

# Cream of the Crop

A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

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## Gardens require planning, money to successfully grow

**P**ull out the shovels – it’s time to start digging. State Superintendent Delaine Eastin set a goal in 1996 for “a garden in every school” by the year 2000. That means this fall it’s high time to get growing!

Before the dirt starts flying, however, take time to plan and to raise necessary funds.

For the planning component, start by contacting the Nutrition Services Division of the state’s Department of Education (916/ 322-4792). It offers

free of charge to California teachers “A Garden In Every School,” a must-have comprehensive packet of school gardening how-to’s. Contents include information about gardens and nutrition; suggestions for books, resources and supplies; listings of pertinent websites; a vermicomposting guide; garden publication addresses; Food Guide Pyramid poster; and guidelines for financial assistance.

*That’s an important detail, because money doesn’t grow*  
See *Gardens*, page 6



Gardens have become increasingly popular with educators as a way to integrate agricultural awareness into their curriculum.

## Confer in Ventura!

**T**he coast should be clear this fall, but a guaranteed tidal wave of resources and ideas is forecast to sweep educators *into* Ventura for the annual California Conference for Agriculture in the Classroom Oct. 14 - 16.

**Registration is due Oct. 1.**

The polychromatic mosaic of Ventura County agriculture blended with the coastal setting makes an ideal site for the conference. “It enhances our goal – to enrich educators’ abilities to teach students why agriculture is still so important

See *Conference*, page 6

*Money doesn’t*

*grow on trees –*

*not even on*

*school garden*

*varieties.*

# Application deadline for Summer Ag Institute moves up — applications due by January 15

**T**imes they are a-changin'! Summer vacation historically allowed students to pitch in when agricultural demands needed all hands to help with harvest. Now it's the teachers who focus on agriculture during summer.

Their harvest — during the Foundation's Summer Agricultural Institute (SAI) — lasts five days in June and provides a bumper crop of resources, ideas and activities to help teach about agriculture's impact on the world. The hours are long, exhausting and incredibly fulfilling — *a lot like those of a farmer.*

**But, why does a teacher need to know about agriculture?** The best answer comes straight from the SAI'ers in a composite answer built of excerpts from their post-SAI evaluations.

Through the SAI, educators come to realize "... how thoroughly ag is integrated into nearly all aspects of our lives." ... "We take our food and fiber for granted. These necessities are obtained easily at a store, used, and discarded without any appreciation or thought as to how they are produced,

transported, or made safe."... "As consumers, all we care about is getting the product we want at the price we can afford." . . . "I see agriculture around me all the time, but ... I never realized how much our ag economy is crucial to California" ... "Not only have I learned a huge amount, but I am very sure of its place in education." ... "Thanks again for a wonderful week."

Judy Culbertson, Foundation executive director, adds, "We want to teach others to recognize how essential agriculture is to our society.



Former SAI'ers coach participants in curricular ideas.

Culturally, though, we don't comprehend agriculture's value in day-to-day life. . .

"The decisions we make which support our lifestyle choices often challenge the ability of agriculture to serve our nation. We must become aware of how our choices impact the industry which helps us to

***"The decisions we make which support our lifestyle choices often challenge the ability of agriculture to serve our nation."***

When you think about it," she says, "everyone is dependent upon a relatively small group of people to provide items we need for survival — food for nourishment and fiber for bodily protection.

survive," she continues.

**To boost their awareness, SAI participants:**

- ✿ hear from producers, processors and agribusiness people about agriculture's many sides;
- ✿ fly over the Sacramento Delta;
- ✿ stay overnight as guests of farmers and ranchers;
- ✿ compare notes with educators who utilize Ag in the Classroom techniques;
- ✿ receive bushels of resources and ideas relating to ag awareness;
- ✿ discover methods for incorporating ag information into existing curriculum.

One outcome of the Summer Agricultural Institute is the development of lesson plans by participants who choose to earn continuing education units through CSU, Chico. Two of those received this year follow. They easily can be adapted to fit other grade levels.



