



AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

A Guide for Media Contacts

STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

What is the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom?

We are a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to educating Virginia's children about the importance of agriculture. Through diverse and extensive literacy programs that connect children to agriculture, Agriculture in the Classroom places agriculture in the hands of 300,000 students across the Commonwealth each year. The key component of the program is that it infuses agriculture literacy in standard school curriculum for teachers, students and parents by using farm and agribusiness examples in core subjects. Increasing agriculture awareness in Virginia's families benefit agriculture communities and rural citizens who depend on the state's largest industry for their livelihood.

How is the Foundation connected to the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation?

The National Agriculture in the Classroom program started in 1981 by a U.S. Department of Agriculture agricultural literacy task force. The group recommended that the USDA be the coordinator of this nationwide education initiative, but that each state create the program in organizations or government agencies best suited for that particular state. The Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom program started in partnership with Dr. John Hillison at Virginia Tech and was largely supported by Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. Our non-profit, charitable Foundation was created in 1992 to embrace support from the agriculture industry and to offer tax advantages to donors. Virginia Farm Bureau continues to be the Foundation's largest financial contributor, along with county Farm Bureaus and Farm Bureau Women's committees. The Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom office is located within the Virginia Farm Bureau headquarters in Richmond.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

What type of programming does Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom provide?

The mission of Agriculture in the Classroom is to educate Virginia's children about the importance of agriculture. AITC does this through:

- Professional development and resources for educators
- School grants for agriculturally themed projects
- Awards for teachers who successfully integrate agriculture into their classrooms
- An annual Agriculture Literacy Project reading program with industry volunteers
- Support for volunteer initiatives
- Connecting children to agriculture through direct outreach programs/events

Who is considered an Agriculture in the Classroom volunteer?

Traditionally, our largest group of volunteer supporters have been Virginia Farm Bureau members, especially the county, district and state Women's Committees. However, anyone can volunteer or use the many readily available activities online or by contacting our staff. In fact, FFA chapters, 4-H clubs, and other agricultural organizations have participated in our volunteer initiatives. The Agriculture Literacy Project is one of our most popular volunteer events each year.

What do teachers/educators gain from attending our professional development training?

Teachers and educators are connected to and trained in using new and innovative agriculture-based lesson plans and receive accurate agriculture books to add to their classroom library. They also often receive informative posters, agriculture industry resources and Virginia maps that highlight agriculture commodities across the geographic regions of the state. All professional development training is offered at no charge to attendees.



Where can I find Agriculture in the Classroom educational materials?

All volunteer and educator materials are available online at no charge on our website at AgintheClass.org. Volunteers have the option of borrowing posters, banners and other resources for short-term events or purchasing many items for extended and regular use. Materials are available on a first-come, first-served basis, therefore reserving well in advance is recommended. Contact our staff at aitc@vafb.com for more information about these resources.

MAKING A CHARITABLE DONATION

Are there tax benefits to me when I donate to this 501(c)3 nonprofit Foundation?

Yes, the Foundation is a nonprofit charity organization. Most donations and sponsorships made to the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom are tax-deductible. Consult with your tax accountant to be sure your gift will be fully or partially deductible. Following receipt of your gift, you will receive a letter confirming the amount received by the Foundation to be used in declaring your tax-exemption.

In what ways can I financially support the Foundation?

There are a variety of avenues individuals and corporations can contribute to the Foundation including:

- Direct donations through check or credit card
- Tributes and memorials
- Corporate matching gifts
- Participating in special events such as our golf tournament, corn hole tournament, clay shoots or Tractors for AITC program - contact us for more information on these events and sponsorship opportunities
- Planned giving

I want to support Agriculture in the Classroom, so what can I do today?

You Can Easily Donate Today!

To donate by credit card:

Visit our website at AgintheClass.org and click on the green “Donate Now” button located on the home page or simply call (804) 290-1034 and our staff will process your information.

To pay by check:

Please make checks payable to “Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom” and mail to:
Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom
P.O. Box 27552
Richmond, VA 23261

To sponsor an educational resource or special event:

Contact our staff at (804) 290-1034 or aitc@vafb.com.

For additional information regarding any of the above topics, please visit our website at AgintheClass.org and follow us on Facebook by searching Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom and The Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom