



Fantastic Ag Fact:



The navel orange got its name due to the button end resembling a belly button.

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Regional Winners of the 2019-2020 *Imagine this...* Contest have been announced! With nearly 1,000 stories submitted, 41 stories were selected as Regional Winners!

[Find them here!](#)



LearnAboutAg

Congratulations to the Literacy for Life Grant Recipients!

The Literacy for Life Grants, sponsored by the Oreggia Family Foundation, are designed to help initiate new projects or expand existing ones that promote agricultural literacy. Grants of up to \$500 are provided to California K-12 educators to support the integration of agriculture into regular instruction.

With more than 70 applications, the competition was steep! View the list of recipients and their projects, which will promote hands-on learning across California during the 2019-2020 school year!

[Find them here!](#)

Suzanne Squires**Grade taught:** 6th-8th**School:** Los Olivos Elementary**County:** Santa Barbara**1. How and when did you first learn of Ag in the Classroom?**

I was introduced to AITC by a colleague at our local high school. She suggested that I apply for a Literacy for Life Award which put me in touch with all of the valuable tools and networking that AITC has to offer. Since that time, I have enjoyed presenting at various conferences and developing enriching curriculum opportunities for other teachers.

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

I began teaching agriculture almost 30 years ago to students long before I was a teacher. As a quarantine biologist for the County of Santa Barbara, I went around to the local schools and taught students about invasive species by bringing in live sterile Med-Flies and talking about the importance of keeping invasive species out of our state. Twenty-five years ago when I became a teacher I continued to integrate agriculture into my science classroom.

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

AITC conferences are a meaningful way to invigorate any teacher's classroom with hands-on activities and materials in just a few days. The collaboration and connection with other teachers from around the state is also a plus. I also use the agricultural fact and activity sheets. They give students a quick informational text reading that is accompanied by fun, hands-on activities that reinforce the reading.

4. Describe any agriculture-based projects you have been involved in lately.

I am continuing to improve my popcorn genetics project which uses four colors (red, blue, yellow, white) of popcorn kernels. Each year the 6th graders plant the parent generation and learn about the structure of a corn plant and how it reproduces. The 7th graders harvest the F1 generation, count it for genetic studies and conduct a taste test on the different color kernels. The 8th graders harvest the F2 generation, count it for genetic studies and then market their corn by developing a class logo, packaging and display box to sell their popcorn at school.

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

All teachers tend to teach a more fulfilling lesson when the teacher

becomes the facilitator and the students become responsible for their own learning. Agriculture can fit into any curriculum area (science, history, writing, mathematical computation, engineering, technology). I would suggest to a teacher to start small by looking for something in their curriculum that they (or their students) might be passionate about, like eating healthy snacks or creating a floral arrangement for Mother's Day. Once you start adding little things into your classroom, then you can expand upon the topics that your students want to explore.

Featured Resource

2019 Food and Farm Facts Book and Map



The 2019 Food and Farm Facts booklet developed by the American Farm Bureau Federation features educational facts about food in America, how it is grown and who produces it. It is a great resource for educators, 4-H/FFA members, agriculture organizations and the public.

[Order Your Set Today!](#)

Grant Feature

What grants will you apply for in 2020?

There are many funding sources available to expand agricultural literacy in your classroom! Possibilities are endless - school gardens, agriculture libraries, field trips and more! You just have to know where to look!

We have developed a list of our favorite grants! Plan to apply in 2020 and enhance your agricultural literacy efforts!



[Explore Online!](#)

Mark your calendar for June 23-26, 2020. Attend the 2020 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. Surround yourselves with educators passionate about incorporating agriculture into their classrooms! Find out more [here!](#)

National Farm to Cafeteria Conference

The 10th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference will be held April 21-23, 2020 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This conference, hosted by the National Farm to School Network is the only national gathering of stakeholders from throughout the country. Find out more [here!](#)



Community Events

For Educators

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<p>Life Lab Workshops Life Lab has trained tens of thousands of educators across the nation! Sign up today for one of their many workshops, spring through summer!</p>	Santa Cruz, CA	Spring - Summer 2019
<p>Powerhouse Science Center 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).</p>	Sacramento, CA	Year-Round (including summer)

For Youth

Event Name and Description	Event Location	Event Date
<p>Hilmar Cheese Company School and Youth Tours 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.</p>	Hilmar, CA	Year-Round
<p>AgVentures! Learning Center Tours of the Learning Center are available year-round for elementary school students. Cost is \$3 per student.</p>	Tulare, CA	Year-Round
<p>McKellar Farms McKellar Family Farms is located in the heart of the world's most productive agricultural region -- California's Central Valley. Farmers around here feed the world. Literally! We can't wait to take you on a behind-the-scenes tour of our citrus farm. Come and let your senses run wild as you see, taste, touch, feel and smell some of California's juiciest gems!</p>	Ivanhoe, CA	Fall and Spring

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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