An airplane flight over the Sacramento Delta gives SAI participants a bird's-eye view of agriculture and its interconnectedness with water.

**Applications for the SAI are due earlier than in the past. "Now they must be returned postmarked by Jan. 15,"** says Teri Bontrager, SAI coordinator.

Thirty applicants will receive fully-paid scholarships to the SAI, to be held

June 19 - 23, 2000. "The earlier deadline means we can alert selected applicants early in the spring, which should help in making summer plans," says Teri.

To receive an application, call the Foundation at 800/ 700-AITC. It also can be downloaded from the Founda-

tion's web site at [www.cfaitc.org](http://www.cfaitc.org) under *Teacher Training*. When downloading, please note the form is in two parts, one to be filled out by the applicant, the other by a professional or personal associate offering a recommendation.



## "Sharing the Water" *By Nancy L. Harris, 1999 SAI Graduate*

### Purpose

To familiarize the students with problems connected to sharing water.

### Concepts

There is only so much water to go around. With that in mind:

- How should this water be managed?
- Can it be managed fairly (a key term with young students)?
- What role can students play in helping to conserve water so others may have their fair share?

### Materials

- Plastic water containers
- Water
- A letter to parent explaining activity

### Time

4 - 5 half hour blocks (*varies, depending on number of students involved*)

### Resource

"The Water Fact Book: California Agriculture and Its Use of Water" (Free to educators)  
California Farm Water Coalition  
717 K St, Suite 505  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916/ 441-7723 Fax 916/ 441-7842  
website: [www.cfwc.com](http://www.cfwc.com)

### Background Information

During the seven-year drought of the 1980s, many urban dwellers found themselves impacted. Farmers struggled to continue providing food and fiber to consumers with reduced water supplies.

**What happens when we don't have enough water to share?**

**How can each one of us play an important role in assuring that the next drought will find more awareness on the water issue?**

*It begins with education.*

Informing students of their roles will also educate their parents.

In 1995 in California, according to "The Water Fact Book", environmental usage was 46 percent of the water; urban share was 11 percent; and agriculture, 43 percent. In the year 2020, it is expected the environmental share will stay the same, the urban share will increase to 15 percent, and agriculture usage will be reduced to 39 percent.

### Procedure

*Note: Due to time constraints, I would limit students involved in the activity to six.*

This lesson is twofold: It familiarizes students with how much water we use as urban dwellers, and how we take water for granted.

Present three students with gallon jugs of water marked off with the urban, agricultural and environmental percentages of water use in California in 1995, and three others with the usages in 2020. The students take the jugs home and that night try to use only the amount of water allotted to urban usage. They should record their water usage choices.

Each group will share with the others how they used their water, how they felt when they didn't have enough water for their needs and what they did to conserve. They will ask the other students to contribute solutions to help conserve. The teacher should ask:

- **What will happen if we continue to use more urban water and give less to agriculture?**
- **What will happen to our food and fiber supply?**
- **How do farmers conserve water? Do they have a role in conservation? How do environmentalists conserve water?**
- **What can you and your parents do to conserve water?**

The entire class will draft a conservation document listing ways in which they will promise to conserve water, sign the document, share with their families and obtain their signatures, and post the document somewhere in their home where it can be seen by everyone as a reminder. Send a copy to an adopted farmer and challenge him to examine his water usage. Also, send a copy to the California Farm Water Coalition.

### Conclusion

Hopefully, a keen awareness will be made as to the problem facing water usage in the future if we do not do our part in conservation, and also to the problems farmers face as their usage becomes less and urban usage becomes greater. *Can we really learn to share water?*

## "Farm Graphs" *By Chris Martinez, 1999 SAI Graduate*

### Purpose

To practice reading and using graphs to display data.

### Concepts

- To decipher data from graphic displays
- To determine which type of graph would be most appropriate for different sets of data
- To be able to create a graph which effectively displays data

### Materials

- Farm Facts booklet
- Math book with examples of bar, circle, line graphs

### Time

1 50-minute session

### Resource

"Farm Facts" booklet, \$3  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
Public Relations Division, ATTN: Rita Walaszek  
225 Touhy Ave.  
Park Ridge, IL 60068 847/ 685-8858

### Background Information

A *circle graph* displays data as parts of a whole.

