



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Fantastic Ag Fact:

Citrus fruits of one variety or another are available year-round from California, Arizona, and Florida.



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Photo of the Month:
Lynne Fluty's fourth-grade class performed a citrus taste test.



Teacher Feature

Sergio de Alba

Teaches: Sixth Grade/School Garden Coordinator

School: R.M. Miano Elementary in Los Baños, California

Sergio de Alba has been teaching for 16 years. Sergio helped his school build their first garden in 2001. Sixteen years later, the school now has twenty gardens and has received over 80 awards. In November 2015, the school renovated their garden beds. In spring of 2016, Sergio received a *Look at Agriculture... Organically!* grant for the *We Are What We Eat* initiative. Sergio continues to lead the effort in planting the beds and teaching students how to grow, harvest, prepare, and enjoy fruits and vegetables.



What inspires you to teach about agriculture?

Living in the heart of the Central Valley we are all affected by agriculture in one way or another. As educators I believe that we need to teach our students the

significance that agriculture has to our overall success as a community as well as a country. By teaching my students the role that agriculture has on the varied facets of our lives, they learn to appreciate the importance of this industry.

Tell us about the latest news with your *We Are What We Eat* project.

Our garden beds are built and filled with soil. Half of the beds are planted with asparagus, honeyberries, blackberries, raspberries, and currants. We plan on planting tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, cabbage, broccoli, and lettuce in the near future. We also planted fig trees on the perimeter of our garden to help tie our garden to lessons on ancient Egypt and the California fig industry. Connecting a historically important fruit to our current lives help students make powerful connections to the importance of agriculture.

What advice do you have for teachers who are just starting their garden programs?

Enjoy what you are creating. Do not allow the struggles that come with producing a new, innovative program to bring you down. I remember when I first brought the idea to our principal. There was a lot to think about, but fortunately Mrs. Ward saw the benefits this project could create for our students, and she ensured that we would be able to get our garden program started. We never stopped believing in what we could accomplish and 16 years later our program is stronger than ever.



Imagine this... 2016 State Winners Announced



3rd Grade
4th Grade
5th Grade
6th Grade
7th Grade
8th Grade

Julia Daniels
Skylar Fredieu
Sahib Sangha
Grace Reis
Kylie Daws
Will Morris



Honorable Mention
Katelyn Warmerdam
Hayle Chavez



The 2016 State Winners for the [*Imagine this... Story Writing Contest*](#) have now been announced!

Learn the titles of this year's winning stories, and find out where these students come from: [2016 State Winners](#).

The awards ceremony will be held March 22, 2017, in Sacramento. The next edition of the book, *Stories Inspired by Agriculture 2016* will debut at the ceremony.

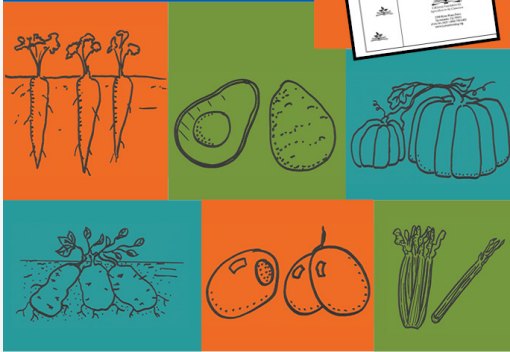


Edible Plant Parts - Back in Print!

Print copies of the Edible Plant Parts unit (grades 2-4) are now available. Request your [free, print copy](#) today!

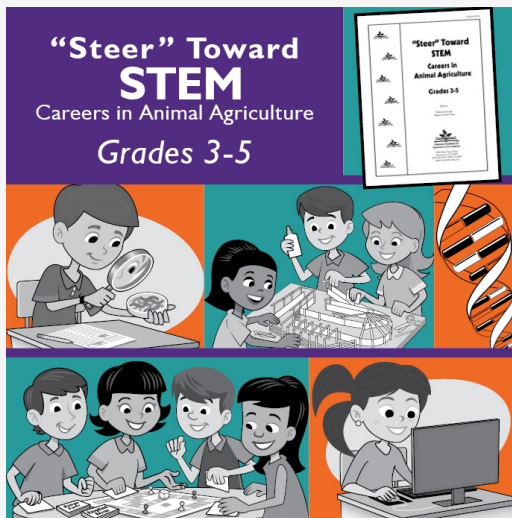
This unit allows students and teachers to examine the six basic plant parts (roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds) in a unique way. Through hands-

Edible Plant Parts Grades 2-4



on activities, students will learn about the different plant parts, as well as how to include fruits and vegetables in their daily meals as part of a healthy diet.

"Steer" Toward STEM- Back in Print!



The "Steer" Toward STEM: Careers in Animal Agriculture unit (grades 3-5) is now back in stock. Request your [free, print copy](#) today!

This unit promotes the development of STEM abilities and critical thinking skills, while fostering an appreciation for the people involved in livestock production. The curriculum includes real-life challenges for students to investigate, inquiry-based labs, and opportunities to plan and construct models.

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 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

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

California Fertilizer Foundation: School Garden Grant Program



The [California Fertilizer Foundation \(CCF\)](#) provides 24 grants of \$1,200 each to schools throughout California (12 awarded twice a year). The next deadline is January 15, 2017. Apply online.

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



Community Events

For Educators

<p>California Farm to School and Garden Conference Explore ways to connect the garden, cafeteria and classroom. The event is organized by California Farm to School Network. Registration is \$295, and the deadline is January 6, 2017.</p>	Modesto, CA	March 27-29, 2017
<p>National Science Teachers Association Conference Discover the latest content, teaching strategies and research at this event organized by the National Science Teachers Association. Registration is \$275. Explore 7 ways to get funding to attend.</p>	Los Angeles, CA	March 27-29, 2017
<p>NGSS and Common Core in the Garden Workshops Engage students in standards through your school garden. The event is offered by Life Lab. Graduate credit is available. Fees vary with location.</p>	Santa Cruz, CA or Your School Garden Location	March 2017

For Youth

<p>San Joaquin County's Ag Venture in Stockton Ag Venture is a program for San Joaquin County 3rd grade students.</p>	Stockton, CA	January 18, 2017
<p>World Ag Expo School Tours Tours are available for junior high, high school, and college students. Admission is \$5 per student.</p>	Tulare, CA	February 16, 2017
<p>San Joaquin County's Ag Venture in Lodi Ag Venture is a program for San Joaquin County 3rd grade students.</p>	Lodi, CA	February 28, 2017

<u>2017 Ag Career Expo</u> Junior high and high school students will have the opportunity to meet ag industry professionals.	Tulare, CA	March 15, 2017
<u>Kern County's Farm Day in the City</u> The program is open to students in grades 2-4 .	Bakersfield, CA	March 21-22, 2017
<u>LA County 2nd Annual Kid's Ag Day (Antelope Valley)</u> The program is open to students in grades 3-4 in the Antelope Valley area.	Lancaster, CA	April 12, 2017
<u>Yolo County Farm Connection Day</u> The annual field trip is offered to students in grades K-6 , to learn all about agriculture.	Woodland, CA	May 5, 2017
<u>El Dorado County's Farm Day</u> The program is open to 3rd grade students. El Dorado Ag in the Classroom also offers Discover Field Trips for preschool and kindergarten students.	Placerville, CA	May 9, 2017
<u>2017 Ag Day LA</u> The program is open to students in grades 3-4 across Los Angeles County.	Pomona, CA	May 17-18, 2017
<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)
<u>Winter Field Trips of the UC Santa Cruz Farm</u> The program is offered for students in grades 3-5 . Cost is \$125 per class.	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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