



## Fantastic Ag Fact:

Celery was first used as a food by the French around 1632. [Learn more!](#)



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Photo of the Month: DeAnn Tenhunfeld, our curriculum coordinator, visited UC Davis and shared our free teaching resources with future teachers!



## Teacher Feature

### Naomi Harper

**Teaches:** 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Science

**School:** Will Rogers Middle School in Fair Oaks, CA

#### What is your *Organic Garden Cart Project*?

Will Rogers Middle School has received several garden and agricultural grants over the years and the students have an established sustainable courtyard with raised bed gardens, vertical gardens, vining gardens, and what we call 'free vending machines'. Students are able to harvest and graze from the garden



seasonal fruits like cherry tomatoes, vining grapes, lemons, oranges, kale, radishes, and strawberries. The purpose of the Organic Garden Cart Project is to provide opportunities for students to display garden produce from a farmers

market type cart. The students are the local-on-campus growers and are educating other students. My Students use to cart to inform other students about the benefits of organic food production with an emphasis on taste-testing produce from our school gardens.

### **How long have you been teaching agriculture in your classroom?**

For the last 10 years of my teaching career, I have included teaching agriculture! Agriculture is California's number one industry. Early in my teaching career I worked as a teacher intern for the State Department of Food and Agriculture during the summer. I traveled the state from as north as Siskiyou County and as far south as Imperial County visiting border inspections stations, San Joaquin valley farming areas, state offices, and community partners who support California's agriculture industry. As a result of my summer internship at the department, traveling around California, writing curriculum during the Japanese Beetle infestation, attending workshops at Soil Born Farms, implementing garden grants, being involved with Healthy Schools Program, and of course benefiting from the California Agriculture in the Classroom curriculum, resources, and grants my science program always includes soil science, planting, growing, and harvesting as a central part of our courtyard studies.

### **What inspired you to start teaching agriculture in your classroom?**

In addition to my experiences with California's agriculture, what inspired me most to include the principles of agriculture in the classroom and out in the courtyard would be the grants and available funding. My students plant, grow, and harvest. They visit urban farms, test soil samples, taste California's commodities, cook and sample orange marmalade and strawberry jams, compost, sheet mulch, prune, weed, build, and move soil! Seeing my students working in the gardens, enjoying our nutrition breaks, and even sweating continues to inspire me to emphasize the importance of California's agriculture to them. Recently a student commented about my science class. She said, "Your class is delicious!"

### **What would be your words of wisdom to a teacher just starting to teach agriculture in the classroom?**

I have an acronym that describes my wisdom: H.O.L.E.S. How Outdoor Learning Engages Students. For a teacher who is starting to teach agriculture, the first tools are shovels. It took several years for the students to prepare the soil for growing. Shovels and several wheelbarrows are tools that give students a feeling of accomplishment through hard work. The law of the harvest means you reap what you sow and that principle has so many applications to real life!



LearnAboutAg®

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

### **2017 Agriculture in the Classroom Conference**

### **July 14-15, 2017**

### **Visalia, CA!**

Do you love using agriculture in your classroom? We are seeking enthusiastic presenters who would like to share their expertise, experience, and educational resources with our conference attendees.

Proposals are now being accepted to present a Workshops and Make 'n' Takes, Exhibit at the



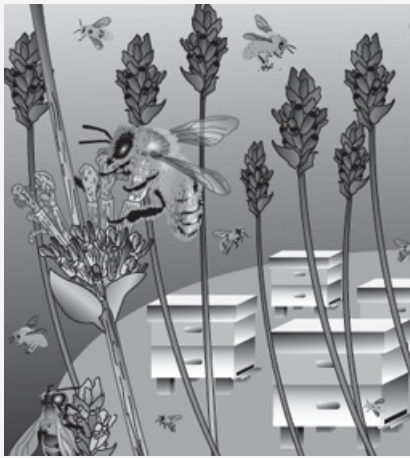
conference or host a "A Taste of CA" dinner table.

[Submit your proposal today!](#)



## Featured Resource

### Bee Fact and Activity Sheet Now Available!



#### Learn all about Bees!

A new Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheet has joined the collection. The resource explains the critical role bees play in California agriculture and includes an art lesson, featuring the honeycomb shape! [Download now](#) and start learning all about polygons!



## More Ways to LearnAboutAg®

### Carton 2 Garden Contest

Enter the [Carton 2 Garden Contest](#)! Re-purpose milk and juice cartons to build or enhance your school garden. Schools who best use cartons will win one of 14 prizes. The grand prize is valued at \$5,000. Entries are due April 12, 2017. All US schools are eligible to apply. This contest is offered by Evergreen Packaging and KidsGardening.org.