A *bar graph* displays data as a comparison. A *line graph* displays data as a change over time.

A graph should be constructed to show real differences in data.

### Procedure

Review circle, bar and line graphs and how they should display data. Be sure to emphasize labeling of the graph itself as well as the side and bottom.

Show examples of:

- a *line graph* that shows two sets of data (p. 12, "Gross and Net Incomes");
- a *bar graph* (p. 10, "Conservation Tillage");
- a *circle graph* (p. 13, "USDA Budget).

Have students find sets of data and graph them. Choose bar, circle and line graphs.

### Conclusion

Students will interpret data and appropriately graph in a bar, circle or line graph.

## Farm-City Week, November 19 - 25, encourages rural, urban focus during time of Thanksgiving

**O**pen your windows wide ... Farm-City Week, Nov. 19 - 25, is a window of opportunity for planting agriculture in your classroom.

This annual week-long celebration is observed nationally to strengthen the understanding of the farm-city connections that help provide the world with its food, fiber, florals and shelter.

Activities can range in complexity from seedling to full-grown-and-ready-to-harvest size. The most important factor is to do *something* to implant an awareness of agriculture's existence in the minds of students.

Even small bits of information help lay a foundation of awareness which will encourage young people to make thoughtful decisions in matters affecting agriculture as they live out their lives.

The possibilities for activities or lessons are endless, like weeds in a field just waiting to be pulled. But, don't reinvent the wheel. Take advantage of

some quick-to-implement ideas listed on page 5.

Or, order a lesson plan or two from the Foundation. Many of the plans and units distributed by the Foundation are available for viewing on and downloading from the website at [www.cfaitc.org](http://www.cfaitc.org). Under "Resource Materials" click on "Instructional Materials". Lesson plans can also be purchased from the Foundation with prices ranging from \$2 - \$10.

Borrowing ideas from other classrooms is great cross-pollination for making ideas bloom! One idea to consider comes from Arkansas as described in *Farm-City Connection*, the newsletter of the National Farm-City Council. Fourth and fifth grade students from two schools, one from rural Holly Grove, the other from urban Little Rock, learned about economics and science through agriculture. Both schools oversaw rice crops from start to finish.

*The possibilities  
for activities or  
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They acquired financing and found a farmer to loan the land and plant the crop. The students patiently watched their rice emerge from the ground. As their crops grew, the two schools traded e-mail messages. Students learned how to market their product and checked the futures market to decide the best time to sell. In addition to the economics, lessons on alternative energy sources were introduced as the students watched the solar power water pump flood the rice fields.

In California, the crop could remain rice or be changed to any of the state's 350 commodities. Communication between classrooms could be by computer, letter, video or newsletter. Discussions and experiments could focus on other alternative energy sources for operating pumps and other equipment used on farms and ranches.

Many regional entities are eager to help carry out educational projects like the one above. County Farm Bureaus, California Women for Agriculture chapters and commodity groups (listed in the Foundation's *Teacher Resource Guide*, available free of charge by calling 800/ 700-AITC) are good places to begin asking for assistance.

Following are quick ideas for class discussions and projects during National Farm-City Week – or any time! 🌱



While agricultural awareness can be incorporated into the classroom all during the year, National Farm-City Week is a natural time to emphasize how much farms depend on cities and cities depend upon farms. Hands-on activities set minds in motion thinking about how the two are connected.

## Quick ideas for class discussions, projects

- Contact your county Agricultural Commissioner to find out the top 10 commodities in your county. Discuss the water cycle and how evaporation, condensation, transpiration and precipitation affect the irrigation needs of two of the top commodities. What happens if there is not enough water to support the needs of the commodity – livestock or plant? What if there is too much water? How does this differ from the impacts a family in an urban area would face from too much/too little water?
- Have students check the fabric content tags of the shirts they are wearing. Graph the figures for natural, blends and synthetics. Are the natural fibers plant or animal fibers? Are the blends predominantly natural or synthetic? Where are the major regions of production for the natural fibers?



