

Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom 2012-2013 Annual Report



October 2013

Because of Your Support

- More than 1,900 educators were able to attend workshops. These educators have the potential to impact over 56,000 young Virginians!
- New curriculum, such as *Jumpstart Your School Garden*, was created and will be the foundation of the 2013-2014 educator workshops.
- Over 30,000 newsletters were delivered to educators about fresh Virginia produce and Virginia's poultry industry.
- The 2013 Book of the Year, *Kelly's Big Day*, was read to over 50,000 students by over 1,900 volunteers!

Thank You from a Teacher

When I was a child, I would spend about half of the summer on my grandparents' farm helping them grow vegetables, pickle and can their produce, and learn about woodworking. These are some of my fondest memories and it saddens me that many children will never experience the joy of growing something themselves. AITC helped me see a content-driven avenue for incorporating agriculture and gardening into my classroom! Thank you for providing this service!

- Teacher from Rockingham County, VA



Spreading the Message across the Commonwealth!

Traveling from east of the Chesapeake Bay to Southwestern Virginia and nearly everywhere in between, AITC spread the message of the importance of agriculture to 1,928 educators last school year. The theme of this year's crop of workshops was "What Really Happens Down on the Farm." Along with agriculturally-themed books, maps and DVDs, educators also received a poster unit that depicted the many moving parts of a working farm.



This unit helped educators teach children about everything from crops, such as corn, wheat, and soybeans to the varieties of livestock grown in Virginia, such as broilers, beef cattle, sheep, hogs and turkeys. In addition, the approximately 56,000 children who will view this piece will be given the chance to learn the many processes that help produce high-quality Virginia agricultural products that provide for our basic needs!

Over 1,900 Volunteers Celebrate Agriculture Literacy Week!

From March 18th through March 23rd, over 1,900 volunteers from agricultural organizations and businesses



Children in Smyth County learn about cattle from the most reliable source!

throughout the Commonwealth read to more than 50,000 children in their own backyards during AITC's 3rd Annual Agriculture Literacy Week.

The book of choice this year was *Kelly's Big Day*, which was penned by AITC's very own Tammy Maxey. The book was told from the viewpoint of a teenager preparing to show her cow at the county fair and the goal was to help kids understand how farmers care for their animals.

"This event is by far our biggest volunteer opportunity of the year. It gives all agriculture supporters the chance to go directly into classrooms and teach children about their passion! I can't tell you how many people report back on how fulfilling this is," said Lynn Black, AITC Education Coordinator

Plans are already being made for AITC's 4th Annual Agriculture Literacy Week, which will take place in March 2014. If you would like to make an impact in your backyard by connecting children to agriculture, please contact Sr. Education Coordinator Tammy Maxey at Tammy.Maxey@vafb.com or 804-290-1143!

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Milk Comes from Dairy Cows, Not Wal-Mart!

AITC is in the business of helping children have that "aha" moment when they start to connect the dots of how agriculture impacts their daily lives. The following is an excerpt from a workshop evaluation that took place in Suffolk, Va. and describes just such a moment:

"Recently we used the DVD that was about cows and milk. It is a 10 minute video that we included with our lesson and the children love it. We have also read the book, Ready, Set, Grow, and talked about the pictures in the book.

The children were amazed to learn that milk came from cows and not from places like Wal-Mart. They learned the process of how we get milk, and at the end of the video it shows a milk truck leaving the farm. We had one child say "to take the milk to Wal-Mart!"

With the book, the children could see how we grow foods and how we harvest them. The children are familiar with the foods in the book and this helped them realize where they come from. I had one child that saw the red apple tree in the story and she started singing the song 2 red apples."



Where does my food come from? How does it get to my dinner table? All questions AITC helps educators and students understand.

Learning in the Garden!

Looking to “Jump Start Your School Garden?” It is probably a good idea, as study after study shows that kids that are involved in school gardening programs score significantly higher on science achievement tests compared to students who did not participate in school gardening.



