



March 2020
Ag in the Classroom Newsletter for
our Ag in the Classroom Volunteers!

Lots of changes and unknowns but we're here to help!

With the day-to-day changes in school closings, advisories, restrictions and other issues, there are so many unknowns for all of us. We are doing our best to adjust deadlines, events and activities based on the best information we have.

2020 Matching Grants- the applications are with the judges and I expect the results back the week of March 23. We will process the checks and send them to the address on the application. Since the projects are for the next year, this program is not affected.

Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom has extended deadlines for several grants and contests due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The [MORE for Agriculture grant](#) deadline to apply is now May 10. This grant is available to teachers in grades 7-12. The MORE grant will provide 50 classroom sets of *The Hungry Planet* by Peter Menzel to participating classes in each state. The book details the food consumption of various families around the world. Companion educational lessons and resources will accompany the books.

[Essay contest](#) submissions are now due by April 24. This contest asks fourth and fifth grade students to respond to the essay prompt, "How has Wisconsin agriculture affected your life today?". If school does not resume, parents may send entries to the [county essay coordinator](#).

The [youth coloring contest](#), that is part of National Ag Day activities, deadline has been extended until May 1. Students are asked to draw and color a picture that shows people who are involved in growing, producing, processing, selling, preparing or somehow have another connection to food. The contest is open to children ages 12 and under.

[National Ag Day reading event](#) submission deadline has been extended until June 1. People of all ages are invited to take their favorite children's book about agriculture and set up a virtual, Facebook Live, or other social media reading. Because many libraries are closed, people may need to use their own library, borrow from a friend, or buy books online. The recommended book is the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom's Book of the Year Right This Very Minute by Wisconsin author Lisl Detlefsen. The book is available for purchase through the [online store](#) on wisagclassroom.com.

ZOOM Meetings- found on YouTube on the Wisconsin AITC Channel

I am recording a ZOOM meeting on March 19 going over many of these changes and will post it to the **Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom YouTube Channel**. Other recorded ZOOM meetings on a variety of Ag in the Classroom topics can be watched anytime! If you can't make meetings and trainings, this is a great way to keep up-to-date on what's happening, new resources, and program details. Watch for other playlists of videos that relate to AITC and agriculture.

What happens if school doesn't resume?

I am in the same boat that you are so am taking things one day at a time with the new advisories, restrictions and issues that are coming up. But in my estimation, here are my best answers as of March 18, 2020:

- **Essay contest**- we will judge what essays come in and do the best we can to recognize them. I am not planning on making the nine District presentations. I will put together a winner's packet, a winning teacher's packet and mailing it to the school. If I have the student's home address, I will send it there. If schools do resume, I am considering sending a Culvers gift card to the teacher and they can get some custard or treats for the class as a thank you. Depending on where they are and if they are in school, I will try to make a presentation at the state winner's school.

For counties, I would encourage you to work with your teachers and schools to see what works best. It may be that no in-school presentations, pizza parties, and ect. can happen and you may want to use that budgeted money for gift cards or other items that can be easily distributed. We will know a lot more once we know if schools resume or not.

The problem with the essay contest is that classes change, the 5th graders may move onto middle school, and there isn't any consistency if we try to carry this over to fall. So we will use the information on the back of the essays and do our best to follow-up.

- **National Ag Day activities and contest**- Obviously schools are closed next week along with libraries, day cares and other venues we'd be reading at. Many nursing homes are in lock-down too. You might want to try some online reading on Facebook (taping and posting or doing a Facebook Live). If you don't know how to do this, we hope to get some "how to" resources on the WFBF website or you can utilize some who are familiar. We can always re-schedule events for later- Ag Day is everyday for our producers so it's not critical that things are done on March 24!

We had this email from the AFBFA on Ag Day:

Hi AITC friends, I hope you are all staying safe and healthy.

We have some fun news to brighten your days! The newest book from Feeding Minds Press "[Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck's Ice Cream Wish](#)" is now available to purchase! We have also produced a video of a "real farmer named Chuck" so we can bring the book to life for young readers! There is also a free lesson on our site. Any help in sharing the word about this new accurate ag book would be appreciated! Just link to: <https://www.feedingmindspress.com/our-books/chucks-ice-cream-wish>

We have come up with a [list of stay at home "ag-tivities"](#) on a blog here you can share. We are also doing our best to share all of your links to your stay at home resources when you post them! If you want us to post anything in particular for you, feel free to email me directly so we can share from AgFoundation.

Finally, we are pushing for a social media celebration of Ag Day on March 24th. Join us in celebrating agriculture by using the hashtag #AgDay20. Here are some ideas:

1. Food and Farm Facts infographics – [which can be found on this page](#).

2. Ag Day [social media posts](#)
3. Post this blog: [4 Ways Farmers Steward the Land](#) and share how you steward the land!
4. Post this blog: [10 Things that didn't make you think farm until now](#) and share your favorite ag fact!
5. Share a video of what you are doing on your farm right this very minute!

We hope you can still help us celebrate National Ag Day March 24th on social media! Don't forget to tag your posts #AgDay20.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Julia Recko

Education Outreach Director
American Farm Bureau Foundation for Ag
www.agfoundation.org

- **If you have a matching grant that was awarded in April 2019 for an activity this spring that will be cancelled:** We realize that things are out of all our control and cancelations are going to happen for projects or activities that you have a grant for.

If you can do the same activity in the future (next year for that event if it's an annual event or reschedule it sometime in the next few months), just hold on to the funds and use it. Report on the event when it gets done.

If the event was a one-time activity or can't be done, you have two options: Return the grant money or if you can submit an alternative project, that would be fine too. The alternative activity must be an educational activity geared towards youth education about agriculture. Send a revised plan of action to Darlene (it doesn't have to be on the original grant application form) when you have it planned. Or if you aren't sure, send your idea and we'll discuss it.

