

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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Join Us This Summer For a Taste of Winter

Learn how maple syrup is made at New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom's summer workshop! On July 7, we will head to Stockton University in Gallaway for a half-day workshop with the Stockton Maple Project, where we will learn how maple trees are tapped for syrup. The \$20 registration fee includes a free T-shirt and syrup to take home. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Don't miss this opportunity to learn the source of syrup and earn three professional development credit hours!

Before You Leave School This Summer *Apply for \$100 in Free Ag Materials*

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is once again offering K-12 teachers \$100 grants for materials from its store filled with educational resources. And the application takes just two minutes! All you have to do is send in your name, school, address, and grade. If more than 100 educators apply, eligible educators will be randomly selected to receive the grants.

To see the educational resources available, click [here](#). To apply, click [here](#).

Attention 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Teachers

Act now to receive our FREE NJ Ag Boxes

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!* includes all the materials to teach three lessons, one each covering literacy, math and science, as well as 30 four-page Ag Mags on *School Gardens*.

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

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!* [here](#).

Meet our NJAITC 2026 Teacher of the Year Kimberly Cardona-Garcia

New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom is proud to announce that Kimberly Cardona-Garcia, second grade teacher at Patton J. Hill School in Trenton, has been selected as our 2026 Teacher of the Year.

A 29-year veteran teacher, Kimberly has been using her school's garden, in the heart of the city, to integrate agriculture into literacy, math, science, and social studies lessons.

"We investigate what plants need to grow," Kimberly said. "We observe plant and animal life cycles in our school garden. We compare the habitats of plants and animals such as our resident groundhog and deer family, bird nests, garter snakes, and a fox. All in the center of Trenton."





Kimberly also uses the school garden as a hands-on living math lab. "Math becomes meaningful when connected with real-life agriculture lessons that are tied to real data students collect themselves," she said. Including the school garden and agriculture in her teaching has sparked curiosity and enthusiasm beyond the academic impact.

"Students become more open to trying fruits and vegetables that they grow themselves or learn where they come from," Kimberly said. "As urban, and in most cases English Language Learners, they often lack direct exposure to farming practices, plant life cycles, and environmental systems. As a result, they love to go home and share what they have learned with their families."

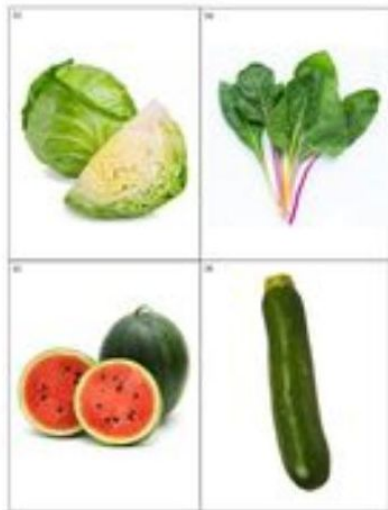
And there have been some unexpected results, Kimberly said. "The students have improved teamwork, communication skills, and responsibility."

As NJAITC's Teacher of the Year, Kimberly will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization's annual conference this June in Rhode Island.

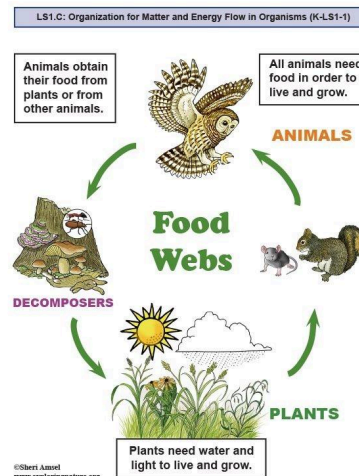
Congratulations Kimberly!
Your work to include agriculture in your students' everyday learning is an inspiration to us all!



Lessons of the Month



Parts of a Plant Game
Grades K-5



Garden Food Chain Game

What parts of plants do we eat? All of them! In this fun card game, students learn whether their favorite fruits and vegetables are roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits or seeds.

The game can be played by individuals in a small group or by teams of students. Do your students know that broccoli is a flower? Here's how they can learn!

All the colorful cards needed to play the game are included.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.

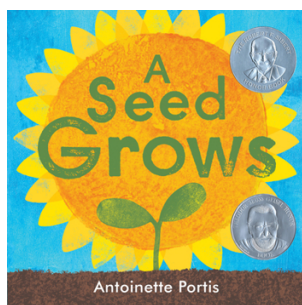
Grades 2-6

Students should understand that a garden is an ecosystem that contains many food chains. Instead of talking about those food chains, you can illustrate them easily with this boisterous food chain game.

Students act as herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores as they try to survive by finding food over a large area. The game lends itself to many subsequent conversations about balanced and unbalanced ecosystems

Click [here](#) for the lesson

Library Corner

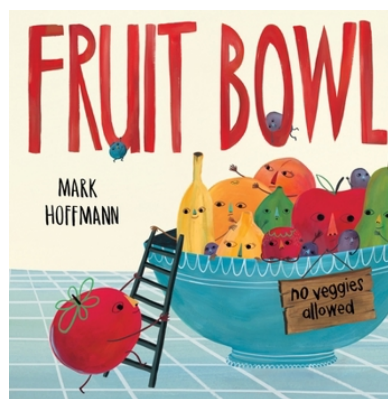


A Seed Grows By Antoinette Portis Grades PreK-1

This simple, vibrant book shows young students, step by step, how a seed grows through the life cycle of a sunflower.

Fruit Bowl By Mark Hoffmann Grades 2-5

Your students will giggle as controversy erupts in the fruit bowl when Tomato tries to climb in. Using sly science (and some wisdom from a wise old raisin), Tomato proves all the fruit wrong and shows that he belongs in the bowl just as much as the next blueberry! And he's bringing some unexpected friends too!



June Ag Gag

*Why did the syrup start a
podcast?*

To stick in people's minds!



**Don't forget to join us for our
maple syrup workshop**

July 7 at Stockton University!
Register [here](#).

***Our next newsletter will be published in September.
Be sure to check our website for activities for summer programs.
We wish you all a happy and relaxing summer!***

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