That is one of the many reasons that AITC has created their latest curriculum that helps educators introduce their students to the natural world. By bringing gardening directly into their classrooms through the cultivation of indoor and outdoor gardens, students benefit from hands-on learning that’s fun!

A new curriculum book titled *Jump Start Your School Garden* will form the foundation for the 2013-2014 workshop series. Traditional Virginia crops such as

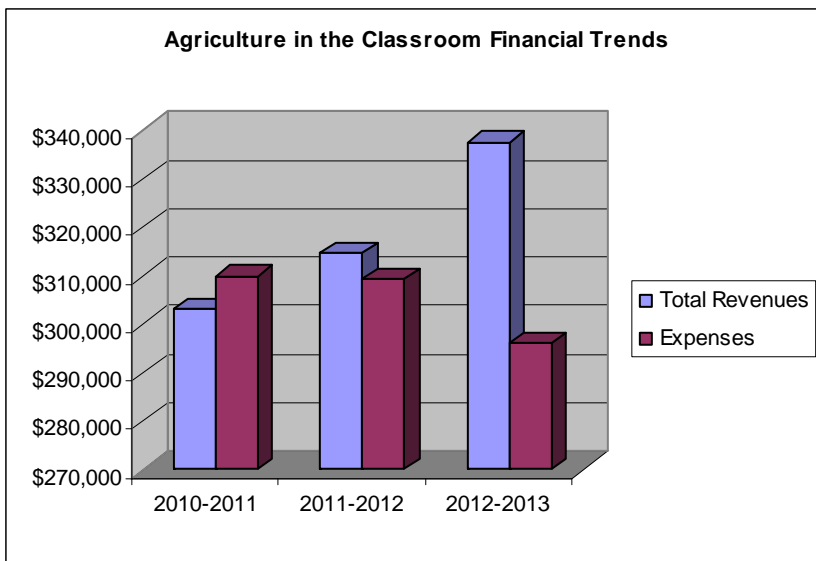
corn, tomatoes and potatoes are used in the book to help illustrate processes such as pollination, germination and life cycle.

“This will be a signature piece for us this year because it will be a resource that is unlike anything we have ever offered the educators we serve. It will not only highlight the importance of agriculture in our state, but it will be a vital tool for educators to teach science and math concepts in an extremely interactive way,” said Lynn Black, AITC Education Coordinator.

“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.”

- Marcus Tullius Cicero

Your Investment at Work



Due to your generosity and careful management of our expenses, AITC enjoyed a tremendous 2012-2013 fundraising year! Thanks to our family of donors, educators from around the state were equipped with math, science, social studies and language arts oriented classroom resources that helped teach thousands of kids about agriculture this past year. In addition, an increase in fundraising has allowed AITC to plan and implement new, impactful projects for the upcoming school year. Thank you for investing in agriculture education for children!

*AITC’s fiscal year runs from 7/1 to 6/30



Over 16,000 educators in Virginia received newsletters from AITC this year and learned about fresh fruits and vegetables and the impact of the poultry industry in our state. You can read them online at AgInTheClass.org.

Agriculture in the Classroom Honor Roll of Donors

Our donors make the work that we do at Agriculture in the Classroom possible. Because of all of you, thousands of children and educators in this state are more knowledgeable about agriculture.

Below is a list of businesses and organizations that supported AITC in the 2012-2013 fiscal year. In an effort to save paper and be good stewards of donor dollars, we have only listed donors who supported AITC at the \$500 level or greater through our special events, grants, or general donations. However, please know that every single gift is important to us!

If you would like to have a full Honor Roll of Donors or have any questions, please contact the Foundation at 804-290-1144.

Founder \$10,001+

Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium/USDA
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Harvester \$5,001-\$10,000

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Farm Bureaus

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Farm Bureau Women's Programs

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Cultivator \$501-\$1,000

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Virginia Crop Production
Association
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Lee County
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A Message from AITC's Board Chair

“Where does our food come from?” A pretty simple question for those of us involved in agriculture every day, but maybe not so simple if you are one of the millions of students who have never been to a farm or even helped tend a garden.

