll whip up a tasty Farm to School activity (yes, we’re making guacamole), explore fresh resources from Ag in the Classroom, gather new ways to partner with your school nutrition staff, and hear how the California Department of Education is helping Farm to School grow across the state.

Grades: K-12

Room: Zinfandel

- **Kevin Jordan and Alex Ayuli, Leo Palmiter Jr/Sr High School**

Title: How to Start a Thriving School Garden

Description: This presentation will cover the best practices for creating a successful school garden. We will discuss how to plan, build, and maintain your school garden. The concept of what to grow, how to grow and where to find funding will all be covered. Site selection, soil preparation, irrigation, harvest, pest control, and much more will be covered. This presentation will create a pathway to guide anyone wishing to begin a new school garden or rejuvenate a forgotten one.

Grades: K-12

Room: Brandywine

Session #2: 2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

- **Efrain Valenzuela, Dairy Council of California**

Title: Dairy Ag Explorers – Enhancing Dairy Agricultural Literacy Through Interactive Learning

Description: This session will showcase Dairy Ag Explorers, an innovative approach that pairs two dairy agricultural literacy programs – Dairy Council of California’s *Let’s Eat Healthy: Explore Dairy* and the Mobile Dairy Classroom Assembly – to provide a comprehensive and interactive learning experience for elementary students. By integrating classroom-based instruction with hands-on learning, the initiative enhances students’ understanding of dairy farming, nutrition, and the role of dairy in a healthy diet. This session is ideal for educators and agricultural literacy advocates seeking to enhance student engagement with dairy agriculture. Participants will gain practical strategies for implementing this model in their communities to foster appreciation for dairy’s role in a balanced diet and sustainable food system.

Grades: K-12

Room: Shasta A

- **Jessica Eves, CFAITC Outstanding Educator, Darnall Charter School**

Title: From Garden to Table: Bringing Life to Learning through Cooking

Description: Join us for an engaging and interactive workshop that explores the transformative power of incorporating cooking into garden education. This session is designed for educators in the garden and agriculture fields who want to enhance their programs and inspire students. Discover how cooking can deepen students’ connection to plants, foster responsibility, and ignite a passion for nutritious eating. We will share practical strategies for integrating cooking into your garden curriculum, including age-appropriate recipes, kitchen safety, and student participation. The session will kick off with a quick cooking demonstration, leaving you with hands-on ideas, resources, and confidence to make learning deliciously memorable!

Grades: K-6

Room: Shasta B

- **June Jo Lee, READERS to EATERS**

Title: Fermentation Workshop: Kimchi, Krautchi and Storytime for Kids of All Ages

Description: Try your own hands at making kimchi! Join June Jo Lee, Food Ethnographer and award-winning children's book author, for a kimchi demo, story time and krautchi-making activity from Sandor Katz and The Tiny Wild, a Kirkus Review "Best Picture Book Biographies 2022." June Jo will also discuss her debut picture book, Chef Roy Choi and The Street Food Remix, a Sibert Award Honor for Most Distinguished Informational Book.

Grades: K-6

Room: Zinfandel

- **Marjie Zarinelli, CFAITC, Curriculum Developer**

Title: From Manure to Megawatts: Teaching Energy, Agriculture, and Sustainability in the Middle School Classroom

Description: Looking for engaging ways to teach sustainability through the lens of agriculture and energy? This session will introduce participants to Climate-Smart Agriculture and Careers in Sustainable Energy, a five-lesson unit developed in partnership with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. Explore classroom-ready lessons featuring virtual field trips, project-based activities, and digital teaching tools that align with California state standards. Participants will engage with real-world applications like methane digesters and energy career exploration, while gaining access to resources that highlight agriculture's role in reducing environmental impact. Attendees will leave with tools to empower students to think critically and see themselves as future leaders in sustainability.

Grades: 4-8

Room: Brandywine

Session #3: 3:15 P.M. – 4:15 P.M.

- **Chris Lavagnino, Ronald Reagan Elementary & Jami Beck, Three Rivers Elementary**

Title: From Gold to Green: The Rise of Agriculture in CA

Description: Discover From Gold to Green, a new history–social science curriculum from Ag in the Classroom! Workshop participants will explore key moments that shaped California agriculture between 1849 and 1950, from the Gold Rush to the people and

innovations that made the state an agricultural powerhouse. This workshop includes hands-on activities from the unit and shows how to connect history to modern agriculture using AITC's new *Knowin' What's Growin'* website. To get the most out of this workshop, please bring a laptop or mobile device!

Grades: 3-5

Room: Shasta A

- **Austin Roughton, University of California Cooperative Extension**

Title: Forestry in the Classroom: Explore Careers and Cultivate Curiosity

Description: Forestry in California spans urban and rural communities, connecting us through stewardship of our shared natural resources. Explore the interdisciplinary nature of Forestry as you engage with Project Learning Tree's Green Jobs curriculum, and work through small group activities focused on cultivating student-driven inquiry around why and how we manage forest ecosystems across the state.

Grades: K-12

Room: Shasta B

- **Maria Azevedo, CWA Merced Chapter**

Title: Advocacy in Action: Connecting Classrooms to Ag Careers

Description: Learn how to connect students with California agriculture through career exploration, classroom speakers, and local partnerships. This interactive session offers a planning toolkit to host your own Ag Career Day or speaker series that highlights diverse roles in agriculture—from farm to research lab to wellness.

Grades: 4-12

Room: Zinfandel

- **Regi Jones, Life Lab**

Title: Connecting Nutrition and Art

Description: A fully integrated school garden works across disciplines. This workshop will showcase how a garden educator can incorporate art, literacy and joy into their garden classroom. This workshop will provide teachers with tools to connect the garden beyond science.

Grades: K-6

Room: Brandywine

- **Debra Mason, Bay Point Community Foundation**

Title: Planting Seeds of Health: Gardening with Youth

Description: Learn how to offer a year-round and impactful garden program to PreK - High School students with limited resources. You will get lots of ideas and activities to

take back to your program.

Grades: K-12

Room: Sonoma