### Purple Plow Challenge

Through the [Purple Plow Challenge](#), students in grades 6-8 research scenarios related to food, hunger and sustainability and build their own prototypes to solve problems. Participating teachers receive resources aligned to national standards and reviewed by industry experts. The project is provided by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture.

### 2017 Water Spots Video Contest

The [2017 Water Spots Video Contest](#) is open to middle and high school students in Sacramento, Placer, and El Dorado counties and the City of West Sacramento. Students make creative and entertaining videos, using the water efficiency theme. The contest is provided by The Sacramento Bee's News in Education (NIE) program and Regional Water Authority.

## Best STEM Books 2017

This is the inaugural year for the "[Best STEM Books](#)" list! After nearly one year of study, the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and three other groups have collaborated to create a list of the best STEM literature for young readers.



## Grant Feature

### Green Thumb Challenge Grant



Green Education Foundation and Gardener's Supply Company have teamed up on an exciting funding opportunity for established youth garden projects nationwide! The organizations are calling on schools and youth groups to submit chronicles of their garden projects in a race to win a \$250 prize. The award is designed to support the continued sustainability of an exceptional youth garden program that has demonstrated success, and has impacted the lives of kids and their

community. **Deadline: September 30, 2017. [Apply online.](#)**

See [other grant opportunities](#) at LearnAboutAg.org.



## Community Events

### For Educators

<b><a href="#">National Science Teachers Association Conference</a></b> Discover the latest content, teaching strategies and research at this event organized by the National Science Teachers Association. Registration is \$275. Explore <a href="#">7 ways to get funding</a> to attend.	Los Angeles, CA	March 27-29, 2017
<b><a href="#">NGSS and Common Core in the Garden Workshops</a></b> Engage students in standards through your school garden. The event is offered by Life Lab. Graduate credit is available. Fees vary with location.	Santa Cruz, CA or Your School Garden Location	March 2017
<b><a href="#">Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT)</a></b> A multi-day residence workshop providing K-12 teachers with knowledge, skills and tools to effectively teach their students about forest ecology and forest resource management practices.	Meadow Valley, Sonora, Shingletown or Arcata	Summer 2017
<b><a href="#">2017 First Peas to the Table Contest!</a></b> The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is inviting your classroom to participate in a national pea growing contest. This contest is for grades K-5.	Nationwide	Contest ends May 15, 2017

## For Youth

<p><b><u>2017 Ag Career Expo</u></b>  <b>Junior high and high school</b> students will have the opportunity to meet ag industry professionals.</p>	Tulare, CA	March 15, 2017
<p><b><u>Kern County's Farm Day in the City</u></b>  The program is open to students in <b>grades 2-4</b>.</p>	Bakersfield, CA	March 21-22, 2017
<p><b><u>2017 RCD Scholarship</u></b>  The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County (RCD) has five Scholarships of \$1,000 available to college bound <b>high school seniors</b> located in the greater San Diego area.</p>	San Diego, CA	April 10, 2017
<p><b><u>LA County 2nd Annual Kid's Ag Day (Antelope Valley)</u></b>  The program is open to students in <b>grades 3-4</b> in the Antelope Valley area.</p>	Lancaster, CA	April 12, 2017
<p><b><u>California Range &amp; Natural Resources Camp</u></b>  Application is now open! Range Camp is an environmental science &amp; management camp for high school students from across California.  <b>Application deadline: April 28, 2017.</b></p>	Half Moon Bay, CA	June 18-23, 2017
<p><b><u>Yolo County Farm Connection Day</u></b>  The annual farm day is offered to students in <b>grades K-6</b> to learn all about agriculture.</p>	Woodland, CA	May 5, 2017
<p><b><u>El Dorado County's Farm Day</u></b>  The program is open to <b>3rd grade</b> students. El Dorado Ag in the Classroom also offers Discover Field Trips for <b>preschool and kindergarten</b> students.</p>	Placerville, CA	May 9, 2017
<p><b><u>2017 Ag Day LA</u></b>  The program is open to students in <b>grades 3-4</b> across Los Angeles County.</p>	Pomona, CA	May 17-18, 2017
<p><b><u>AgVentures! Learning Center</u></b>  Tours of the Learning Center are available year-round for <b>elementary</b> school students. Cost is \$3 per student.</p>	Tulare, CA	(Year-Round)
<p><b><u>Winter Field Trips of the UC Santa Cruz Farm</u></b>  The program is offered for students in <b>grades 3-5</b>. Cost is \$125 per class.</p>	Santa Cruz, CA	January - March, 2017



### Show Your Support for Agricultural Literacy

Help us continue providing programs and materials that create an awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students. Make a one-time or recurring [donation](#).

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