

Our mission is to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture among New Jersey educators and students. You can learn more on our website

newjersey.agclassroom.org

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The January Pause

Ah, January - the time when farmers and teachers alike can pause and take a breath before the frenetic demands of spring. It's a great time to reflect on ways you can include agriculture in your teaching, and we are happy to help!

Whether you are thinking of starting a school garden, looking to visit a farm, or just want to include some fun lessons to show your students where their food comes from, NJAITC has what you need. Check out our website for lessons in every subject [here](#), or contact us with a question at njagliteracy@gmail.com.

Are You Our 2026 Teacher of the Year?

Apply now to win an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Agriculture in the Classroom Annual Conference



**2025 NJAITC
Teacher of the Year
Jennifer Hill**
Agriculture teacher for
Maurice River
Elementary School
in Millville, NJ

NJAITC is seeking our Teacher of the Year for 2026. It could be you!

Our Teacher of the Year is a PreK-8 teacher who teaches about agriculture as part of their core curriculum and is passionate about teaching students where their food comes from and how it is grown.

To be our Teacher of the Year, you must be a New Jersey-certified teacher of grades PreK-8 in a public or private school.

The Teacher of the Year will be awarded an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Agriculture in the Classroom's annual conference, the premier forum to learn about teaching agricultural concepts as part of the core curriculum. This year the conference will be held in Providence, RI June 22-25.

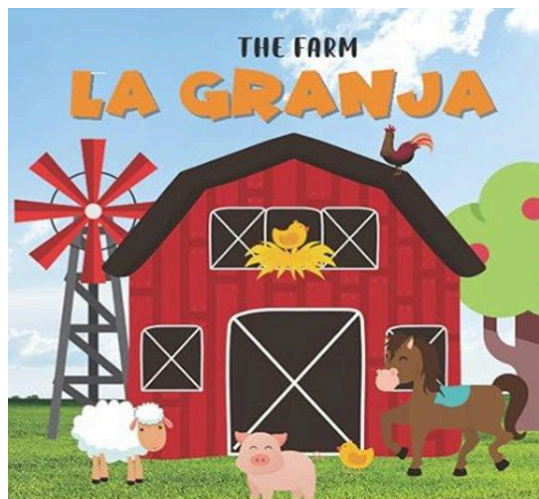
You can't win if you don't apply, so why not do it?
Click [here](#) for more information and for the application.

Introducing: NJAITC Lessons in Spanish

New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom has translated several of our lessons into Spanish, in order to support increased agricultural literacy across New Jersey schools.

Our goal is to expand resources available to New Jersey teachers of English learners.

On our new *Lessons in Spanish* webpage, there are links to both the Spanish and English versions of the lessons. The lessons are tailored for grades 3-5, but can be modified for lower and upper grades.



In addition, NJAITC has gathered a group of Spanish-language books and other resources on a variety of agricultural topics for emerging English learners.

To see all of our lessons and resources available in Spanish, click [here](#).

A suggestion from a teacher led to the creation of our Spanish-language web page

In 2024, second-grade teacher Kimberly Cardona-Garcia asked New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom if we could translate some of our lessons into Spanish. Kimberly teaches at the Patton J. Hill School in Trenton, a school that serves 544 students, 75% of whom speak Spanish as their first language.

Upon Kimberly's request, NJAITC applied for and received a grant from the National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization to translate lessons into Spanish. We recently completed the grant's work: 25 lessons across six subjects have been translated into Spanish, along with all accompanying handouts, worksheets, and PowerPoint presentations. All materials are available on our new *Lessons in Spanish* webpage. You can see all the lessons [here](#).

A teacher for 29 years, Kimberly has actively included agriculture in her everyday curriculum. She helped to start a school vegetable garden, and she often teaches lessons that show her students where their food comes from. We asked Kimberly to explain the need for Spanish-language teaching materials about agriculture and how NJAITC's materials can help teachers and students. See her answers below.



Kimberly Cardona-Garcia with her second grade students holding their Spanish-language ag mags on bees (abejas).

Why did you believe it would be beneficial for teachers to have New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom lessons translated into Spanish?

New Jersey has had a substantial increase of multilingual students in recent years. Schools have needed to create dual-language immersion programs. Therefore, there is a need for more bilingual teachers and resources.

How will the NJAITC online Spanish library of lessons help teachers and students in the classroom?

English Language Learners should have access to agricultural lessons in both Spanish and English because it offers hands-on and visual learning. Translated lessons bridge the language gaps.

How will Spanish-language lessons help connect New Jersey students to agriculture?

At the primary level, agricultural lessons teach students where food comes from and sustainability. This knowledge will connect with STEM and the sciences in the upper grades. Translated lessons can help students make connections and build on background knowledge they may have in their primary language. These lessons will foster confidence and comprehension while fostering dual literacy.

