Since 2023, the members of the Blue Hill Consolidated School National Agriculture Week Committee have worked together to create a schoolwide celebration of agriculture that reaches every student from Pre-K through Grade 8. What began as an idea inspired by the ReadME Agriculture program has grown into an annual tradition that brings agriculture into classrooms, the cafeteria, the gym, the garden, and the outdoors. Each year, the week's theme is guided by the subject matter in the Maine Agriculture in the Classroom book and supported by classroom teachers, specialists, cafeteria staff, administration, and community partners.

National Agriculture Week follows a consistent format each year, with three main components: daily agricultural facts and announcements, special visitors and hands-on experiences, and bingo sheets in each homeroom classroom that encourages students and teachers to explore agriculture throughout the special school week. Students do not simply learn about agriculture by reading about it. They experience it!

Over the years, students have grown and tasted broccoli sprouts, created seaweed lava lamps, taken nature walks with local land trusts, built native bee homes, participated in a "bee" waggle dances, played seaweed tag, and cooked and taste-tested foods such as seaweed smoothies, blueberry compote, and quesadillas. These experiences merge agriculture to science, ecology, health, physical education, and the environment, culture, and history of the Blue Hill Peninsula. Our program also connects students directly with people who work in agriculture and related fields. Guest speakers and partners have included the Maine State Apiarist, experts from the World Wildlife Fund, representatives from Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, University of Maine professors, and local farms such as Tilth and Timber in Castine and Blue-Zee Farm in Blue Hill.

We also innovate our week with new ideas. In 2026 BHCS's 5th and 6th grade teachers participated in the MAITC ReadME MORE pilot program. Another new activity is planting

seeds in our newly refurbished greenhouse. Half of the seedlings are sold at our Seedling Sale in collaboration with the school's Garden Club and Boosters. The seedlings go off to grow in gardens around our community, including teachers' gardens! All students also go home with a seedling further connecting agricultural experiences and students' everyday lives.

The program has also grown beyond our school. Our National Agriculture Week model was shared with Maine educators during the 2025 Maine Summer Teachers' Institute and our work was presented at the 2026 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference. Our interdisciplinary approach has contributed to other professional presentations about outdoor learning, such as a National Science Teachers Association presentation. In 2024 students' work was recognized when the World Wildlife Fund featured BHCS in a national publication about our Seaweed Week activities. In addition, our work has been highlighted in MAITC newsletters.

Every student and staff member participates during our National Agriculture Week and teachers find creative ways to connect the agricultural theme to their own curriculum, such as in music class where students translate the number of syllables in food items into drum beats. Agriculture becomes a common thread linking subjects and grade levels rather than an isolated activity. Students investigate, create, cook, grow, observe, ask questions, and learn from experts. The interdisciplinary nature of our agricultural week is one of the program's greatest strengths.

National Agriculture Week has become a defining part of the school culture at Blue Hill Consolidated School. It brings our community together around agriculture and gives every child meaningful, hands-on experiences that connect science, music, literacy, health, art, physical education, environmental studies, and local knowledge. Most importantly, students gain a deeper understanding of the people and the ecosystems that produce their food and the many ways agriculture is connected to their lives.

Supplementary Material for the Selection Committee:

1. Presentation Given at the 2026 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference

Nora Bradford, a member of the National Agriculture Week Committee, was selected to present at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Providence in June, 2026.

See selected slides from presentation:






