

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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Flowers Are Big Business in New Jersey

Many of us will soon head to our local nursery or garden center for pots or flats of flowers to grace our outdoor spaces. It's not what we ordinarily think of as agriculture, but New Jersey ranks fifth in the country for floriculture - the growing of flowering and ornamental plants.

In fact, horticulture, including plants, shrubs, trees, sod, and Christmas trees, is the state's leading sector of agriculture, which reaped \$703 million in sales in 2024. The NJ Department of Agriculture lists 501 independent nurseries and garden centers. So even though we live in the country's most densely populated state, there is no shortage of greenery here!

Attention 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Teachers **FREE NJ Ag Boxes with books and lesson materials** **available now!**

NJAITC is pleased to announce a series of four new NJ Ag Boxes available free to teachers of grades 3-5. Our NJ Ag in a Box program provides teachers with all the resources and materials to teach a lesson each season about New Jersey agriculture. Thanks to a grant from Farm Credit East AgEnhancement, we can offer 25 teachers this new four-box series for free.

**Our first new ag box
Gardening!
will include:**

**The book *We Are the Gardeners* by
Joanna Gaines**

A literacy lesson to accompany the book

**30 four-page Ag Mags on *School
Gardens***

***Making a Garden Map*, a math lesson**

***Growing Gloves*. a science lesson on germination**

All materials necessary to do all the lessons with your whole class



Other subjects in the new NJ Ag in a Box series will be: soybeans, wheat, and turkeys. You can find more information about our NJ Ag in a Box program [here](#).

If you teach grades 3, 4 or 5 and would like to receive the new ag boxes, all we ask in return is that you complete a short digital survey after completing the lessons in each box.

Interested teachers please send your name, grade, your school, and school address to njagliteracy@gmail.com.

***Don't miss this great opportunity to introduce your students
to New Jersey agriculture
for free!***

You can check out all the lessons in NJ Ag in a Box: *Gardening!* below.



**We Are The Gardeners
Grades 3-5**

In this book by Joanna Gaines, four children learn how to become vegetable and fruit gardeners by making mistakes and trying again.

In this lesson, groups of students will do further research on a gardening concept mentioned in the book.



**Making a Garden Map
Grades 3-5**

What's the first step to planting a vegetable garden? Make a plan!

Students learn how to read seed packets to determine how much space their plants need. Then they

Students will also write their own essay about a time when they initially failed at something, but succeeded when they persevered.

See the entire lesson [here](#).

draw a map of their garden on graph paper.

This lesson gives your students a chance to use their literacy and math skills in a real-life setting.

See the entire lesson [here](#).

Growing Gloves

Grades 3-5

Students plant a different type of seed on cotton balls in each finger of a transparent glove.

They observe and record the germination rate of each seed, and then graph the results.

See the entire lesson [here](#).



\$1,000 for an Ag Project

Apply now!

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is now accepting applications for \$1,000 grants for K-12 projects that improve agricultural literacy.

If you are interested in starting an agricultural project at your school, or expanding an existing one, please consider submitting an application. Think school gardens, hydroponics, composting, egg incubation, or any ag-related project!

Click [here](#) for more information and to apply. The application deadline is June 12.



Kudos to Kathy!

NJAITC Educator Kathy Cafasso was recently nominated for the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce's 2026 Quality in Living Award.

In 2010, Kathy created the Sussex County Agricultural Learning Center at the Sussex County Fairgrounds, and she continues to develop the center each year. By combining information with entertainment, Kathy has helped thousands of schoolchildren learn how farmers provide the variety and abundance of food and dairy needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Kathy has touched the lives of over 15,000 elementary students over the course of the program, through class trips to the fairgrounds, school presentations, professional development workshops for educators, and a variety of resources for elementary teachers looking to integrate agriculture into their curriculum.

A retired teacher with 37 years experience, Kathy volunteers her time for all the work she does at the agricultural learning center.