Do you anticipate that having Spanish reading materials in the classroom will increase agricultural literacy?

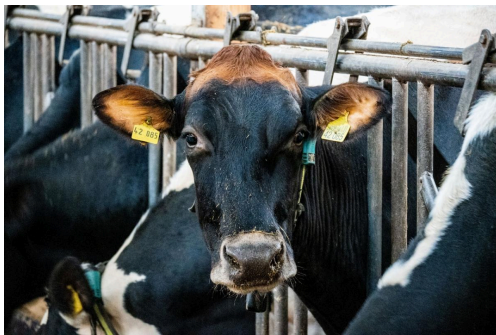
Yes, Spanish reading materials and lessons can help students make connections and build on background knowledge they may have in their primary language. These lessons will foster confidence and comprehension while fostering dual literacy.

Lessons of the Month

Although dairy farming has been dramatically declining in New Jersey, there are still about 35 commercial dairies in the state. That's compared to about 500 dairy farms 75 years ago. Farmers' decisions to abandon dairy farming, according to the NJ Department of Agriculture, are largely attributable to the high cost of doing business, coupled with volatile pricing in the federal milk marketing system, which results in low profits.

NJAITC was privileged to tour one of New Jersey's remaining dairies, Middlebush Farms in Somerset, NJ. The video of this tour introduces students to how cows are raised to produce milk.

This video, and the accompanying lessons on dairy farming are part of NJAITC's new *Animal Agriculture* webpage, which you can see if you click [here](#).



Life on a Dairy Farm Grades 3-5

Students will identify aspects of raising dairy cattle and producing milk products that are done in an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable way.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.



Many Milks Grades 3-5

Students taste test four different milks while comparing color, texture, taste, and cost. In addition, students examine four milk food labels and complete a table comparing calories, fat, and calcium found in the milks.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.



Whipping Butter into Shape Grades 3-5

*can be modified for younger
and older students*

In this STEM lesson, students investigate the physical change that



From Cow to Carton: Milk's Journey to the Consumer Grades 6-8

Students will explore milk production in the United States and explain the benefits of homogenization,

occurs as milk is turned into butter.

For the entire lesson, click [here](#).



pasteurization, and fortification of milk.

For the entire lesson, click [here](#).

Lactose Lab: Some Don't Like it Sweet Grades 9-12

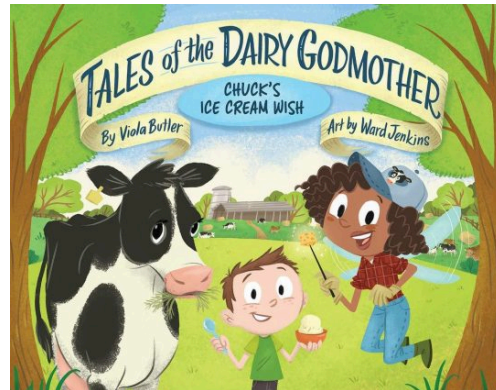
In this lesson, students learn the chemistry and composition of milk, identify the difference between a monosaccharide and disaccharide, and carry out a laboratory activity testing the effect of the enzyme lactase on various milks.

For the entire lesson, click [here](#).

Library Corner

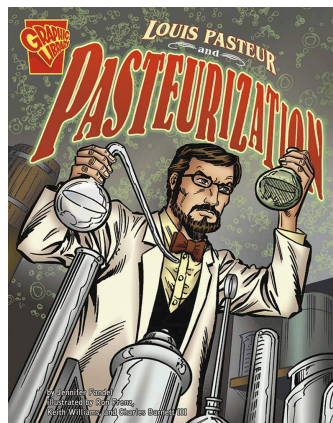
Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck's Ice Cream Wish By Viola Butler Grades PreK-3

A boy is granted a wish by the Dairy Godmother to have all the ice cream he can eat. He is transported to a dairy farm to learn about dairy farming and the hard work it takes to make his favorite treat.



Louis Pasteur and Pasteurization By National Geographic Learning Grades 4-8

This graphic novel follows chemist Louis Pasteur as he tackles the problems of food spoilage and learns about germs in the process.

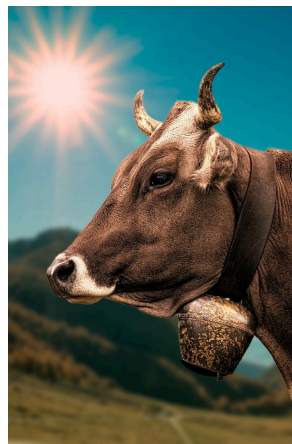


January Ag Gag

Why do cows wear bells?

Because their horns don't work.

Happy New Year!



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