Agriculture in the Classroom wants to ensure that every child in Virginia can answer that vital question by providing free, agriculturally-themed resources and training to educators throughout our state.



“How can Ag in the Classroom provide these free of charge?” Now that is a simple question with an easy answer ~ through the generosity of folks like you. We cannot thank you enough for ensuring that agriculture’s story is not lost to the next generation of Virginians.

- Ellen Davis
State Director of Rural Development & AITC Board Chair

“How can Ag in the Classroom provide these free of charge?” Through the generosity of folks like you.

Creating A Legacy

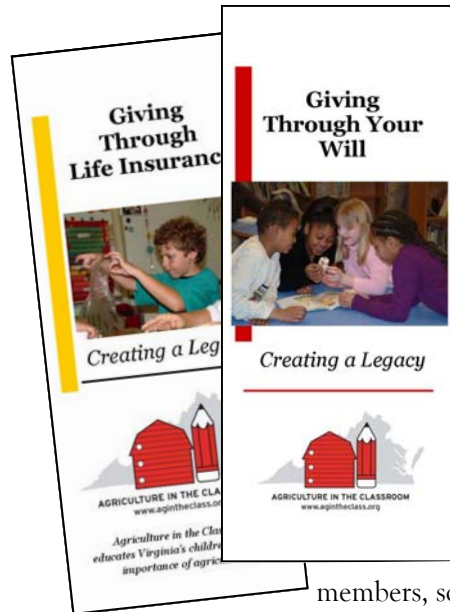
Continue your support of AITC through your will or life insurance

If you believe Virginia's children should grow up with an understanding of where their food and fiber come from, please consider remembering Agriculture in the Classroom in your will or with a gift of life insurance.

When you create or revise your will, talk to your estate planner or financial advisor about the many ways to include AITC in your estate plans

Life insurance gifts also empower you to make a generous financial contribution to AITC when you may not have many assets. There are numerous options when choosing this way to give.

Whatever avenue you choose, your estate gift to AITC will help ensure future generations of Virginians are given the gift of agriculture literacy.



How do you get started? Contact Karen Davis for more information about giving to AITC or call your Farm Bureau Insurance Agent to learn how to give through life insurance and for estate planning information. These services are free to Farm Bureau

members, so call today and ensure that the next generation is given the opportunity to cultivate an appreciate for agriculture!

Your donation makes a difference! Haven't given yet this year?

Go online and give through the AITC website at AgInTheClass.org (click on Donors) or send a check in the enclosed envelope!

Questions or need more information?

Contact Parke Sterling at 804-290-1144 or parke.sterling@vafb.com.

Clunkers for Classrooms

Get rid of your clunker to help connect kids to agriculture!

Do you have old, unused farm equipment, a car on its last legs or a boat that has seen better days? You can turn them into agriculture maps, books and lesson plans for thousands of educators and students by donating them to Agriculture in the Classroom.



Donate Your Tractor Today!

The donation process is easy and painless. Just call toll-free 1-877-99-AG-CAR [877-992-4227](tel:877-992-4227), to speak to a representative of the Agriculture in the Classroom Vehicle Donation program or send an e-mail to donations@charitableautoresources.com. You can also donate online by visiting the AITC web site, AgInTheClass.org, and clicking on the "Support AITC" button.

Your donation to AITC through Clunkers for Classrooms is an easy way to help connect farms to schools and educates kids about agriculture. It is also tax deductible. If agriculture education is important to you, donate your clunker today!

For more information, contact Karen Davis at 804-290-1142 or karen.davis@vafb.com or Parke Sterling at 804-290-1144 or parke.sterling@vafb.com.

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Agriculture in the Classroom is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children in Virginia about the importance of agriculture. If you believe today's children should be given the opportunity to form an understanding and appreciation for agriculture, please contact our staff to learn how to get involved. You can also visit us on the web at AgInTheClass.org.

