

**Ag in the Classroom News Release
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation®**

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Contact: Darlene Arneson, Ag in the Classroom Coordinator
608.828.5719

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spring Green Educator Recognized for Agricultural Literacy Work

MADISON – Sheila Burris, a second grade teacher at Spring Green Elementary School, is the recipient of the [Wisconsin Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom's Outstanding Teacher Award](#).

The selection each year is made by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau in order to recognize teachers for their efforts in teaching students the importance of agriculture. Teachers of all grade levels and subject areas, with the exclusion of certified agriculture education instructors, are eligible to apply for the award.

“Sheila’s classroom is alive with excitement, hands-on activities, and is an inspiration for the students to learn about all subjects - including agriculture,” said Darlene Arneson, Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Coordinator.

Burris is the teacher coordinator for the Sauk County Ag in the Classroom program at her school. The county coordinated presentations with Burris about Wisconsin products including a presentation on cheese and a curriculum about the new food pyramid and how it connects to agriculture.

She also teaches about plants, takes students to apple orchards, has units about animals and animal care and management practices.

Burris works with their local high school agriculture education instructor at River Valley High School, Shari Graffunder, when the River Valley FFA has “Drive Your Tractor to School Day” in the spring. Her second grade students learn about weights, tires and hydraulics. Burris and Graffunder also utilize the school’s greenhouse to teach the younger students about watering, temperatures, and how to transplant plants.

Her class participates in the Agri Dairy Service of Richland Center’s poster contest for agriculture. She utilizes various books about food in her health unit and encourages students to create a “funny lunch” and figure out where the food comes from and what food group it belongs to in the food pyramid.

A graduate of UW-Platteville with majors in comprehensive music and elementary education and a farm girl from Iowa County, Burris has taught at Spring Green Elementary the past 24 years. She has her master's degree in elementary education from UW-Platteville. She has been treasurer of the River Valley Education Association and was named to Who's Who Among America's Teachers four different times.

Burris will be Wisconsin's nominee for the National Excellence in Teaching Agriculture Award and will receive a cash award. Her class has already received a presentation.

For more information on the Ag in the Classroom's Outstanding Teacher Award, contact Darlene Arneson at 608.828.5719.

[Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom](#) program provides teachers and students K-12 with an understanding of how their food is produced. The program seeks to work within existing curricula to provide basic information on our nation's largest industry: Agriculture. Wisconsin's Ag in the Classroom program is carried out by a network of local educators, volunteers and representatives from agricultural organizations and businesses.

The goal of the program is to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies.