



Thousands of Virginia children learned about agriculture during literacy week

Armed with books, beekeeping suits and real honey and honeycomb, volunteers read to thousands of students during Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom's annual Agriculture Literacy Week, March 5-9.

"Everyone was excited to read *These Bees Count!* and share many stories and feature local beekeepers and their many tools of the trade," remarked Tammy Maxey, AITC senior education manager. "A thousand volunteers read to 60,000 children in over 2,800 classrooms. This book was very popular."

These Bees Count! by Alison Formento is the 2018 Virginia AITC Book of the Year. Many volunteer readers donated copies to school and classroom libraries. Del. Tommy Wright, R-Victoria, said he donates the AITC Book of the Year to schools in his district each year. "The bee books this year were great, with the colorful pages about bees and how they operate," Wright noted.

Other volunteer readers included Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring, employees of Farm Credit of the Virginias and participants in Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's Women's and Young Farmers programs.

"This project provides an awesome opportunity for volunteers to share the story of agriculture with children across the state," Maxey noted. "We are excited at the continued success of this initiative."

Virginia AITC is part of a nationwide effort to help teachers and students understand and appreciate agriculture, which is Virginia's and the nation's largest industry. The program provides an opportunity for children to connect to agriculture through volunteer-led activities, school grants, educator professional development and Web resource at AgInTheClass.org.

The AITC program is funded by

donations received through the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. Many county Farm Bureaus donate annually.

For information on supporting the foundation's educational initiatives, visit AgInTheClass.org, and click on the "Donors" link.

Businesses, Farm Bureaus support AITC

In addition to many individuals who contributed, numerous organizations made contributions to the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018.

Steward Level (\$50,000+)

- Virginia Farm Bureau Federation

Harvester Level (\$10,000 to \$24,999)

- Farm Credit
- James River Equipment
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co.
- Virginia Soybean Board

Grower Level (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

- Augusta County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- BB&T Charitable Foundation
- Chesterfield County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Farmers and Merchants Bank
- Finys
- Titmus Foundation
- Universal Leaf Foundation
- Virginia Beef Industry Council
- Virginia Corn Board
- VFBF Women's Committee
- VFBF Young Farmers Committee

Cultivator Level (\$1,000 to \$4,999)

- Accomack County Farm Bureau
- Albemarle County Farm Bureau
- Altria Group
- American Agricultural Insurance Co.
- Amherst County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau Inc.
- Ballyshannon Fund in the Charlottesville Area Community
- Beechland Farms
- Benchmark Tool & Supply Inc.
- Birdsong Peanuts
- Botetourt County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Charles City-James City-New Kent-York County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Chesterfield County Farm Bureau
- Crop Production Services
- Dairy Alliance
- Dinwiddie County Farm Bureau
- Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation
- Elis Olsson Memorial Foundation
- FBAlliance
- First Bank & Trust Co.

- Floyd County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Franklin County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Franklin P. and Arthur W. Perdue Foundation Inc.
- Greene County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Halifax County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Hanover County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Homestead Creamery
- Houff Family Foundation
- Houff's Feed & Fertilizer
- Hubner Seed
- Huffman Trailer Sales
- King William County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- LexisNexis
- Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association Inc.
- Powhatan County Women's Committee
- Prince William-Fairfax County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Publix Charities
- Ricoh USA
- Rockingham County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Rockingham Petroleum Cooperative
- Shenandoah County Farm Bureau
- Smyth County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Co.
- SyCom Technologies
- Tazewell County Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- The Jane and Arthur Flippo Foundation
- Virginia Apple Board
- Virginia Cattlemen's Association
- Virginia Cotton Board
- Virginia Egg Council
- Virginia Farm Bureau Membership & Field Services Department
- Virginia Kubota Dealers
- Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association Inc.
- Virginia Pork Council
- Virginia Poultry Federation
- Virginia Soybean Association
- Virginia State Feed Association
- Washington County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Westmoreland County Farm Bureau & Women's Committee
- Winchester Equipment Co.

Find more information about AITC at AgInTheClass.org. Donations to the AITC program are always welcomed and can be mailed to AITC, P.O. Box 27552, Richmond, VA 23261.