FARMING + GARDENING WEEK 2025
FARMER EVA'S
GREEN GARDEN LIFE

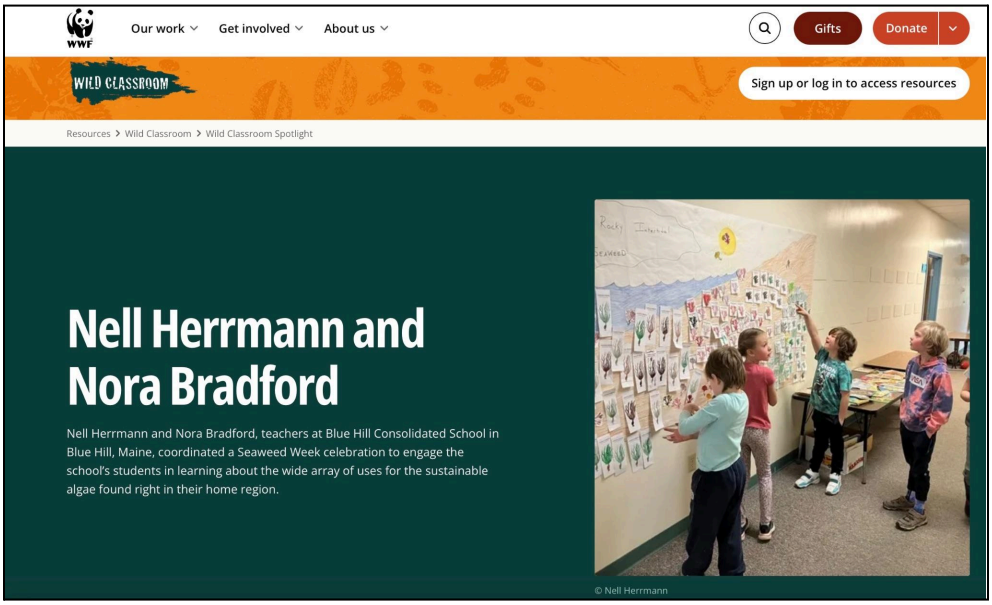

BLUEBERRY WEEK 2026
BLUE HILL
CONSOLIDATE
SCHOOL
AGRICULTURE
WEEK 16-20
HEALTH & SAFET
WEEK 23-27
FAIR SAT 28
9 - 1130
I LOVE BLUEBERRIES!


NEW IDEAS
There are seedlings for sale. Get some Seedlings for sale. They are so beautiful! I hope you buy some seedlings!
GO GET SOME Seedlings
We worked with the school's Boosters organization to run a bake sale the same morning!

2. [World Wildlife Fund Wild Classroom Spotlight]

Seaweed Week in 2024 was featured in the *World Wildlife* printed magazine in the summer of 2025 issue. Seaweed Week was also featured in the Classroom Spotlight online.

Screenshot of Classroom Spotlight:



From March 18-22, 2024, all 257 students in grades PK-8 at Blue Hill Consolidated School in Blue Hill, Maine celebrated Seaweed Week. The week was inspired by the **Kelp Curriculum** from the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center and WWF, the 2024 Read ME Agriculture program, and the school's 2023-2024 theme, "The Sea Around Us."

Each PK-4 classroom received a copy of the book ***The Wakame Gatherers***, written by Holly Thompson and illustrated by Kazumi Wilds, courtesy of Maine Agriculture in the Classroom. Other classrooms received copies of ***With a Little Kelp from Our Friends***, written by Mathew Bate and illustrated by Liz Rowland, courtesy of WWF.

During Seaweed Week, students read books about seaweed in their classrooms and during library time, they played seaweed tag in PE, they tasted seaweed crackers, condiments, quesadillas and other seaweed snacks, and they created seaweed-inspired artwork. All students helped in the creation of murals of Maine's rocky intertidal seaweed and engaged in a variety of hands-on activities including making seaweed lava lamps and bookmarks, visiting a seaweed touch tank, and cooking with seaweed. They also enjoyed interacting with seaweed experts from WWF, 4H, Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, and Maine Sea Grant.

Blue Hill Consolidated School is grateful to the visitors for their time and expertise, and we are happy that our students have developed an appreciation for seaweed, a group of organisms important to marine ecosystems and beyond. Much focus was placed on the fact that kelp is a sustainable crop that can be grown and harvested in Maine, and that kelp can provide winter work and income for Maine lobstermen and women. Kelp farms don't require farmland, fresh water, pesticides, or fertilizers and they reduce carbon dioxide, phosphorus and nitrogen! Kelp aquaculture is an up-and-coming industry (60% of the farmed edible seaweed produced in the United States comes from Maine), which could provide future jobs for many of our students.

3. MAITC Newsletter Features

Since the first National Agriculture Week in 2023, our work has been shared in the monthly MAITC newsletters.

MAITC Newsletters:



Maine Agriculture in the Classroom

Monthly News & Updates

May 2026 | Issue #177 *Click 'View Entire Message' to make sure you don't miss important information!*

Calendar of Events

Gardening with Mushrooms Workshop
May 2, 2026
North Spore Mushrooms, Portland

MEEA Conference
May 7-8, 2026
Pilgrim Lodge, West Gardiner

Maine School Garden Day
May 9, 2026
Thomaston Grammar School

Northeast Livestock Expo Kids Day
May 15, 2026

National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference
June 22-25, 2026
Providence, Rhode Island

MAITC Grant Deadline
Categories 4 & 5
June 26, 2026

Summer Teacher's Institute
August 3-7, 2026
Downeast Institute
Beals, Maine

MAITC All Grants Deadline
August 28, 2026

National Ag Week at BHCS
(and how to make it happen at your school)!

