



Cream of the Crop

A harvest of ideas for educators

July 2019



California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom



Fantastic Ag Fact:



Pears are one of the few fruits that does not ripen on the tree, so growers pick the fruit when it is mature, but not yet ripe.

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California's Outstanding Educator, Chris Lavagnino, being recognized at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Arkansas.



LearnAboutAg

SAVE THE DATE: 2019 Agriculture in the Classroom Conference



**October 17-19, 2019
DoubleTree by Hilton Sonoma
Rohnert Park, CA**

General Registration: \$275
(includes all meals, resources and farm tours)

We are seeking enthusiastic presenters who would like to share their expertise, experience and educational resources with our attendees.

Proposals are now being accepted for:

Workshops*
Make 'n' Takes*
Exhibits
"A Taste of California"

Register Now!

**We offer a \$50 stipend for all workshop and Make 'n' Take presenters.*

 **Teacher Feature**

Julia Brewer

Grades taught: 9-12

School: Merced High School

County: Merced

1. How and when did you first learn of Ag in the Classroom?

I had the opportunity to learn about Ag in the Classroom back when I was in college. I knew it was a resource that could help me better teach my students about agriculture and wanted to give my students the best education about agriculture I could.

2. How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?

I am about to start my 3rd year teaching agriculture and love every minute of it. I have a passion for agriculture and want to instill the same passion into my students. My love for agriculture started in my high school agriculture class. I loved learning about an industry that produced the world's food and fiber. I began teaching so I could instill that same love I found into the younger generations. Giving students the ability and tools to educate others on all facets of agriculture gives me a sense of pride and it allows students to appreciate what all it takes to get their food to their tables. I feel proud and lucky that I get to go to work everyday and teach about something that I believe full heartedly in.



3. What is your favorite AITC program/resource/event and why?

I love that Ag in the Classroom gives grants to schools that are wanting to start anything agriculturally related. It allows for a source of funding that may not have been there to begin with. At Merced High we were able to build a 40 by 50 foot chicken coop and with the help from the grant we were able to buy supplies to help us get closer to completing the project. I think it is admirable that an organization is willing to spread the knowledge of agriculture to youth around the state.

4. Do you have any advice for other teachers on implementing agriculture into the classroom?

My advice would be have an idea and create it. Educational builds like that of the chicken coop allows for so much learning and growth, not only in you as an educator but in your students as well. Teaching the youth about agriculture is never a waste, we all are directly or indirectly connected to agriculture and all students should understand that. We were able to have multiple classes involved in the project. Our shop class helped build the coop, our vet science hatched eggs and dissected the eggs that didn't hatch, and it gives the whole school an opportunity to see the chickens daily. Don't hesitate to find something that will work with your school, students will learn and take ownership and the staff will support you. Teaching the youth about agriculture is very rewarding and I'm very thankful I had the opportunity to get a grant that would help us create a coop at Merced High.



Featured Resource

Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheets

California
Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheets
Information compiled by California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

These California-specific fact sheets include information about natural resources or commodity production, history, nutrition, top producing counties, and economic values. The activity sheets provide specific lesson ideas and fun facts for each topic. The lesson plan is aligned to current California Education Standards.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agricultural Water• Alfalfa• Almonds• Apples• Artichokes• Asparagus• Avocados• Beef• Bees• Bell Peppers• Blueberries• Cantaloupe• Cherries• Citrus Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cling Peaches• Corn• Cotton• Cut Flowers• Dairy• Dried Plums• Dry Beans• Eggs• Forest Resources• Fresh Carrots• Green (Snap) Beans• Herbs• Invasive Species• Lettuce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mushrooms• Pears• Pickling Cucumbers• Pistachios• Plant Nutrients - Nitrogen• Plant Nutrients - Phosphorus• Plant Nutrients - Potassium• Pork• Poultry• Processing Tomatoes• Rice• Spinach• Strawberries• Table Grapes• Walnuts
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Top 10 Ways to Use Agricultural Fact and Activity Sheets

- 1. Ag Literacy Events**
Information and fun activities for young students who are just starting to learn about agriculture.
- 2. Bulletin Board Ideas**
Assign each student a different commodity or natural resource. Students design a weekly bulletin board and engage their peers in a related activity.
- 3. World Geography Connection**
Where did these California commodities originate? Students create a world map, illustrating country of origins.
- 4. History Connection**
Highlight the dates mentioned on each commodity sheet. Create a timeline that goes all around the classroom, using words and images to record these significant moments in agriculture.
- 5. Math Connection**
Students use numbers found within the facts sheets to create an appropriate graph of their choice. For example, create a pie chart representing the percentage of ripestone peaches that are used for fruit cocktail, are canned and are eaten fresh.
- 6. Agricultural Marketing**
Students use the information on fact sheets to develop jingles, slogans, and commercials. Discuss the importance of a strong and positive marketing campaign for agriculture.
- 7. Agriscience Project Ideas**
Fact sheets are a wellspring of ideas for researching and experimenting about different agricultural commodities and natural resources.
- 8. Language Arts/English Connection**
Students read the front of the fact sheet and demonstrate their reading comprehension by writing a summary or writing questions and then exchanging with a partner. Students select an agricultural topic and write a research paper using proper grammar and citing of references.
- 9. Nutrition Connection**
Students analyze the nutritional values of various agricultural commodities and explain the human body's use of specific vitamins. Students identify where the commodities fit in the different food groups.
- 10. Add some spice to your lessons!** Find a new method for teaching everything from alfalfa to water.

This is one in a series of fact sheets compiled by the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (CAAITC). For additional educational materials, contact: CFAITC, 2000 River Street, Sacramento, CA 95833-3200 • (916) 661-6655 • (916) 704-1170 • Fax: (916) 661-6627
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California produces more than 400 different agricultural commodities, providing an abundance of fruits, vegetables, nuts, milk, nursery plants, flowers, fiber and livestock.

According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, our state produces nearly half of US-grown fruits, nuts and vegetables. Several crops enjoyed exclusively in California. Each sheet in this set introduces an agricultural commodity, plant nutrient or agricultural topic. Additionally, the sheets provide ideas for using this information in a lesson or activity.

Order your set today!

What to start your school year off with some extra money?!



We are excited to announce an upcoming 6-month Taste Test program for the 2019-2020 school year!* Participating educators will receive a resource binder full of standard-aligned activities and lessons that revolve around one crop per month to incorporate into their curriculum. A \$15 prepaid gift card will be provided each month to purchase the featured commodity.

Apply now if you're interested!

**School must have 80 percent or more of the students enrolled in Free and Reduced Price meal programs.*



Food and Farm Facts

Developed by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, Food and Farm Facts features facts about food in America, how it is grown and who produces it. The booklet contains color photographs and infographic style illustrations. [Get the book here!](#)

Farm Academy Live

Farm Academy Live offers classrooms virtual field trips to farms using interactive video conference technology. Trusted by teachers since 2009, 100,000 students across 33 states and four countries have benefited from this program. This 40-minute virtual tour of a farm teaches plant and animal science aligned to national science standards. The experience is enhanced by offering students the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities like ginning cotton by hand and mixing a feed ration for a dairy cow. 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, spring through summer!	Santa Cruz, CA	Spring - Summer 2019
<u>E.A.T. Foundation Summer 2019 Ag Tour and Seminars</u> The Ag Tour and Seminar, is a 3-day, 2 CE units workshop where agriculture and the classroom collide. The workshops include tours of local farms, dairies, and packing houses, as well as active participation in local farming and gardening techniques.	Hanford, CA	July 15-18, 2019
<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>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!

Stay Connected! @LearnAboutAg