The California Young Farmers Art Contest reflects an artistic image of agriculture that can be captured on a single piece of paper.

- Take part in the California Young Farmers Art Contest "Impressions of California Agriculture" (see Calendar, page 8). Make it a schoolwide event. Display the artwork and have local agricultural professionals – farmers, ranchers, nurserypeople, grocers,

bank lenders, county ag commissioners, FFA teachers, 4-H leaders – be the judges. Ask students to write a paragraph explaining their artwork or a story complementing it.

- Make peanut, pistachio, walnut, or other "nutty" creatures with scraps of fabric, yarn, markers, glitter, sequins, paint, floral wire, etc. Write either a class story or individual stories about the creations. Include what growing conditions make for happy, healthy "creatures." What conditions make for cranky "creatures"?
- Draw a poster of or write a report about what the earth would look like if soil decomposers – earthworms, nematodes, bacteria, molds – did not exist. How do they help farmers grow crops? To fully understand, start a worm bin in class or in conjunction with a school garden. Use scraps from lunch to feed the worms. (The California Environmental Protection Agency's Integrated Waste Management Board offers the

vermicomposting guide "Worms, Worms, and Even More Worms." To order, contact the IWMB at 916/255-2385 or look them up on the web at [www.ciwmb.ca.gov](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov).



Nutty creatures set the stage for creativity, opening doors for activities or projects which focus on agriculture in an imaginative way.

- Plan a meal made only of commodities grown in your county. Try to keep all the ingredients true to what is produced in your region. For example, if the meal requires flour, is wheat grown in your county? What substitutes can be used if an ingredient is not available locally? Equate your meal to limitations pioneers faced before refrigeration and the transcontinental railroad.

## National Farm-City Council Supplies

The following supplies, specifically developed for Farm-City Week, are available to educators. Additional items also are available. Mail your order to: National Farm-City Council, Inc., 225 Touhy Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068; or fax your order to 847/ 685-8626. Make checks payable to National Farm-City Council, and allow two weeks for delivery. For more information, contact the council at 847/ 685- 8663.



<b>Farm-City Kit</b>	<b>\$ 7.00</b>
<b>"Farm-City Day" poem by Rebecca S. Dufrene</b>	<b>.10</b>
<b>Student Activity Sheets K-2 "Who Uses What?" (Pkg. of 50)</b>	<b>5.00</b>
<b>Student Activity Sheets 3-6 "A Day in the Life" (Pkg. of 50)</b>	<b>5.00</b>
<b>Get Your Popcorn brochure</b>	<b>.30</b>
<b>Bridging the Gap: Urban and Rural Youth brochure</b>	<b>.25</b>
<b>Fact Cards (Bundles of 100)</b>	<b>10.00</b>
<b>Farm-City, The History</b>	<b>.30</b>
<b>SLICE Kit (Student Lessons in Consumer Education) K-6</b>	<b>3.00</b>
<b>It's a Puzzlement! kit on cotton, wool and leather (K-6)</b>	<b>5.00</b>

## CA Heartland – field trips minus bus costs!

If a picture's worth a thousand words, what's the value of a video? In the case of *California Heartland*, it could easily be the price of a field trip.

*California Heartland*, public television's weekly half-hour series, spotlights the people and events that make California agriculture truly unique. Each episode features multiple topics in an upbeat style even kids enjoy.

Make *Heartland* your next field trip destination! Traveling to *Heartland* ag sites can complement curriculum almost as well as actual excursions.

To flavor classroom learning

agriculturally, for example, study the economics of value-added products like sun-dried tomatoes in episode 339. See the impact gardens have on a school yard in episode 332. And comprehend why the geography of the Central Valley creates one of the primary growing regions for cotton in episode 340. Of course, any *Heartland* video can provide prompts for student writing or research assignments.