We are so proud of Kathy and lucky to have her as part of the NJAITC team!

Lessons of the Month



Fabulous Flowers **Grades K-2**

Students examine the functions of flowers and determine that some flowers are edible.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.



Parts of a Flower **Grades 3-5**

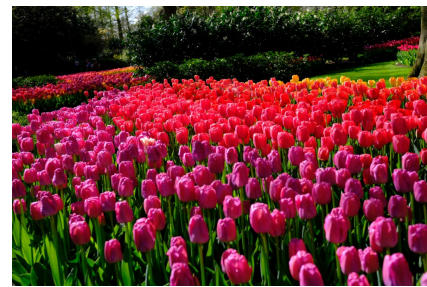
Students create a flower with craft materials in order to learn the parts of flowers and their functions.

Click [here](#) for the lesson

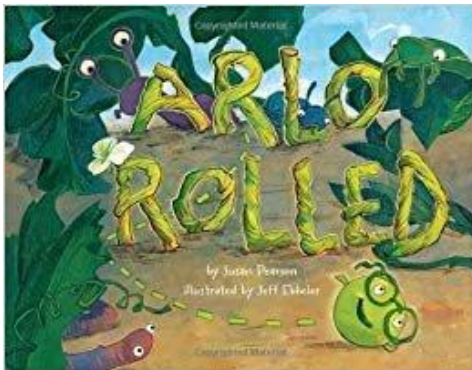
Flower Power **Grades 6-8**

Students observe the anatomical structures of flowers and explain a flower's role in plant growth and reproduction, as well as their connection to our food supply.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.



Library Corner

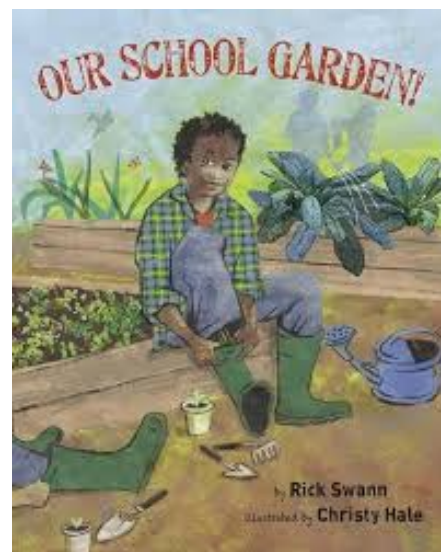


Arlo Rolled **By Susan Pearson** **Grades PreK-3**

Arlo, an ambitious pea, leaps from his vine and rolls away to seek his future. On the way, he must dodge garden creatures who want to eat him. After a dog kicks him high into the air, a tired Arlo rests in the soil. While he sleeps, he grows and turns into a vine.

Our School Garden **By Rick Swann** **Grades 3-5**

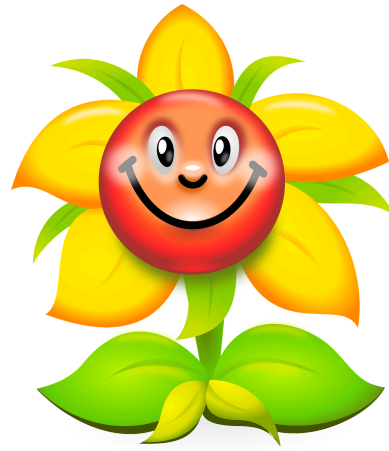
Michael is feeling lonely at his new school until he discovers the school garden. There's so many ways to learn, and so much work to do. But the garden is much more than activities outdoors: making school garden stone soup, writing Found Poems and solving garden riddles, getting involved in community projects such as Harvest Day, food bank donations, and spring plant sales. Each season creates a new way to learn, explore, and make friends.



May Ag Gag

*Why is a flower
like the letter A?
Because a bee goes after it!*

Happy Teacher Appreciation Week!



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