



December 2018
Ag in the Classroom Newsletter for
our Ag in the Classroom Volunteers!

New Year's Kick-Off Event at Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center
Saturday, January 5, 2019 Lunch & Meeting from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center- 7001 Gass Lake Rd, Manitowoc

Let's kick-off the New Year with an Ag in the Classroom tour, lunch and information meeting! Begin and end the day (based on your arrival and departure time) viewing the exhibits at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center and then join Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom over lunch for an update on 2019 activities! The center is open from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The Ag in the Classroom lunch and program will run from 11:30-1:30 in a separate area. We'll cover the 2019 Ag Day activities, essay contest, matching grants, and plans for summer trainings. There will be a presentation by Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center staff on how you can bring schools, groups and others to the center.

We welcome Ag in the Classroom volunteers, Promotion and Education members, YFA members, classroom teachers, home school parents, 4-H and extension staff and volunteers and others involved in agricultural literacy to participate. Visit <https://farmwisconsin.org/> to learn more about the center.

The registration fee for the Ag in the Classroom section and tour is **\$20 per person**- this includes the admission to the center and lunch. If others want to join you for the trip but don't want to participate in the Ag in the Classroom lunch and program, they can pay the **\$5 per person** group fee (only if they register when you do) and have lunch on their own in the café. The \$5 per person must be done in advance- not that day. Registration materials can be found at wisagclassroom.org. For more information, contact Darlene Arneson at darneson@wbf.com or 608.828.5644. Payment must accompany the registration fee.

Ag in the Classroom New Year's Kick-Off- Due December 19

Contact Person _____ County _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Home Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Are you a _____ AITC volunteer _____ teacher _____ P & E _____ YFA _____ Other _____

Names of those for the AITC lunch and program (\$20 each) _____

Names of those for admission only (\$5 each) _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation

Send order to: Wisconsin Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 5550, Madison, WI 53705-0550

Or you can pay by credit card:

Step 1: Fill out form and save to your computer. Press SUBMIT to email this form to the Farm Bureau office.

Step 2: Click here to complete payment.

The top 10 reasons why you should go to the FWDC Kick-Off

1. You will hear the 2019 bus tour dates and locations along with other summer AITC training sessions.
2. You will get all the details for the March National Ag Day contest and activities.
3. You will hear from our Teacher of the Year- Ashley VandenBush!
4. You will get updates on this year's essay contest.
5. You will hear from Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center's Melissa Bender as she discusses how volunteers and teachers can use the center.
6. You can spend the day with your family- they can come along for \$5 each if they register when you do! They can eat in the café when you attend the AITC luncheon meeting.
7. You can bring along your AITC county committee members, FFA members involved with Food for America, and/or teachers that you work with.
8. You'll get to see the amazing exhibits and inter-active displays at the FWDC.
9. You'll have time to network with others involved in AITC.
10. You'll go home inspired and ready to plan your 2019 AITC!

ZOOM meetings set for county AITC volunteers

Information will be emailed out to our county AITC coordinators, committee members and District Coordinators on three ZOOM Meetings. The meetings utilize your computer (to see what's happening) and your phone (to hear but you can also listen through your computer). The ZOOM meetings will be recorded and posted to the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom's YouTube channel afterwards.

- Wednesday, December 26 at 12 noon: A 30-minute session for new county AITC coordinators to go over expectations and how AITC works.
- Wednesday, December 26 at 1 p.m.: A 30-minute session reviewing a new county tracking sheet to help you record activities, outreach and other information needed on your county reports.
- Wednesday, January 9 at 12 noon: A 30-minute session on National Ag Day contest and events.

The emails will contain the call-in information and links to the meetings. Darlene Arneson will be able to share her screen and show you resources and where to find the topics covered on the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom website.



2019 National Conference

June 18-21, 2019

Little Rock, Arkansas

www.agclassroom.org/conferences/index.cfm

Registration and hotel information will be ready January 15!

Sturgeon Bay Teacher Recognized for Agricultural Literacy Work



Ashley VandenBush, a third-grade teacher at St. John Bosco School in Sturgeon Bay, is this year's recipient of Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program's Outstanding Teacher Award.

Each year the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation recognizes a teacher for his or her efforts in educating students on the importance of agriculture. Teachers of all grade levels and subject areas, with the exclusion of certified agriculture education instructors, are eligible to apply.

"Ashley has done a fantastic job of seeking out agriculture resources to use in her teaching," said Darlene Arneson, Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Coordinator. "She has attended numerous volunteer and teacher trainings, has presented a workshop at our national conference and has used Ag in the Classroom resources in a variety of settings."

VandenBush earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Carroll University. She has taught at St. John Bosco since 2016. She was a substitute teacher in the greater Green Bay area and an educator with the Brown County Dairy Promotions Ambassador program since 2012. She still assists Brown County Dairy with events.