Research topics on *Heartland's* website at [www.californiaheartland.com](http://www.californiaheartland.com). Individual tapes (\$15 + tax) or an entire series of 52 tapes (\$700 + tax) can be

purchased through the Foundation by calling 800/ 700-AITC. 🌿

### Heartland Broadcast Schedule

Eureka	KEET 13	Tuesday	7 pm
Fresno	KVPT 18	Wednesday	7:30 pm
Huntington Beach	KOCE 50	Friday	5:30 pm
Los Angeles	KCET 28	Saturday	10 am
Redding	KIXE 9	Sunday Monday	6 pm 12:30 pm
Reno	KNPB 5	Saturday	5 pm
Rohnert Park	KRCB 22	Saturday	7 pm
Sacramento	KVIE 6	Sunday Tuesday	6:30 pm 7 pm
San Bernardino	KVCR 24	Tuesday	7 pm
San Diego	KPBS 15 Cablevision 3	Sunday	1 pm 6:30 pm
San Francisco	KQED 9	Saturday	3 pm

## Enthusiasm runs sky high at AITC conference

continued from page 1

in today's high-tech, fast-paced life," says Teri Bontrager, conference coordinator.

Field trips to agricultural locations always steal the show, but motivation

"I attend many conferences each year . . ." wrote one participant. "The AITC conference is so well organized, full of information, great workshops, field trips, and most of all FUN! This is one conference that I never 'ditch' a session

***"This is one conference that I never 'ditch' a session or leave early!"***

comes in all forms: workshops and roundtables, a resource fair with items for purchase and for the taking, exposure to educators and agriculturists who cultivate ag awareness, and a showcase of teacher-developed activities.



Field trips to agricultural spots always get rave reviews.

or leave early!"

The conference is sponsored by the Foundation with help from many organizations, including Hansen Trust, Ventura County Farm Bureau and California Women for Agriculture. **To register:**

contact the Foundation at 800/ 700-AITC. The \$185 registration fee includes field trips and eight meals. One CEU is available from CSU, Chico for \$45.

Hotel reservations *must* be made through the Four Points Sheraton at 800/ 229-5732. Cost per night, at the AITC Conference rate, is \$89 plus 10 percent room tax. Reservations are not guaranteed after Oct. 1. 🌿



Hands-on learning works for adults, too!

## Gardens

continued from page 1

*on trees – not even on school garden varieties.* Yet, it's as essential an ingredient in a garden's productivity as are seeds, water, soil and fertilizer.

Beyond local fundraising and site monies, funding can be obtained on a limited basis through several agencies. See Resources, page 7, for a scattering of grants and gardening resources available to educators..

Workshops at the California Conference for Agriculture in the Classroom, Oct. 14 - 16 in Ventura, also will focus on gardens. See *Confer in Ventura*, page 1, for conference details. 🌿

# Resources inspire explorations into agriculture

## The Bookshelf



■ **My Favorite Tree: Terrific Trees of North America** (K - 6) Trees play a significant role in our history, traditions, ecology, economy and in the natural glory of our land. Examines the traits and uses of 26 North American trees from the ash to the yew, and describes notable or historic specimens. Includes bibliographical references and index. *Diane Iverson, Dawn Publications, Nevada City, CA, 1999. \$9.95 softbound at local bookstores.*

■ **Century Farm: One Hundred Years on a Family Farm** (2 - 8) Family anecdotes help to share the story of a 100 year farm as it grew from a barn, house & granary in the 1890s to a thriving dairy in the 1990s. Filled with photos selected from a century's worth of family albums. Provides a glimpse into the past and future of one American family farm. 32 pages *Chris Peterson, Boyds Mills Press, \$16.95 hardbound at local bookstores.*

■ **Garden Wizardry for Kids** (K-3) & (4-6) Two books for different age groups, both with the same title, provide a collection of more than 300 extraordinary experiments and projects with everything that grows. Clear text and easy-to-follow directions make it great for home or classroom. 220 and 224 pages, respectively. *Yvette Santiago Banek, Barrons Juveniles, \$14.95 and \$21.95 respectively, paperback at local bookstores.*