SEAWEED WEEK 2024

Do you ever end Read ME Agriculture (RMA) wishing you could keep the momentum going? Have you been interested in bringing agriculture to your school on a larger scale, but are unsure where to start? Here's some inspiration!

Our friends at Blue Hill Consolidated School have taken RMA to the next level by embracing the full National Agriculture Week! This includes involving all grade levels and specialists, and showcasing the interdisciplinary nature of agriculture studies throughout the week.

May 2026 Newsletter



Maine Agriculture in the Classroom

Monthly news & updates

May 2024 | Issue #152

make sure to click "View entire message" to get access to the full newsletter!

Make a Scholarship Donation

Calendar of Events

GMRI Educator Workshop: Potato Farming in Maine's Changing Climate
May 2, 2024
12pm - 8pm
Washburn, ME
More info

Maine FFA State Convention
May 9-10, 2024
University of Maine
Orono, ME

Maine Environmental Education Association Conference
May 10-11, 2024
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Hinckley, ME
More info

NELE Kids Day
May 17, 2024
Windsor Fairgrounds
Windsor, ME
More info

Maine School Garden Day
May 18, 2024
Kingfield Elementary School
Kingfield, ME
More info

In Bloom in Maine Conference
"Promising Practices in Nature-Based Early Childhood Education"

Blue Hill Consolidated School Celebrates Seaweed Week!

During National Ag Week 2024, students in grades PK-8 at Blue Hill Consolidated School (BHCS) celebrated Seaweed Week! Teachers, Nell Herrmann and Nora Bradford, coordinated a celebration to engage students in learning about the wide array of uses for the sustainable algae found right in their home region. The week was inspired by the Read ME Agriculture program, the Kelp Curriculum from the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center, and the school's 2023-2024 theme, "The Sea Around Us."

May 2024 Newsletter



Maine Agriculture in the Classroom

Monthly news & updates

May 2023 | Issue #140

make sure to click "View entire message" to get access to the full newsletter!

Make a Scholarship Donation

Calendar of Events

Maine Environmental Education Association Conference
May 11 & 12, 2023
Hutchinson Center
Belfast, ME

Maine School Garden Day
May 13, 2023
Reeds Brook Middle School
Hampden, ME
Register Here

Building Inclusive Food Education Practices Workshop
May 16, 2023
3pm
Zoom Registration

NELE Kids Day
May 18, 2023
Windsor Fairgrounds
Windsor, ME

Maine Nutrition Council Annual Conference
"Eating for the Earth"
June 23, 2023
Falmouth Elementary School

Blue Hill Consolidated School Celebrates National Agriculture Week as Bee Week!

BEE WEEK BINGO

Thank you to Nora Bradford from BHCS for sending in this story and pictures!



Classroom Conference
June 26-29, 2023
Orlando, Florida

Maine Farm & Sea to School Institute 3-Day Academy
July 24-26, 2023
The Ecology School
Saco, ME
More info

MAITC Summer Teacher's Institute!
July 31 - August 4, 2023
University of Maine at Presque Isle
More Info

Teach ME About Food & Farms
Agriculture Lessons for Grades PreK-12

Visit our Teach ME Food & Farms Lesson Site
Developed for Maine Educators

Connect with us on Facebook!

Teacher Feature Questionnaire

We LOVE to feature outstanding

Blue Hill Consolidated School in Blue Hill celebrated National Agriculture Week by having a Bee Week with the help of the Read ME Agriculture program. Classrooms participated in a game of Bee Bingo throughout the school week. Activities included: creating a home for native bees, reading the book *Honeybee* by Candace Fleming, learning a bee waggle dance, and talking to a beekeeper. When all activities were completed, students earned honey sticks! The local land trust, Blue Hill Heritage Trust, took some class on nature walks to find food sources (maple trees, apple trees, and pussy willows) for native bees emerging from hibernation. We concluded our Bee Week with a visit from Jen Lund, the state apiarist. She discussed beekeeping with middle schoolers and played a simulation pollination game with younger students. Students are now talking about planting bee friendly plants and how to become beekeepers. Many thanks to the Read ME program!

May 2023 Newsletter