



Cream of the Crop

a harvest of ideas for educators

CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM



In this issue...

[Teacher Feature - Debbie Spellman Smith](#)

[1. 2014 Imagine this... Story Writing Contest State Winners](#)

[2. From Genes to Jeans II](#)

[3. California Fertilizer Foundation Garden Grants](#)

[4. Bayer CropScience Young Farmer Sustainability Award](#)

[5. "We Believe in Growing" Scholarship](#)

[6. National Ag Day Essay Contest](#)

[7. California STEM Summit](#)

[8. California Farm to School Conference](#)

[News - Gardening To-Do List for the Entire Year](#)

[Resources](#)

[County - Local Events](#)

[Support AITC](#)

Teacher Feature - Debbie Spellman Smith

Resource of the Month

Get Guts?
Introduction to the Digestive System

Skills
Activities
 1. Draw the basic structure and gross organs of the digestive system.
 2. Build the story about digestion in a cow's body.
 3. Analyze the cow's digestive tract by watching the National Geographic video.
 4. Compare the cow's digestive system to the human digestive system.
 5. Build the cow's digestive system in a clay model.
 6. Build the cow's digestive system in a clay model.
 7. Build the cow's digestive system in a clay model.

Materials
 • Paper
 • Colored pencils
 • Scissors
 • Glue
 • Clay
 • Video
 • National Geographic video

Tip
 Ask your students to draw the digestive system of a cow and label the parts.

Standards
 Grade 5
 Science 5-LS1-1
 Science 5-LS1-2
 Science 5-LS1-3
 Science 5-LS1-4
 Science 5-LS1-5
 Science 5-LS1-6
 Science 5-LS1-7
 Science 5-LS1-8
 Science 5-LS1-9
 Science 5-LS1-10
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 Science 5-LS1-100

Got Guts? Ag-Bite

DID YOU KNOW?!

Hass avocados account for 95 percent of California's crop.



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Fifth Grade Math and
Science Teacher
San Diego Cooperative
Charter School, San Diego
County



**What is your favorite
AITC program/
resource/event and why?**

My favorite AITC event is the annual conference and specifically the field trips. Teachers enjoy learning about the surrounding areas and how the classroom can branch outside of the four walls of the school building. It is a great way to meet other teachers and network to find out what is happening in education and classrooms throughout the area.

[read more...](#)

1. 2014 *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest State Winners

Congratulations to the six state-winning authors and the two honorable mentions! Quail, artichokes, grapes, and rain are a few of the winning topics of the 2014 *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest. The stories will be illustrated and published in softbound and e-book formats, and the authors will be recognized at an awards ceremony during National Ag Week in March.

The Life of Charlie the Quail

Jack Overholtzer, 3rd Grade

Gratton Elementary School - Sheila Amaral, Teacher

An Artichoke Adventure

By Kahlan Patel, 4th Grade

Freedom Home School - Stacy Patel, Teacher

Great Grandpa Grape

By Kayleigh Lugowski, 5th Grade

St. Anthony School - Susie Henriques, Teacher

Regal's Escapade
By Gargi Rao, 6th Grade
St. Stanislaus School - Marlene Bravo, Teacher

A Cat's Game
By Stephanie Temnyk, 7th Grade
Gratton Elementary School - Rexann Jensen, Teacher

The Raindrop's Great Courage
By Grace Reyes, 8th Grade
St. Anthony School - William Mitchell, Teacher

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Sunflower Time!
By Kylie Merrihew, 6th Grade
Scott Valley Jr High School - Hannah Shickle, Teacher

Phillip Pistachio Fighting Heart Disease
By Mason Liu, 8th Grade
San Gabriel Christian School - Clarence Atwater,
Teacher

Thank you to all the students and teachers who participated in the *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest.

The winning stories will be posted online later this month. For more information, visit www.learnaboutag.org/imaginethis.

2. From Genes to Jeans II

This newly updated unit for sixth through twelfth grades was designed utilizing themes in the Next Generation Science Standards as well as real world application to the agricultural industry. The lessons may be used independently or as a self-contained unit which covers in depth the concepts of genetics including an introduction to human inheritance, genetic breeding, Punnett squares, the importance of genetic diversity, biotechnology, gene marker selection, and the use of biotechnology for sustainable agriculture.

To download a free copy, visit www.learnaboutag.org/lessonplans.

3. California Fertilizer Foundation Garden Grants

Deadline: Jan. 15, 2015

The California Fertilizer Foundation (CFF) is offering 24 grants, 12 grants awarded twice a year, for \$1,200 each to schools throughout California. The goal of the grant program is to increase the understanding and awareness of agriculture in California's youth through school gardens. At the end of each year, winning schools can re-apply for a progress grant of \$1,500 and a free agricultural field trip!

