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

Got Guts? Ag-Bite

Hass avocados account for 95 percent of California's crop.
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](http://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](http://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.


**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.

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

[www.foodmuseum.com](http://www.foodmuseum.com)

**County - Local Events**

**Jan. 21, 2015** AgVenture San Joaquin County - Stockton
[www.sjfb.org](http://www.sjfb.org)

**Feb. 5, 2015** Napa County Teacher Appreciation Dinner
[www.napafarmbureau.org](http://www.napafarmbureau.org)

**Feb. 11, 2015** DISCOVER El Dorado County's Agriculture Teacher Workshop
[www.agintheclass-edc.org](http://www.agintheclass-edc.org)

**March 3, 2015** AgVenture San Joaquin County - Lodi
[www.sjfb.org](http://www.sjfb.org)

**March 10-11, 2015** Kern County Farm Bureau's 30th annual Farm Day in the City
[www.kerncfb.com](http://www.kerncfb.com)

**March 12, 2015** Kings County Farm Day
[kcflb.org/farm-day](http://kcflb.org/farm-day)

**March 17, 2015** Solano County "Youth Ag Day"
[www.scfair.com/youthagday.html](http://www.scfair.com/youthagday.html)

**March 17-18, 2015** Sonoma County Ag Days
[www.sonomafb.org/Annual+Events](http://www.sonomafb.org/Annual+Events)
March 25, 2015 EXPLORE El Dorado County's Unique Agriculture

www.agintheclass-edc.org

Show Your Support for Agricultural Literacy
Help us continue to provide programs and materials to create an awareness and understanding of agriculture among California's educators and students.

Make a one-time or recurring donation.