Just communicate with Darlene Arneson on your status and we'll work together to make this work out!

National AITC Conference - <https://www.agclassroom.org/conferences/index.cfm>

I haven't heard if there are any possible concerns about the National Conference in June 23-26 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Registrations are open and we hope that it can happen! Teachers, volunteers and staff will enjoy traveling workshops to Utah agricultural operations; onsite workshops that demonstrate how to use agricultural resources to contextualize standards in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and nutrition; and dynamic keynote speakers who provide their perspectives on supporting Agriculture in the Classroom's mission of promoting the importance of agriculture in our daily lives.

Things to share and do when school is not in session

We have so many resources for students to do online, activities such as My American Farm and Journey 2050, as well as hands-on activities, lessons, interactive activities, virtual tours and other fun, educational activities on our key websites. We realize that not all students and teachers have good internet access and while at home, may have other challenges that are taking their attention such as caring for siblings, not having food or meals, and other family challenges.

The key websites to share are:

- www.wisagclassroom.org
- www.agclassroom.org
- www.agfoundation.org
- www.myamericanfarm.org
- www.journey2050.org

We also have many commodity groups that have interactive websites for teachers and students. Many Ag in the Classroom and commodity videos are on YouTube. There's a lot out there for you to share.

If Wisconsin AITC can be of help to you, please let us know! I am watching my emails and phone messages. Our office is currently open (as of March 18) and we are encouraged to work at home if possible. I have been sending out resources so feel free to order items through our online store. Just make sure that if they are going to your schools, there is someone in the office to accept mail. You might want to use your home address.

At this time, I am continuing to plan the summer trainings and bus tour. Watch for those registration forms to go online soon! And the Facebook page is my best way to share messages so please watch that!



Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Partnership Offers MORE Grants- this is an amazing book!!

Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom has extended the application for the MORE for Agriculture grants to May 10th.

The MORE for Agriculture grant is available to teachers in grades 7-12. The grant will provide 50 classroom sets of *The Hungry Planet* by Peter Menzel to participating classes in each state. The book details the food consumption of various families around the world. Companion educational lessons and resources will accompany the books.

"This is an exciting new opportunity for teachers to engage their students in learning about agriculture as it relates to the food that is eaten around the world," said Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Coordinator Darlene Arneson.

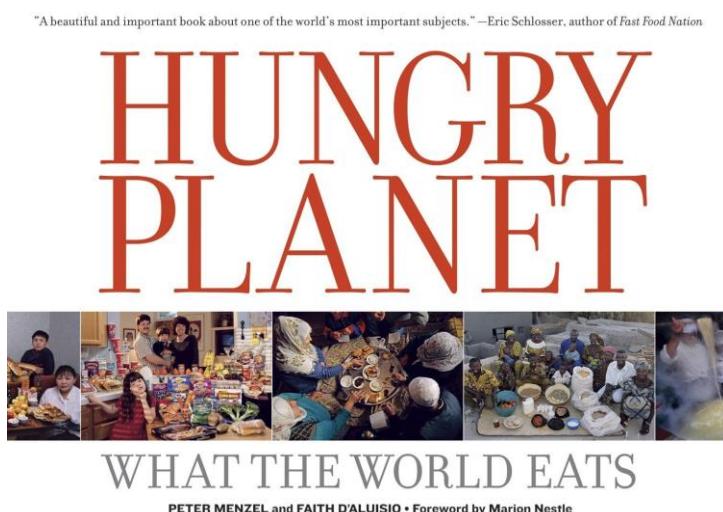
Grant recipients are required to attend one of two, 3-hour trainings. Wisconsin training dates are Thursday, July 2 and Monday, July 13. You don't have to attend both- just one of the two!! The locations will be determined based on where the grant recipients are located.

Applications for the MORE for Agriculture grant are due May 10. Grant recipients will be notified by May 22.

Teachers in grades 7-12 can apply [here](#) or visit wisagclassroom.org/more-for-agriculture-grant/ more information. Online applications can be completed via Jot Form. If sent by mail, entries must be received by May 10.

This grant is made possible by the generous support of the Compeer Financial Fund for Rural America, the corporate giving program of Compeer Financial.

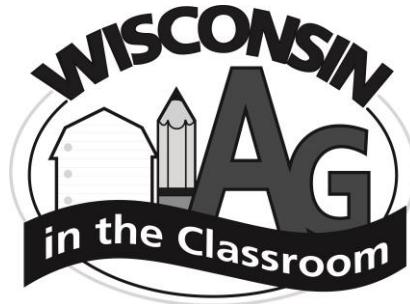
See some of the images from the book by visiting <https://menzelphoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/Hungry-Planet-Family-Food-Portraits/G0000zmgWvU6SiKM/C0000k7JgEHhEq0w>



What's coming up for Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom?

There are many opportunities for training in the summer for teachers and volunteers! Final details are being worked on but watch for registration information for:

- June 30- A workshop on the turf and soils industry for agricultural education instructors at the Wisconsin Association of Agriculture Educator's Professional Development Conference in La Crosse.
- July 9- Ag in the Classroom and Soybean Science Kit training in Oshkosh
- July 27-28- Summer AITC Bus Tour in Green County
- August 14- Training on Skills based learning, Academic Career Planning, and AITC resources in Oconto Falls
- August 18- Training on Inquiry Based Education and teaching methods, AITC resources, school agriculture education department and farm tour in New Richmond
- August 22- Back to School Kick-Off at Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center in Manitowoc



For any help, questions or other inquiries about Ag in the Classroom, please contact:

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