"Ashley has been active in Farm Bureau, Green Bay FFA Alumni, Young Farmers Association and has been a strong advocate for agriculture," Arneson added. "Because of her high-level of dedication of including agriculture in her curriculum, she earned a White-Reinhardt Educator Scholarship from the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture to attend the National Ag in the Classroom Conference."

VandenBush will be Wisconsin's nominee for the National Excellence in Teaching Agriculture Award and will receive \$500 to attend the 2019 National Ag in the Classroom Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Cindy Barber, a fifth-grade teacher at Random Lake Middle School, and Lori Bongert, a fourth-grade teacher at Rio Elementary School, were named runners up for their efforts in sharing agricultural literacy with their students.

Ag in the Classroom Program Awards Teacher Mini-Grants

Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program has awarded 12 teacher mini-grants to be used for agricultural literacy lessons and activities. The grants, funded by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, provide opportunities for teachers to obtain funding that may not be available through their local school budgets.

The following teachers were awarded \$100 grants that will be used this school year:

The Great Seed Exchange

Heather Gayton- Creekside Elementary School, Sun Prairie

Students will research the history behind heirloom varieties, take a virtual tour of a seed bank and explore where certain varieties are native to which continents. This program will help students develop global connections through agriculture and become more aware of the interconnectedness of cultures through foods and crops. Funds will be used to purchase seeds, make brochures and for packaging products.

Little Blessings Garden Patch

Kristi Magnuson- St. Aloysius Catholic School, Sauk City

This program will allow students to be engaged in an active learning space within their school garden. Students will observe, discover, experiment, nurture and learn about agriculture. Funds will be used to plant grass seed, purchase a root-view planter buying supplies for flowers, garden tools and a field trip to the Merrimac Community Charter School's garden. This experience will enhance the children's connection to the environment, with a goal of fighting childhood obesity by changing eating habits and strengthening attitudes toward learning.

Books and Blankets

Livia Doyle- Mineral Point Elementary School, Mineral Point

The project's goal is to raise funds to purchase materials to be used in outdoor learning spaces including a wagon, blankets and books centered around topics like insects, plants, birds, trees, gardening, compost, environmental stewardship, animals and weather. Teachers can engage students by allowing them to pull the wagon full of books and blankets into the garden or Oak Savanna, spreading out the blankets, grabbing a book, getting comfortable and learning all about the great outdoors.

Elementary Ag Day

Nathaniel Nolden- Wisconsin Dells High School, Wisconsin Dells

Students enrolled in agri-science class and Wisconsin Dells FFA members will prepare activities and content for 10-15-minute stations. They will invite all the third-grade students in the school district to a half-day Elementary Ag Day. There will be a minimum of 14 stations on various topics related to agriculture in the community and state. Funds will be used to purchase related books, food storage containers and other supplies.

Global Food Security

Katelyn Dei- Slinger High School, Slinger

Students will be utilizing the Hungry Planet books by Peter Menzel to determine what factors create food insecurity and which countries around the world are food insecure. Students will learn about our American agriculture system and how our lives have changed dramatically in the last 100 years due to advancements in our agriculture. Critical thinking will allow students to develop innovative plans to solve the global security issue before 2050. Funds will be used to purchase the books for the project.

Respecting Rural Life!

Kirstin Thompson- Greenfield Elementary- Baldwin

In a two-part project, students will be asked to research rural life skills, conduct interviews of rural-life experts, and then design a three-dimensional model related to the topic. With the school district's emphasis on personalized learning, the grant will help purchase a variety of non-fiction books the students can use in their research. Helping the student's reading skills and learning how to research will then allow students to have a better understanding and appreciation of our rural history and then develop a plan to carry those rural life skills into the future.

Write Your Way Through Natural Resources

Kirsten Konder- Luck Public Schools, Luck

After studying many areas of natural resources along with environmental issues, students will write a children's book concentrating on one area. They will explain the issue within the story and show multiple ways to resolve it. The stories will be targeted to a fourth-grade reading level. Students both in high school and elementary school will learn more about natural resources and the challenges we face. The grant will help purchase blank books along with supplies needed for the project.

Yes, Reading is Fun!

Lori Rowe- Tigerton High School, Tigerton

To assist the staff members in the district to provide agricultural books for the school, Middle School Book Club and Reading Nights, the grant will be used to buy a variety of agricultural books. Staff have observed that students have lost their interest in reading books for fun, so the new books will provide interesting topics, good illustrations and content that will spark their interest in agriculture and reading.

Patio Gardening; Fresh Food for Families!

