



Cream of the Crop

A harvest of ideas for educators

April 2017



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Fantastic Ag Fact:

California produces 90% of our nation's broccoli.

 Share the Crop



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Photo of the Month: Judy Culbertson, our Executive Director, attended the National Science Teacher Association Conference in Los Angeles and shared our free teaching resources with science teachers!



Teacher Feature

Elizabeth Bundschu-Mooney

Teaches: 4th Grade

School: Coronado Elementary in Richmond, CA

What is your "Plant, Grow, Taste, Organically!" project about?

Our California Ag in the Classroom project, "Plant, Grow, Taste, Organically!" is geared directly to teach students about the benefits of gardening, to increase awareness of the food

they eat at home and at school, and to bring an understanding of the word "organic" to students. We plant around the weather with seeds in the fall and seedlings in the spring to ensure production before the end of the school year. We plant, we grow and we taste. Students learn about plants they have never seen before, such as Bok Choy, Kale, and Brussels sprouts. They also learn about some all-time favorites: mesclun lettuce, radishes, spinach, broccoli, and cauliflower. This year we are growing cheddar cauliflower and six varieties of Kale along with a variety of pizza sauce herbs: Italian and Greek oregano, lemon and lime thyme, and a golden sage. This year as the project has evolved, I am bringing an Earth Box to the Pre-School teacher so she can create a garden right outside her classroom. It is never too early to teach agriculture.



How long have you been teaching agriculture in your classroom?

I have been teaching for 15 years and I have always taught some form of agriculture. I received a California Garden Grant in 2006 and worked with a 4/5/6 special education classroom at Grant Elementary to create a container garden on the blacktop. We garnered some publicity to promote our school garden with a local San Francisco news weather anchor, Roberta Gonzales. Last year, I created a new container garden at Downer Elementary with 4/5/6 special education students thanks to California Ag in the Classroom. This year I am teaching 4th grade at Coronado Elementary, a newly built school with a garden that was just waiting for my students to bring to life. I am looking forward to applying for Agriculture in the Classroom's Literacy for Life grant and any other grant that will promote agriculture in the classroom.

What inspired you to start teaching agriculture in your classroom?

I come from a family of farmers. My mother was raised in Illinois on a soybean and corn farm and my father's family has grown wine grapes in Sonoma since 1858 so agriculture comes easy to me. I also owned a garden and gift shop in Hawaii before I became a teacher, so I was in training, so to speak. I have always had my hands in dirt and I am never afraid to get them dirty. I take every opportunity to tie our learning to our garden. Math, science, engineering, technology, art, music, and physical education are all integrated and it all begins in the garden. This year I attended the California Ag in the Classroom Conference in Sacramento and one of my favorite activities that inspired me was visiting the UC Davis facilities including the greenhouses, swine, and dairy barns. I brought back many activities to enhance my lessons.

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

One piece of wisdom for teachers just starting to teach agriculture in the classroom would be to start small and see how much time you can allot to the garden. I always plant when the weather cools and the rain begins. This ensures the watering will take place in the event classroom lessons keep you from tending to a watering schedule. I always train a few students at a time and then they become the trainers. It depends on the type of garden space you have. Lessons can always be enhanced from the classroom by going out to the garden or

bringing the garden back into the classroom. I like to let the plants go to seed at the end of the year and harvest the seeds to use the following year. I also use nutrition as a starting point and eating with my students gives me an opportunity to talk agriculture. Apply for grants to help fund your garden and most importantly, get there and have fun! I highly recommend attending the California Ag in the Classroom Conference where you will be given many resources to help with your garden lessons.



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 Make 'n' Takes, Exhibit at the conference, or host a "A Taste of CA" dinner table.

[Submit your proposal today!](#)



LearnAboutAg®

Look at Agriculture... Organically!

Grant Application NOW OPEN!

Deadline: May 15, 2017



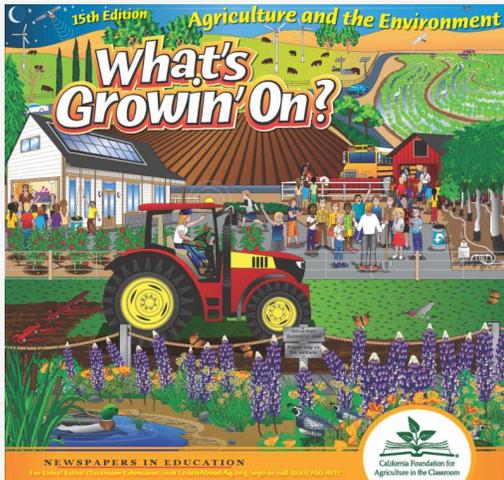
The *Look at Agriculture... Organically!* grants are designed to creatively enhance the understanding of organic agriculture for kindergarten through eighth grade students. Grants of up to \$1,000 will be provided to K-8 educators nationwide.

[Apply online!](#)



Featured Resource

What's Growin' On? Agriculture and the Environment



The newest edition of the *What's Growin' On?* student newspaper shows the close connection between how food is grown, how farms are sustainable, and the role all of us have in taking care of the environment. Featured this year are citizen science and service learning projects for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

[Order your free classroom set today!](#)

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 U.S. 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 a water efficiency theme. The contest is provided by The Sacramento Bee's Newspapers 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

California Fertilizer Foundation Grant



The California Fertilizer Foundation (CCF) provides 24 grants of \$1,200 each to schools throughout California (12 awarded twice a year). At the end of each year, winning schools can re-apply for a progress grant of \$1,500 and a free agricultural field trip. Through the garden program, CFF provides direct funding to California schools for garden projects. For more information, please contact Kayla Gangl at (916) 574-9744.

15, 2018 [Apply online.](#)

Deadline: June 30, 2017 and January

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

Community Events

For Educators

<p>2017 First Peas to the Table Contest! 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.</p>	<p>Nationwide</p>	<p>Contest ends May 15, 2017</p>
<p>Project Learning Tree Restoration Institute Use curriculum to create and use wildlife habitat at your school! Enjoy three days of hands-on lessons to help teach common core and NGSS. Registration deadline: June 9, 2017</p>	<p>Carmichael, CA</p>	<p>June 27-29, 2017</p>
<p>Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT) 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.</p>	<p>Meadow Valley, Sonora, Shingletown or Arcata</p>	<p>Summer 2017</p>

For Youth

<p>2017 RCD Scholarship The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County (RCD) has five Scholarships of \$1,000 available to college bound high school seniors located in the greater San Diego area.</p>	<p>San Diego, CA</p>	<p>April 10, 2017</p>
<p>LA County 2nd Annual Kids' Ag Day (Antelope Valley) The program is open to students in grades 3-4 in the Antelope Valley area.</p>	<p>Lancaster, CA</p>	<p>April 12, 2017</p>
<p>Yolo County Farm Connection Day The annual farm day is offered to students in grades K-6 to learn all about agriculture.</p>	<p>Woodland, CA</p>	<p>May 5, 2017</p>
<p>El Dorado County's Farm Day The program is open to 3rd grade students. El Dorado Ag in the Classroom also offers Discover Field Trips for preschool and kindergarten students.</p>	<p>Placerville, CA</p>	<p>May 9, 2017</p>

<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>Summer Steam Maker Festival</u> Take a free field trip to the San Diego Fair! Demonstrations, hands-on activities, and challenges. Registration deadline: Friday, May 12, 2017	Del Mar, CA	June 14, 2017
<u>California Range & Natural Resources Camp</u> Application is now open! Range Camp is an environmental science & management camp for high school students from across California. Application deadline: April 28, 2017	Half Moon Bay, CA	June 18-23, 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)



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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