For more information, or to apply, visit www.calfertilizer.org.

4. Bayer CropScience Young Farmer Sustainability Award

Deadline: Jan. 16, 2015

This award recognizes young agricultural producers who demonstrate excellence in business and environmental sustainability. Any farmer, rancher, or producer, under the age of 40, who receives at least half of his or her income from farming and farm-related ventures may apply. The first-place winner will be recognized at the 2015 Ag Issues Forum scheduled for February 23-24 in Phoenix, Arizona.

For more information, or to apply, visit www.bayercropscience.us/our-commitment/sustainability-initiatives/sustainability-award.

5. "We Believe in Growing" Scholarship

Deadline: Jan. 23, 2015

World Ag Expo and E.M. Tharp Inc. team up again to provide the "We Believe in Growing" scholarship, created to further support agriculture education. High school seniors from Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and Kern counties are eligible to apply. Two \$10,000

scholarships will be awarded to students who attend a four-year university to major in an agriculturally related field.

For more information, or to apply, visit www.worldagexpo.com/-we-believe-in-growing-scholarship.

6. National Ag Day Essay Contest

Deadline: Jan. 30, 2015

The Agriculture Council of America invites ninth- to 12th-grade students to submit a 450-word essay or a two-minute video essay about the importance of agriculture. This year's theme is "Agriculture: Sustaining Future Generations." The national written essay winner receives a \$1,000 prize and round-trip ticket to Washington, D.C., for recognition during the Celebration of Ag Dinner. The video essay winner wins a \$1,000 prize, and the winning video will play during the Celebration of Ag Dinner.

For information visit www.agday.org.

7. California STEM Summit

March 16-17, 2015, Los Angeles, CA

The theme for the 5th annual summit, "Unleashing Curiosity Through STEM," will focus on new ways and opportunities to engage all students, parents and educators in STEM education. This year's summit will bring together more than 400 leaders from Pre K-12 education, higher education, business and industry, government, and informal education to develop an action plan to increase quality, equity and innovation in STEM education throughout California.

For more information, or to register, visit www.castemsummit.com.

8. California Farm to School Conference

May 4-6, 2015, Pacific Grove, CA

This conference will offer a series of workshops, panels and discussions that will be of significant educational and networking value to attendees who will represent all facets of the farm to school movement, including farmers, distributors, government representatives, procurement officers, educators, and food program administrators.

The theme for the California Farm to School Conference is, *Connecting. Growing. Leading* .

For more information,

visit www.cafarmtoschoolconference.org



Gardening To-Do List for the Entire Year

Nov./Dec. 2014 California Bountiful magazine

Year-round gardening checklist is also available as a downloadable PDF.

[read more...](#)



Lesson Plan: Cycle of Life

In this unit students learn that the stages of growth and development vary among different plants and animals, and that humans benefit from and depend on animal and plant reproduction to meet a variety of needs. This unit is part of the California Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI).

www.calrecycle.ca.gov/eei

Resource: Avocado Fact and Activity Sheet

This California-specific fact sheet includes information on avocado production, history, nutrition, and economic value. The activity sheet provides lesson ideas and interesting facts on avocados.

www.learnaboutag.org/factsheets/pdf/Avocados.pdf

Book: *How Did That Get in My Lunchbox? The Story of Food* by Chris Butterworth

In this clearly written and beautifully illustrated book, author Chris Butterworth takes a clear, engaging look at

the steps involved in producing some common foods. Healthy tips and a peek at basic food groups complete the menu.

ISBN: 978-0-7636-5005-6

Website: The FOOD Museum

The FOOD Museum celebrates food, exploring its history, heritage, and cultural influence worldwide. Visit this website peruse blogs about food, see exhibits featuring food, learn about food issues, and read books about food.

www.foodmuseum.com



County - Local Events

Jan. 21, 2015 AgVenture San Joaquin County- Stockton
www.sjfb.org

Feb. 5, 2015 Napa County Teacher Appreciation Dinner
www.napafarmbureau.org

Feb. 11, 2015 DISCOVER El Dorado County's
Agriculture Teacher Workshop
www.agintheclass-edc.org

March 3, 2015 AgVenture San Joaquin County- Lodi
www.sjfb.org

March 10-11, 2015 Kern County Farm Bureau's 30th
annual Farm Day in the City
www.kerncfb.com

March 12, 2015 Kings County Farm Day
kcfb.org/farm-day

March 17, 2015 Solano County "Youth Ag Day"
www.scfair.com/youthagday.html

March 17-18, 2015
Sonoma County Ag Days
www.sonomafb.org/Annual+Events

March 25, 2015 EXPLORE El Dorado County's Unique
Agriculture

www.agintheclass-edc.org



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