

The value of attending the National Ag in the Classroom Conference

The National Ag in the Classroom Conference is an opportunity for volunteers, teachers and staff involved in agricultural literacy to really learn about new resources, share ideas and experiences, and network with others involved in agricultural education. The conference location rotates between the four regions in the National Ag in the Classroom consortium. The 2013 National Conference is hosted by the Central Region and will be held June 25-28 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The conference offers a variety of workshops, mini-workshops and interest approaches for participants to attend. The topics vary from commodity education to teaching techniques to subject oriented options. The workshops are offered several times during the conference. The Interactive Learning Labs include “make and take” where participants can learn how to do a number of hands-on activities, crafts and projects in an informal setting and others will be a chance to visit with a small group about a program or activity that has been successful.

The Traveling workshops (or tours) offered by the conference offer participants an opportunity to learn about production agriculture, agri-businesses, food systems, the green industry, and other aspects of agriculture. Obviously the tours will vary from location to location which offers unique opportunities to learn about agriculture in that region.

Other experiences at the conference will be great speakers, luncheons in which Outstanding Teachers and Grant recipients are recognized, an exhibit area and other informal social activities. There are so many ways for people to network and share ideas at the conference.

I have found that each of the conferences I've attended have really helped me learn a great deal, built my enthusiasm, expanded my network of partners, and helped me set goals for our state program.

I hope that teachers, staff working in agricultural or commodity education, and volunteers involved in Ag in the Classroom will consider the opportunity to attend and that other groups, organizations and businesses in their area will support their efforts. The cost to attend the conference includes registration fees, hotel rooms and travel expenses. Any assistance to help offset these costs would be greatly appreciated.

I encourage you to visit www.agclassroom.org to learn more about the conference. Please contact me if you have additional questions. I can be reached at 608.828.5719 or [darneson @wfbf.com](mailto:darneson@wfbf.com).

Thank you!

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