■ **California Children's 5 a Day-Power Play! Campaign** (4-5) School idea and resource mini-kit encourages eating five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Includes booklet, brochures, cookbook, rap tape. Activities cover history/social science, language arts, health, math, P.E., visual/performing arts, science. Available free to teachers in the 12-county Sacramento region, 10-county Fresno region, 2-county San Diego region, and Los Angeles County. \$10 charge to others; will be free to all by 2001. *CA Dept. of Health Services, Cancer Prevention & Nutrition Prog.,*

P.O. Box 942732, MS 662, Sacramento, CA 94234-7320 or call *Samantha Ryder* at 916/ 445-7030 Fax: 916/ 322-1532

■ **Math in the Garden** (K-2) Thematic unit explores math concepts using garden-based activities for applications to real-life situations. Cross-curricular activities show how to integrate math concepts through the day. Includes fiction, non-fiction bibliography. \$6.45 + 7.25% sales tax + \$3 s/h. *Evan-Moor Corp., 18 Lower Ragsdale Dr., Monterey, CA 93940 800/ 777-4362 Fax: 408/ 649-6256 www.evan-moor.com*



■ **Wool Fiber in the Making** (K-12) Wool samples supplement descriptions of wool grading and sorting, scouring, lanolin recovery, dyeing, carding, spinning, weaving and finishing. Describes differences between fine, medium, coarse wool. Free. *For ordering information, see entry below.*

■ **Wool... A Natural** Packet includes wool chart, booklets on wool production and the Pendleton Co. Free. *Education & Testing Dept., Pendleton Woolen Mills, P.O. Box 3030, Portland, OR 97208-3030 503/ 226-4801 Fax: 503/ 535-5599 web site: www.pendleton-usa.com*



■ **Cotton - From Field to Fabric** (K - 12) 20-page booklet reviews history, production, utilization of cotton from growth to yarn and fabric production. One copy free, \$.50 per extra copy. *National Cotton Council, Communication Service Dept., P.O. Box 820285, Memphis, TN 38182 901/ 274-9030 FAX 901/ 725-0510 web site: www.cotton.org*

■ **Cottonseed and Its Product** (K - 12) 24-page booklet describes the cotton industry and the many uses of cottonseed products. Free! *National Cottonseed Products Association, P.O. Box 172267, Memphis, TN 38187-2267 901/ 682-0800 Fax: 901/ 682-2856 www.cottonseed.com*

■ **Youth Garden Grants** (K-12) Applications available for 300 awards of \$750 made to schools and other groups. Post-mark deadline for returning application is Nov. 1, 1999. Obtain application and other educational materials from *National Gardening Association, Youth Garden Grants Program, 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401 800/ 538-7476 website www.garden.org -- Click on Youth Garden Grants. Also check Kids & Classrooms and Kids Gardening Catalog.*

■ **California Fertilizer Association's School Garden Program** (K-12) Provides funding for continuation/implementation of school garden programs. Grants awarded twice per year. One page application plus attachments of photos, essays, letters. Next deadline: Oct. 1, 1999. Spring deadline to be established. *California Fertilizer Assoc., ATTN: Jennifer Lombardi, 1700 I St., Suite 130, Sacramento, CA 95814 916/ 441-1584 www.calfertilizer.org*

■ **CA Department of Education School Garden Project Financial Assistance** (as listed in the Nutrition Education and Training Program's "A Garden in Every School" packet (see Gardens, page 1): **Environmental Education Office** has various grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$15,000. Access through the web at [www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/oe/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/oe/); **CalServe Program** promotes activity-based instruction and service learning. Call Mike Brugh at 916/ 653-7971 or Barbara Weise at 916/ 657-3348.