Amy Mather- Northern Hills School, Onalaska

Students will develop gardening skills and help feed their families while working collaboratively to solve problems related to a cooperative project. They will have increased responsibility and independence related to feeding themselves and their families. The grant will help purchase supplies and then they will learn from Master Gardeners how to plant, care for seedlings and harvest produce.

Seed Germination

John Slipek- Abbotsford High School- Abbotsford

Working with second grade students, the grant will be used to purchase seed, soil and containers for use during this 9-week unit. Each student will be able to plant seeds and monitor growth while observing germination differences, soil temperature, moisture variation, impact of sunlight, growth rate and other factors. The students will also be able to propagate plants using other methods and have plants to take home for Mother's Day.

Safety on the Farm

Cheri Oglesby- St. Rose Catholic School, Cuba City

Working with the Cuba City FFA Chapter, elementary students will learn about the dangers on a farm and how to protect themselves. The dangers of equipment, chemicals and animals will be covered in a three-week project. The grant will help purchase several student safety books that will be used during the unit. High school students will make posters and lead the discussion and then use a 'red-green' game to share the information.

Read About and Make Ice Cream

Sarah Halverson- Black River Falls High School, Black River Falls

Our high school Child Development Class students will create age appropriate lessons for 4K students. The content will be delivered in dairy and ice cream themed stations that are 15 minutes in length. Students will need to include PIES (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Social) developmental milestones in the lessons they create. The grant will be used to buy several books and an ice cream maker.

Matching Grants Due March 1

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program also has matching grants available to groups and organizations that conduct agricultural literacy projects. Applications are due **March 1** and can be downloaded at www.wisagclassroom.org or by contacting Darlene Arneson at 608.828.5644 or darneson@wbf.com.

What's new in Ag in the Classroom and where do I find it? Facebook: Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Program



Curriculum and Lesson Plans on the National Ag in the Classroom's Curriculum Matrix <https://www.agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix/>



Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom - <https://www.wisagclassroom.org/>





On the Farm Experience Applications Open



What: An On the Farm professional development experience. [Learn more by watching this short video.](#)

Who: The events are designed for those who work in STEM and have a limited background in agriculture. Not sure you are the right person? [Check out past participants.](#)

Where and When:

- Kansas City, Kansas - May 1-3
- Syracuse, New York - May 21-23

How: <http://www.agfoundation.org/on-the-farm>

Why: The training was designed to bring science to life for participants with the help of beef farmers and ranchers, researchers, nutritionists and veterinarians.

Book of the Year and Essay Contest for 2018-19

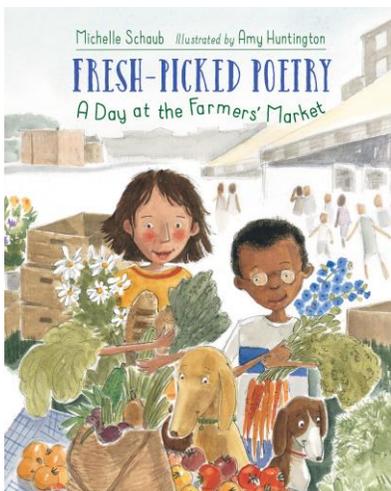
The 2019 Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Book of the Year, "Fresh-Picked Poetry," is written by Michelle Schaub of Illinois.

Each year, the Ag in the Classroom program holds an essay contest in conjunction with the book of the year for fourth and fifth grade students throughout the state. This year's essay contest topic is, "Making it happen at the Farmers' Market." Accompanying lessons aligned to state standards and various Wisconsin educational resources are available online for teachers, students and volunteers to use in promoting and preparing essays.

"The book and topic should be popular as we have more schools offering Farm-to-School and locally grown foods to their food service program," said Darlene Arneson, Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Coordinator. "Using various styles of poetry, the author highlights the different aspects of the farmers' market, preparation at the farm, and what happens at the market. The essay contest will give students a wide variety of topics to focus on and teachers may encourage them to use poetry within the essay."

Essay submissions must be 100-to-300 words in length and will be judged on content, grammar, spelling and neatness. The essay contest rules, lesson plans and sample classroom activities are located at [wisagclassroom.org/whats-new](https://www.wisagclassroom.org/whats-new). Essays are due April 1.

Nine district winners will be selected with one being chosen as the state winner in May by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Promotion and Education Committee. Each district winner will receive a classroom presentation for their class. The essay contest is sponsored by We Energies and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation. Last year, more than 2,500 students participated in the contest.



Where to find what you need?

Book order forms:

<https://www.wisagclassroom.org/teachers-information/childrens-books/>

Essay Contest information:

<https://www.wisagclassroom.org/teachers-information/essay-contest/>

Ag in the Classroom Resources:

<https://www.wisagclassroom.org/teachers-information/order-forms/>