



Cream of the Crop

A harvest of ideas for educators

January 2019



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Fantastic Ag Fact:

California produces 100% of United States almonds.



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Third graders from San Diego County learning about agriculture and growing healthy plants!



Teacher Feature

Sergio de Alba, 2010 CFAITC Outstanding Educator

Teaches: Sixth Grade/
School Garden Coordinator

School: R.M. Miano Elementary

County: Merced

Sergio de Alba has been teaching for 18 years. Sergio helped his school build their first garden in 2001. Seventeen years later, the school now has thirteen gardens and has received over 100 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 building 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 17 years later our program is stronger than ever.



Seed Survivor is in California!

California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom is hosting Seed Survivor Mobiles, two **FREE** plant nutrient classrooms on wheels,

now through March 2019! During this time, two mobile classrooms will be traveling throughout California to help teach plant nutrient units to students in grades 3-6.



This educational display will be visiting **Central California** schools on the following dates:

January 7 - January 11: Fresno/Kings County
January 14 - January 18: Tulare County
January 21 - January 25: Fresno/Kings County
January 28 - February 1: Madera County
February 4 - February 8: Merced County
February 11 - February 15: Stanislaus County

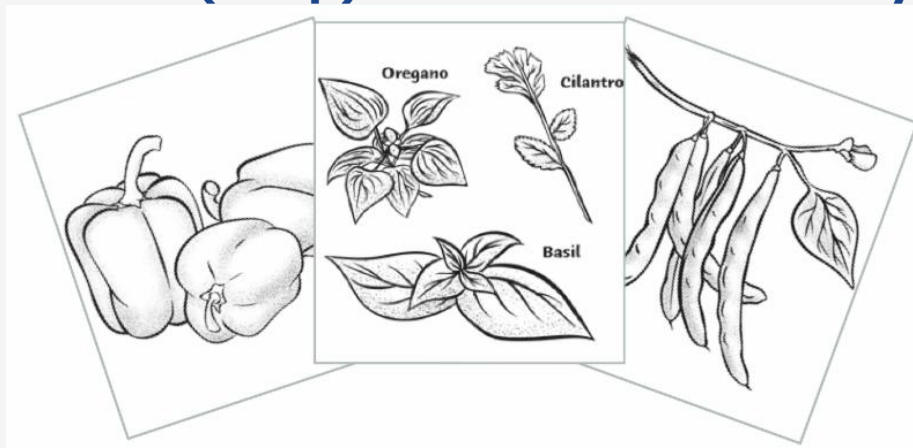
The registration form is available on the Seed Survivor website. [Register online now](#) for when the display is in an area near you!

Please email caseedsurvivor@gmail.com with any questions.

We are also looking for staff to help teach these units. If you have a passion for teaching and for agriculture, contact us today to learn more about this paid position!

Featured Resource

NEW: Bell Pepper, Herb and Green (Snap) Bean Fact and Activity Sheets



Learn all about bell peppers, herbs and green (snap) beans! We have created new Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheets to teach all you need to know about these commodities. [Download now](#) and start learning how

they get from farm to you!



Grant Feature

President's Environmental Youth Award

Apply or encourage a student you know to apply for PEYA and see what a difference they can make for the environment with an award-winning project. Applicants from all 50 states and U.S. territories are eligible to compete for a regional certificate of special recognition and a national Presidential award.



Applications are now being accepted through February 1, 2019.

[Apply today!](#)



More Ways to LearnAboutAg[®]

Stay up to date with National Ag in the Classroom

National Agriculture in the Classroom supports state programs by providing a network that seeks to improve agricultural literacy - awareness, knowledge, and appreciation - among PreK-12 teachers and their students. Stay up to date with their happenings by subscribing to their newsletter. Subscribe [here](#) and check out the amazing lesson plan matrix [here!](#)

AgForKids.com

We see plants all around us, every day. From trees to flowers to the grass in the park, there's no doubt they look great. But there are so many more cool things about plants. Like the fact that they taste great. And did you know that we even wear plants as clothes! Let's explore the world of plants, starting right now. Learn by [playing online!](#)

Want to go to Arkansas next summer?

Mark your calendars for June 18-21, 2019. Attend the 2019 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. Surround yourself with educators passionate about agriculture. Find out more [here!](#)



Community Events

For Educators

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
SMUD Workshops Make STEAM education come alive for your students with free, professional workshops that	Sacramento, CA	Year-Round (including summer)

include hands-on activities and materials. K-12 teachers and students will be inspired and motivated to learn from a variety of resources including workshops, games and activities, printed materials and virtual field trips.		
<u>Powerhouse Science Center</u> For over 65 years, Powerhouse Science Center has been dedicated to partnering with educators across Northern California. Visit the center to try the hands-on labs, workshops and programs that are aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and focus on providing opportunities for mastering disciplinary core ideas (DCIs) and Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs).	Sacramento, CA	Year-Round (including summer)

For Youth

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<u>Tulare County Farm Bureau Calendar Art Contest</u> In recognition of National Ag Week, March 18-22, 2019, Tulare County Farm Bureau and the Tulare County Office of Education will hold a calendar art contest for Tulare County students in grades K-12. A total of 14 winners will be selected for the 12-page, full color calendar from the following grade categories: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12. A special prize will be awarded for the best overall entry. This year's theme: "Tulare County Agriculture: Full S.T.E.A.M. Ahead"	Tulare County	Due by February 15, 2019
<u>Hilmar Cheese Company School and Youth Tours</u> Join us for the most fun and educational field trip in the Central Valley! Free for all public, private and home schools associated with a school district. Organized and led by trained tour guides, safe and fully accessible. All students receive free cheese samples, a hairnet, Daisy's Dairy "ABCs" and a souvenir pencil.	Hilmar, CA	Year-Round
<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 [donation](#) today!

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