## New from the Foundation

■ **Fresh Carrots Fact Sheet** The newest in a series of commodity and natural resource fact sheets includes information on the production, history and economic value of fresh carrots. Provides lesson ideas and fun facts for easy inclusion in curriculum. Other topics: *Agricultural Water, Artichokes, Avocado, Beef, Citrus Fruits, Cling Peach, Cut Flowers, Dairy, Dry Beans, Eggs, Forest Resources, Pistachios, Rice, Strawberries, Walnuts, Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potassium.* Individual sheet and complete sets free. *CFAITC, P.O. Box 15949, Sacramento, CA 95852-0949 800/ 700-2482 Fax: 916/ 561-5697 www.cfaitc.org*

# Challenge students to write

Like hundreds of California educators, Mary Ann Long last year challenged her students to stretch their imaginations and exercise their writing skills through the Foundation's *Imagine this...* story writing contest.

Like all students who entered, Allison Richter (one of Mary Ann's students) probably thought it would be easier to find *three* needles in a haystack than it would be to nab one of six first or second place spots in the statewide contest.

But because Mary Ann – a Sutter County 6th grade teacher – supplemented her curriculum with the contest,

Allison took the challenge. Her words carried her far – she wrote her way to the top of the stack of *Imagine this...* entries.

Allison and the five other winners were celebrities at a National Agriculture Day gathering where Secretary of Agriculture William (Bill) J. Lyons, Jr. honored the young authors.

The same scenario is revving up again with the opening of the 1999-2000 contest. Coordinated by the Foundation and funded by State Compensation Insurance Fund, *Imagine this...* is open to 2nd - 8th graders in public, private or alternative schools. Stories can be based on fact or fiction, but must accurately portray agriculture and be post-marked by Nov. 1 to qualify for entry.

*Imagine this...* is structured in layers with each class forwarding two essays to regional judging where first and second place is awarded in grades 2-3, 4-5 and 6-8. Winners receive trophies and autographed books, then progress to statewide competition where first and second place winners receive medals;



Winners of last year's *Imagine this...* contest and their teachers attended an awards ceremony during National Agriculture Week.

\$100 and \$50 savings bonds, respectively; and an expense-paid trip to Sacramento for the National Agriculture Week ceremony.

Teachers of the winning students at both levels receive classroom resources relating to agriculture. Additionally, the six winning stories are professionally produced into an animated video which has received state and national recognition two years running.

At this year's National Ag Week dinner featuring Allison reading her story before 130 adults, Mary Ann remarked that students need creative challenges to practice their skills. "Allison did not learn to write by completing a workbook, by taking a spelling quiz, or by filling out the bubbles on a standardized test... Allison wrote that story (in part) because she was given the opportunity through Ag in the Classroom... to challenge herself through competition."

For complete information, contact the Foundation at 800/ 700-AITC.

# Calendar

**CA Conference for Agriculture in the Classroom, Oct. 14 - 16**, Four Points Sheraton, Ventura. Register by Oct. 1; \$185 plus hotel accommodations. Call 800/700-AITC for information. *Don't miss this year's event!*

**California Young Farmers Art Contest "Impressions of California Agriculture"** for grades K - 6. Entries must be on 8 1/2 x 11 paper & submitted before Dec. 1, 1999. Contact Mike Huffman, 916/ 685-1717

**Imagine this... Story Writing Contest** (See story, left) Regional judges must receive entries post-marked by Nov. 1. For specific entry criteria and contest rules, contact the Foundation at 800/ 700-AITC. Check out last year's winning entries on the web at [www.cfaitec.org](http://www.cfaitec.org).

**National Farm-City Week, Nov. 19 - 25**; See story, pages 4 - 5, for quick classroom ideas.

**Summer Ag Institute applications due, Jan. 15, 2000**. For information, call 800/ 700-AITC, or research the web at [www.cfaitec.org](http://www.cfaitec.org) under Teacher Training.

**Summer Agricultural Institute, June 19 - 23, 2000**, Sacramento.

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## Cream of the Crop



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## Last chance to remain on Cream mailing list!

Thank you to all who returned their *Cream of the Crop* surveys included in the last issue. We appreciate the time spent on the evaluation and the comments included.

Recipients who did not respond to the survey will be removed from the

data base. This issue will be the last sent to the mailing list as it existed prior to the survey. **If you did not respond but wish to continue receiving *Cream of the Crop*, contact the Foundation by phone, mail or fax (information to the right).**