



Cream of the Crop

A harvest of ideas for educators

October 2017



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Fantastic Ag Fact:

George Washington Carver developed 118 products from sweet potatoes including glue for postage stamps!



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Golfers get ready to hit the greens at the Swing to Link golf event September 13 in Poppy Hills.



Teacher Feature

Kaitlin Musser

Franklin Classical Middle School
Long Beach, CA

"Look at Agriculture... Organically"
Grant Recipient

Describe your grant project.

Franklin Classical Middle School is nestled right in the middle of the 'food desert' of downtown Long Beach. The majority of the housing is comprised of cement apartments and various shelters and transitional housing. With such a demographic, the concept of growing fresh fruits and vegetables seems impossible. We started the school garden five years ago to get kids outside, dirty and experiencing where food comes from and how it's harvested. We grow ingredients and regularly have salsa parties. We even started the school year off with fig smoothies!



How have you used Ag in the Classroom to improve your classroom?

Ag in the Classroom is so vital in connecting like-minded folks together to make a difference. Many times as volunteers, my husband and I feel ill-

prepared and not equipped to handle the school garden. Being able to look up lesson plans, activity guides and stories of other successful garden programs really motivates and encourages us to dig in and just keep growing.

What are you looking forward to most this year?

I am looking forward to not only seeing how excited returning students are to the garden, but the thrill new middle schoolers experience. This program is after school and completely voluntary for the Franklin students. They do not have to come and collect recyclables or mix compost. They even give up Saturdays to go on field trips to local green fairs and arboretums without truly needing to by school mandate. And yet they come. They work hard and they taste new vegetables they have never even heard of. This demographic is hard to gauge and getting to see the glimmer of excitement as they bite into a fresh tomato is beyond wonderful.

Why do you think learning about where our food and fiber comes from is important?

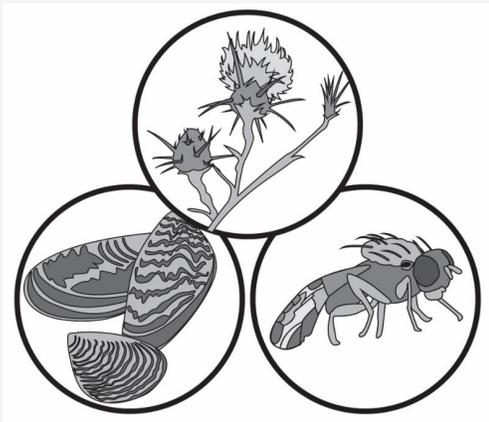
100% of the student population is on free lunch and breakfast. They survive off local gas station fare and I have sadly witnessed them throw away fresh fruit or vegetables provided in their state approved meals. The result is obvious with low focus, obesity, and behavioral problems. Giving the students ownership and knowledge of how to feed themselves and have a healthy lifestyle is actually giving them worth. I have seen students willing to eat a fig if they themselves have put the labor into helping that fig tree fruit. I am not an expert by any means but I have seen just how powerful school gardens are in transforming a community.

What encouragement would you give to teachers wanting to teach in more innovative ways?

Don't give up. It's slow to see a seed make its way to the surface, but with all you give it will grow. We will grow. We are not in this alone. School gardens do make a difference and it can cross over all demographics of economy, race and ages. It is a worthwhile fight and I am thankful for organizations like Ag in the Classroom that make it clear we are not alone.

 **Featured Resource**

Invasive Species



Moths, flies, and mites - Oh my! Get the facts to help prevent the damage caused by invasive species to California's Crops. We have a LIMITED SUPPLY of physical copies to send to teachers AT NO COST! Learn about the Asian Citrus Psyllid, the European Grapevine Moth, and more! Packets include Fact and Activity Sheets and a variety of activities.

[Order yours today!](#)



Nature Works Grants



Grants of \$2,000 will be awarded to 60 public or charter schools across the United States. These grants are designed to support projects that implement green infrastructure to address local environmental challenges. These include: access to healthy food, air quality, climate change, and storm water collection. Young people will work as social innovators to help their communities through project design and implementation.

Deadline: November 3, 2017
[Apply Online!](#)



Imagine this... Story Writing Contest

California students in grades 3-8 creatively explore where their food and fiber comes from by writing narrative stories. The winning stories from each grade are illustrated by high school art students and published in our annual story book, "Imagine this... Stories Inspired by Agriculture". Winning authors receive an e-reader and other prizes. Contest aligned to C.C.S.S.

Annual deadline: November 1. Find out more [here!](#)

Want to go to Maine next summer?

Mark your calendars for June 26-29, 2018. Attend the 2018 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Portland, Maine. Surround yourself with educators passionate about agriculture. Find out more by visiting agclassroom.org/conferences.

Farm Academy Live

Farm Academy Live is a FREE, interactive, video conferencing program built to meet the Common Core State Standards for grades 3-4. Each lesson provides students with a hands-on, engaging activity. Raw products are sent directly into the classroom for the students to physically touch and see. Using the latest video conferencing technology, the 45- to 60-minute lessons are taught by the Farm Academy Live teacher. Find out more [here!](#)



For Educators

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date

<u>Life Lab Workshops</u> Life Lab has trained tens of thousands of educators across the nation! Sign up today for one of their many workshops this summer and fall!	Santa Cruz, CA	Fall 2017
<u>San Diego County Teacher Resource Fair</u> Held at the Del Mar Fairgrounds from 4pm to 6pm. Make learning come alive in your garden and classroom by incorporating lessons about agriculture. Garden-based and ag-based learning can inspire the next generation of farmers, veterinarians, and chefs. Meet local farmers and collect great resources!	Del Mar, CA	October 12, 2017
<u>California Science Education Conference</u> Hosted and organized by the California Science Teachers Association (CSTA). The annual event takes place over 2 ½ days. Over 1,800 science educators from around the state are expected to attend this year's conference. Well-known by science educators as the place to make connections, generate new ideas, energize their teaching, and learn and grow as professionals.	Sacramento, CA	October 13-14, 2017
<u>California Dream'n - Afterschool Conference</u> The symposium focuses on the innovation that occurs every day in expanded learning sites across California. Topics to be covered include Continuous Quality Improvement, effective site leadership, inspiring and supporting line staff, school and district partnership, and innovative practices related to the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California; as well as cutting edge topics such as Summer Learning, Social-Emotional Learning, and STEM.	Sacramento, CA	October 20-21, 2017
<u>Educational Garden Design Element Video Lab</u> We want you to share your garden or farm! Submit your video before the end of National Farm to School Month (October 31, 2017) and you will be entered in a random drawing to win one of two \$250 Whole Kids Foundation Grants or a collection of garden education books!	Nationwide	October 31, 2017

For Youth

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<u>AgVentures! Learning Center</u> Tours of the Learning Center are available year-round for elementary school students. Cost is \$3 per student.	Tulare, CA	(Year-Round)



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](#).